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Managing Mega-cities 01/06/2008

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The year 2007 was a turning point in human history, as 50% of the world's population became urban. Rapid urbanisation is a phenomenon of our times. The speed and scale of current urban population growth generate challenges for surveyors, planners and governments. How can surveyors, through SDIs and good land administration, provide reliable spatial data and the means for environmental monitoring, development control, planning and good management of rapidly increasing urban areas? This question was the focus of discussions at the 2008 Workshop and Annual Meeting of FIG Commission 3 on 'Spatial Information Management towards Environmental Management of Mega -cities'. The event took place in Valencia, Spain, from 18th to 21st February 2008 as an integrated part of the Spanish IX National Congress of Surveying Engineers TOP-CART 2008.

The objectives of the Workshop were to:

- emphasise to authorities and society the role of SDIs at national and international level
- give colleagues the opportunity to meet again and share experience about new technologies and professional realities both within and beyond Spain's borders
- show our present and coming engineering profile
- enhance the need to make the property unit, in its widest sense, the main future of our profession as a core unit of national and regional SDIs
- promote the important role of our international associations, FIG and ISPRS, and their collaboration with sister associations like UN and World Bank
- spotlight an essential field, not only for our profession, but for society, the environment and quality of life
- emphasise the enormous humanitarian component of our profession.

More than 450 Spanish and 85 international delegates participated. There were three plenary sessions covering 'Cadastral, electronic administration and land management to support sustainable development', 'Cartography, Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing for the Benefit of Society' and 'Urban Planning Aspects and the Impacts of Rapid Urbanisation'. Keynote speakers were Jesus Miranda, general director of the Spanish Cadastre, Prof Stig Enemark, FIG president, Prof Ian Williamson, Prof Ian Dowman, ISPRS president, Alberto Sereno, general director of the National Cartographic Institute of Spain, Prof Agustin Pichel, Juan Antonio Altes Marti, head of the Urban Planning Department at Valencia City Hall, and Dr Chryssy A. Potsiou, chair of FIG Commission 3.

Invited speakers included Michael Gould, who addressed "the INSPIRE initiative and its Implications", Kevin Mooney, who talked about the "EuroSDR research activities in urban spatial-data collection, management and delivery", and Dr Ana Maria Cruz who presented "Results of the 2008 Natech Workshop: Assessing and Managing Natech Risks". Other distinguished delegates represented European cadastral and mapping agencies. A total of 124 papers were presented, 44 focusing on the Commission 3 specific topic.

Resolutions from the Workshop will be made available at the FIG website. A specific publication presenting peer-reviewed papers will be put out by the journal SaLIS. The next workshop (a follow-up) will be held in Germany in February 2009, on 'Spatial Information for Sustainable Management of Urban Areas'.

Prof Pedro Cavero, Chair of the Organising Committee
 Dr Chryssy A Potsiou, Chair FIG Commission 3 - Spatial Information Management

