

# Opening Speech by the Bavarian Minister President Dr. Edmund Stoiber at the 23rd International FIG Congress on 10 October 2006 in Munich

Bavarian Minister President Dr. Edmund STOIBER

Ladies and Gentlemen

Welcome to Bavaria! It gives me great pleasure that after

- the Football World Cup, and
- the visit of the Pope in his native land

a further event in Munich is attracting international attention. I welcome you most warmly to the 23<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Surveyors. I particularly welcome as visitors to Munich the many guests from other countries. Even Bavaria does not every day see a Congress with 15,000 participants from over 100 countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the need for surveying data and geoinformation is greatly increasing at the present time:

- **Cadastrés** and **land registers** are being established in many **African** countries in order to clarify property relationships.
- **China** is undertaking comprehensive political initiatives on **village renewal** and **land consolidation**. This is a gigantic task when it is considered that 70% of the population live in rural areas and that there are 800,000 villages. I am acquainted with this situation from our Bavarian partner region Shandong.
- **Europe** is making every effort with the **Galileo Satellite System** to provide a convincing answer to the American GPS-System.
- Environmental warning systems against **Tsunamis** are being installed with substantial German assistance before the coasts of **South-East Asia**.

These examples make one thing very clear:

They show the important tasks which surveyors, land developers and geo-information scientists fulfil throughout the world. Their functions provide the indispensable foundations for legal, economic and technical activities.

Surveyors in Bavaria and Germany make an exceptional contribution to the development of our country – in State surveying offices, in authorities for rural development, in towns, in private practice or in universities and in research. And I know that they enjoy a high reputation both at home and in other countries.

There is hardly an aspect of human life to which the surveying profession has not made a contribution. **Galileo Galilei** (1564-1642) at the time of the renaissance already insisted:

*“What can be measured, must be measured, what cannot be measured, must be made measurable.”*

The International Association of Surveyors (FIG)

seeks today to realise this aspiration more and more fully. It is an organisation which functions at a high level of competence:

- The FIG promotes **progress in surveying**.
- The FIG supports **international cooperation**. It represents 113 States and is recognised by the **United Nations** as a non-governmental organisation (NGO).
- The FIG plays its part in the **wide spectrum of activities** in the practice of the surveyors profession.
- And it promotes **dialogue** with academics, with professional practice, with citizens and with politics.

The FIG has the benefit of 128 years experience in carrying out its functions. Surveyors have a long tradition of international cooperation. They were already thinking in terms of world wide contexts before concepts such as “globalisation” and “internationalisation” penetrated the general consciousness. It is significant that the FIG was founded in Paris as early as 1878. Germany was already active at that time as one of the five founder States.

The FIG has in the last four years had a German leader. The German Presidency now comes to an end with this Congress and the simultaneous “Intergeo” Trade Fair. I congratulate the German President, Professor Holger Magel from the Technical University Munich, on his very successful term of office. Professor Magel, you have been influential in your sphere far beyond the boundaries of Germany and you were always a good ambassador for Bavaria. For this you deserve my thanks and recognition.

The German Presidency decided to hold its concluding Congress in Munich. You are consequently meeting in Bavaria.

I should like to give you a short presentation of my country: Bavaria is one of the 16 constituent Länder or States of Germany. Bavaria has however enjoyed its own identity as a State for over 1,000 years. And in the context of the German understanding of Federalism we continue to enjoy a separate Statehood.

Bavaria with its 70,553 square kilometres is the size of Ireland. Our population of 12.4 million is larger than that of States such as Sweden, Belgium and Greece. And in economic power Bavaria is one of the leading countries in Germany and in the whole of Europe. Our per capita gross national product (GNP) is over 32,000 Euro.

The federal structure of Germany gives Bavaria far-reaching political freedom of action. And we make good use of it. Characteristics of Bavarian Policies are:

## 1. High-Tech-Orientation

Bavaria is an internationally recognised centre for progress and innovation. **The promotion of High-Tech is a major feature of Bavarian economic policy.** Revenue of over 4 billion Euro from privatisation measures has over the last ten years been invested in science and research. Expenditure on research and development at 3% of the gross national product lies at the top end of the scale internationally. Bavaria belongs to those regions of the world which have the highest research effort.

A further development and extension of the Bavarian high-tech policy results from a systematically pursued **cluster strategy**. This means that we seek a closer link between the economic sector and research in important fields of growth. Integrated structures are set up which bundle the know-how of the participating companies, universities and research institutions and effectively translates it into production and procedural innovation.

The cluster policy is a countrywide initiative which covers the entire area of Bavaria. It has a strong regional orientation. The whole of Bavaria with all its various parts should participate in a heightened innovation and development dynamic. Cluster policy consequently also constitutes regional economic policy. It also increases the development potential in rural areas.

The economic sector in Bavaria profits from this strategy. The many foreign companies which have established bases in Bavaria also profit from this. In recent years over 1,000 foreign enterprises have established a base here.

## 2nd Characteristic: Education and Training

Companies find here **well qualified personnel**. We have particularly high aims in the field of education and training. International studies, such as the PISA Study, show that the Bavarian schools are among the best in the world.

Our eleven universities and 17 technical universities enjoy a high reputation and need not fear comparison with other countries. Our universities and technical universities consequently attract students from all over the world. This is particularly true for engineering and natural sciences.

## 3rd Characteristic: Healthy Solid State Finances

National debt has reached an ominous level in many countries in the world. This means that today's generation is living at the cost of future generations. David Ricardo, one of the first great economists, described national debt as *one of the worst scourges to plague a nation which has ever been found*.

We in Bavaria have stopped the march toward the deeply indebted State: in this year we have achieved a balanced budget. This means that from 2006 onwards we will incur no new debts! Bavaria is the only German Land which has so far succeeded in balancing its budget.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Characteristic: Land Development**

A strong shift of population from rural areas into overcrowded conurbations can be observed throughout the world. This can lead to undesirable developments – both in the **metropolises** and in **rural areas**.

In the last decades in Bavaria good and equal prospects for its people have been achieved in all regions. In the future also we want to continue the positive development of the competitive capability, the quality of life and future perspectives for rural areas. We want a good functioning cooperation between town and country, an equal partnership.

One of the principal instruments for this is our **Land Development Programme**. It is the determining connection between political aims and the concrete implementation of practical measures. I should like to emphasise two leading principles of the Land Development Programme:

On the one hand we have firmly embedded the aim of equal living and working conditions in urban and rural areas. We shall keep permanently to this in any event.

On the other we have given priority in principle to individual rural areas where development should be particularly promoted. This means that we place clear political priorities in the support of structurally weaker areas

#### **5. Characteristic: International Relations**

The future in politics, in the economy, in science and in society cannot be considered or shaped today without a look at the wider international dimensions. As much as we in Bavaria are deeply attached to our country and maintain our traditions, so also we place great importance on intensive exchanges with partners throughout the world. It is our concern to ensure the international competitiveness of Bavaria and to make our country an attractive Partner in the world

In Europe we particularly foster cooperation with the new member States of the European Union in Central and South-East Europe and with those countries which are progressing towards European integration. It is for us a matter of course that we strongly support the transformation processes. Your contribution is important here, for example in the context of regional planning or in the liberalisation of real estate markets.

For some years we have also been working more closely with **regions overseas**. The heads of government of Bavaria, Quebec, Upper Austria, Shangdong in China, West Cape in South

Africa and Sao Paulo meet regularly. Questions are discussed which affect us all. In fields such as health or renewable energy we have been able to develop a significant degree of co-operation. Through this cooperation we procure for ourselves reciprocal advantages in global competition. You, Herr Professor Töpfer, were a guest at the last meeting at Linz in Upper Austria in July 2006.

This Congress is also an important contribution to international contacts which are now so necessary. I am pleased that we have been able here to offer a good forum to 15,000 guests from all over the world. I wish the Congress and the “Intergeo” Trade Fair much success, and I wish all participants interesting discussions and an enjoyable time in Munich!