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Workshop Informal Settlements 01/07/2007

By Chryssy Potsiou, chair FIG Commission 3: 'Spatial Information Management'

A workshop on "Spatial Information Management Toward Legalising Informal Urban Development", and "Informal Settlements – Real Estate Market Needs for Good Land Administration and Planning" took place in Sounio, Greece, from 28th to 31st March 2007. This was a joint workshop of FIG Commission 3 and the UN/ECE Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) and Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) and focused on informal or unplanned development, a topic of major importance for several countries worldwide. One objective of FIG Commission 3 is co-operation with international sister organisations; therefore a proposal was made to the UN/ECE WPLA Bureau, which agreed to include this activity as an extra function in its already-planned workshop calendar for 2007. The WPLA Bureau in turn invited participation of the UN/ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management.

Organisation

Local organisers were the Technical Chamber of Greece (TCG) and the Hellenic Association of Rural and Surveying Engineers (HARSE). The major sponsor was the Technical Chamber of Greece; others were the Attica Bank, Marathon Data Systems, the Region of Attika, the Municipality of Lavrio, the Municipality of Anavissos, and the Municipality of Palaia Phokea. In total, 130 distinguished delegates from 42 countries registered for the workshop. Welcoming addresses were given during the two opening sessions by TCG president Yannis Alavanos, HARSE president Chronis Akritidis, FIG president Prof. Stig Enemark, UN/ECE division director Kaj Barlund, chair of FIG Commission 3 Dr Chryssy Potsiou, FIG Commission 3 vice-chair of administration Makis Apostolatos, UN/ECE CHLM chair Doris Andoni, and chair of UN/ECE WPLA Peter Creuzer. Key speakers were Prof. Stig Enemark, director of Spatial Strategies Pty Ltd, Paul Kelly, and HUNAGI secretary-general Gabor Remetey.

Papers and Resolutions

A plenary session was held on "Policy makers for planning and land administration". Technical sessions addressed "Technical aspects for informal urban development monitoring and planning control", "Necessary tools for good land administration and planning", "Informal urban development", "Land policies for lower economies", "Land tools for planning and property registration", "Illegal urban development in the ECE", "e Governance - participatory democracy" and "Urban planning and property registration". Fifty papers were presented. Workshop resolutions will be available shortly. All papers, resolutions and discussions will be published in workshop final proceedings to be published on the FIG Commission 3 website.

FIG Commission 3

According to FIG Commission 3, delegate decisions and common understanding, all papers presented to FIG Commission 3 workshops are considered of great value and importance. To satisfy specific requests and to bring together experts from private- and public-sectors with academic members to jointly address issues of major importance, FIG Commission 3 initiated an optional, double-blind peer-review process for presenters of papers at this workshop. A number of FIG academic delegates provided peer review of papers, as requested by authors. For this and future FIG Commission 3 workshops, reviewers will not review their own papers or those originating from their own countries. Reviewers will be selected according to their expertise in the topic; papers accepted for peer review shall be the result of original research and shall not have been published previously. Twelve papers received successful peer review for this workshop. Other papers presented at the workshop may also include original research, information and ideas, but their authors did not select the peer-review process. Chryssy Potsiou, chair of FIG Commission 3 and Yerach Doytsher, head of the peer-review group, will serve as editors for any additional specific publications of peer-reviewed papers.

Follow-ups

This was the first FIG Commission 3 annual workshop and meeting in a series of three planned for the new term 2007-2010. The next workshop (follow-up) is planned for 18th to 21st February 2008 in Valencia, Spain, with the topic "Spatial Information toward Environmental Management of Mega Cities". More detailed information regarding local organisers and the specific topics will be published soon.

