

SURVEYING AND POLITICS – A RELATIONSHIP OF MUTUAL BENEFIT

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ABSTRACT

In the course of political changes (e.g. in countries in transition), global UN-campaigns (e.g. UNCHS (Habitat) campaigns on security of tenure and urban governance) and international declarations (such as Agenda 21 from the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro on sustainable development) or disasters (e.g. wars, earthquakes, floods), services of surveyors have received a growing economic and societal importance. In many places, there is, however, still a 'silence' between surveyors and politicians. Often, surveyors are not at all interested in political issues connected to their work. Politicians, politics, polities and policies are considered to be from another discipline or even 'from out of space' – especially from the perspective of universities. It is very significant that there are almost no surveyors in German or other parliaments.

From the perspective of the author, this reluctance is wrong. Examples from land registration, cadastre, geo-information, geo-data-systems and land readjustment show that – in times of global challenges, changing professions, and the increasing overlapping with neighbouring disciplines - surveyors need politicians and their support and decisions more than ever. This is true for universities, administration, economy and liberal profession.

At the same time, politics and society also need the surveyor's services and their advice with regard to reconstruction, transformation and development.

FIG can play an important role to support and enable this essential dialogue between politicians (policy) and surveyors (surveying). The results achieved so far by the present and previous Bureaux and Commissions as well as by UN-FIG-Liaison-Director Ian Williamson tell their own story. The paper shows how this strategy will be continued and extended in the future – for the mutual benefit of surveying and policy.

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