

**International Conference on Spatial Information Management for Sustainable
Development
Nairobi, Kenya
2 October 2001**

Welcome Address

By FIG Vice-President Univ. Prof. Holger Magel, Germany

Your Excellency, President **Daniel Arap Moi**,
Mister Deputy Executive Director **Daniel Biau**,
Dear Chairman and Friend **Humphrey K. Njuguna**, Distinguished Guests,

It is a great honour for me to be invited to address such a distinguished audience on behalf of the FIG, of its council, its commissions, its nearly 100 member associations spreaded all over the world and its more than 230 000 members. I would like to thank our hosts of Kenya for their great hospitality and to congratulate them to this important and well-organized conference — you have made a good job to organize this big event which deals with outstanding topics. In a rapidly changing and endangered world all nations are asked to discuss and to force sustainable development and land management in urban and rural areas, land tenure issues and as an indispensable basis of all the increasing possibilities of the new information technologies, especially of spatial data infrastructure.

FIG has committed to actively supporting and cooperating with all of its member associations on this efforts as well as the international community, especially the UN Authorities like UNCHS, UNEP, UNFAO etc. We are therefore very glad that FIG is recognised as a formal partner of UN. The result of this cooperation is fruitful and impressive: there now exist documents about sustainable development, Agenda 21-contributions, Land Administration as a condition for sustainable development or guidelines about Women's access to land and so on. A highlight was the participation of FIG at the Istanbul +5 UN-Conference in New York in June 2001 – together with our partners of Habitat Professionals Forum – and the joint discussions about secure tenure and access to land-issues. There is no doubt that we are willing to continue our international engagement next year at the RIO +10 summit in Johannesburg. We are convinced that our knowledge and our wide range of cultures and other human resources, mainly embedded in our technical commissions are strong enough to do both the acting on international and on regional level. Because we want to get closer to our clients and users we are more and more going to organize together with our colleagues Seminars and Conferences in the regions as we have done it here together with our Friends of Institutions of Surveying of Kenya and our Partners of Habitat, UNECA and the colleagues of ISPRS and ICA. And it is most impressing and demonstrating the importance of this conference how many sponsors have participated. I would like to thank them as well as — this is an additional sign of the significance of our event — the 6 FIG commissions which have supported and participated in the technical programme. I thank Commission 1 dealing with professionals standards and practice including ethical standards, Commission 2 dealing with education and training, Commission 3 the “think tank” for Spatial information infrastructure, Commission 5 the “classical” surveying commission, Commission 7 dealing with Cadastre,

Land Administration and Land Management, Commission 8 responsible for Urban and spatial planning including readjustment and finally Commission 10 dealing with Construction, economics and management.

This conference is an extraordinary example of our future strategy towards capacity building at regional and local level. The presence of so many colleagues of Kenya and more than 20 other african countries shows us that we should continue and strengthen this way. The strong participation of colleagues of the region can be achieved or at least facilitated by a strong member association like ISK. But the presence of the President of the Republic usually can hardly be influenced. It is simply a lucky chance for all of us and, Mister President, it confirms us to continue our efforts to improve the relationship between politics and surveying. It is a relationship of mutual benefit. Thank you very much indeed for your coming and your speech, Mr. President, and many thanks for your demonstrated esteem for the surveying profession and the representatives of the international family of surveyors.