

Remarks by Robert W. Foster at
Signing of Memorandum of Cooperation between
UN Food and Agriculture Organization and FIG on
September 18, 2002 at
Rome, Italy

Deputy Director General Harcharik:

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and FIG held a Round Table meeting at the 20th FIG Congress in Melbourne, Australia in 1994, titled “Cadastral Reform in Rural Economics in Transition”.

The Round Table recognized that for there to be an improvement in land management there must be an improvement in registration and cadastral recordation systems.

The FAO statement from the Round Table discussion noted a change in the way people think about the “human-land relationship”. It was a recognition of a new ethic in land use, land economies and the environmental considerations related to the exploitation of land resources.

In the eight years since 1994 the realities of globalization have overtaken the world’s economies and ways of doing business. Globalization is arguably good - or bad - for rural economies and struggling cultures, but it is clear that the goals of the 1994 workshop and the objectives of the Memorandum of Cooperation which we sign here today, are ever-more important and must be accomplished if the hope of sustainable development and poverty reduction in the world are to be realized.

Mr. Harcharik, I am pleased and honored to sign this Memorandum of Cooperation with UN-FAO on behalf of FIG. I know that my successor, Professor Holger Magel and his Council of FIG will be equally pleased to fulfill the commitments made here today.

