

GOODWILL MESSAGE TO THE 36TH ASPNG CONGRESS (JULY 2002) FROM THE PNG INSTITUTE OF VALUERS AND LAND ADMINISTRATORS

By: Smyly Bannerman, President, PNG Institute of Valuers and Land Administrators

Mr Chairman, The President of the ASPNG, Councillors of the ASPNG, Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen, I bring greetings and goodwill from the PNG Institute of Valuers and Land Administrators (PNGIVLA) to the members and participants of the 36th ASPNG Congress.

The PNGIVLA has over the years had a very close and strong association with the ASPNG. Professionally, we are all allied land professionals and our professional duties are often interrelated. This close association culminated in the hosting of a joint conference at this venue in 2000. It is our hope that this joint conference was not just a one-off event, rather the start of a new era of co-operation and mutual understanding between the two associations.

Mr Chairman, the PNGIVLA shares the concerns of the ASPNG as expressed in the theme of this year's Congress - SURVEYORS NEED FOR PROGRESS/CHANGE IN THE 21ST CENTURY. This theme is one that should be seriously considered by all professional associations throughout PNG. In effect, every professional association should critically examine itself and consider the need for change and progress in the new century. Such progress and change should lead to better service for our clients and the country at large. On its part, the PNGIVLA is ready to assist and co-operate with the ASPNG in its drive for progress and change. The major duties and responsibilities of our members are intertwined with those of the Surveyors. The survival of one group depends on the survival of the other. It is on account of this interdependence that the PNGIVLA is very much interested in the proceedings of this Congress. Some of the recommendations made by this Congress will have to be taken seriously and possibly implemented by the PNGIVLA as well.

Mr Chairman, let me also take this opportunity to invite participants of this Congress to the PNGIVLA Conference to be held at the Melanesian Hotel from 16th to 18th August this year. The theme of our conference is CUSTOMARY LAND ISSUES IN PNG. Although this might seem to be a much-discussed topic, the PNGIVLA strongly believes that past governments have not taken the country's land problems seriously. Land matters have been discussed in the public domain in a very emotional manner. The PNGIVLA believes that professional and technical views on land matters, should lead all such discussions. We have specifically chosen this topic to coincide with the formation of a new government and we hope to set the land agenda for any new government, hence the timing and selection of the conference theme.

Issues to be discussed at the conference include customary land dispute settlement, customary land survey, customary land mobilisation, customary land registration, customary land valuation and customary land legislation. The PNGIVLA would welcome any papers by participants at this Congress on Customary land survey and any other customary land issues. Members of the ASPNG are also cordially invited to attend this conference.

Mr Chairman, the theme of this year's ASPNG Congress is indeed a thought provoking one and I would like to share a few thoughts on the topic:

GLOBALISATION AND THE SURVEYING PROFESSION IN PNG – TIME FOR PROGRESS AND POSITIVE CHANGE.

The main issues, which have been in the forefront of the international agenda and have been the main global drivers for change in the spatial information world, have been GLOBALISATION, TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT. These issues have not only set a global agenda but have also highlighted the importance of the surveying profession to economic development, environmental management and social stability. Of particular interest to all professionals in developing countries, is the issue of globalisation. The Rio Declaration of 1992 on Environment and Development summarised the magnitude of these challenges facing us and advocated " a global partnership for sustainable development " to meet those challenges. This is the issue which I will address as it affects all professionals everywhere, more particularly allied land professionals in PNG. Globalisation, as used in everyday language refers to "a growing web of trade and investments between and among nations, bringing economies into close proximity – and drawing societies and cultures along in the process".

To most of us, globalisation is an issue for the economists and politicians to deal with. We rather need to ask about the impact of globalisation on our professions. This will afford us the opportunity to appreciate and understand the role of various professionals in the globalisation process and accept the fact that it is time for change or progress in our various professions. There is no doubt that the market for the services of surveyors is worldwide. There is no human activity, which does not involve the use of land, in its broadest sense, and, increasingly, our clients have international interests. In addition, pressure is also being generated by the WTO, which provides the framework for free trade in professional services. Surveying, as a profession needs to respond to these changes and pressures.

In addressing the issue of globalisation as it affects our professions, it is important to first of all examine changes in the surveying profession over the last few years. Base Mapping has been and will continue to be the prime interest of most traditional surveyors. This, in the past, had been divided into very specialised interests:

- i. Control – provided by the Surveyor
- ii. Map manuscripts provided by the photogrammetrist
- iii. Thematic content provided by a specialist
- iv. Map layout, printing and distribution undertaken by the Cartographer

New surveying and mapping tools have totally changed the old concept. Such tools include total stations, GPS, orthophoto mapping, digital plotting and satellite remote sensing. This is progress and it is heartening to note that the surveying profession in PNG has kept abreast with these changes and can therefore be said to be progressive. But this is not the end of the chain. Globalisation means more than just accepting new technology and adapting or using new technology. Globalisation has become more of a decision on efficiency and cost rather than the use of a modern technology.

In PNG, the surveyor is often wrongly taken as the one with the narrowest scope of operations. However, in reality, he is the one with the highest appreciation of the country's biggest problem – land tenure and security of land tenure. Given the complexity and diversity of land issues in PNG, it would be absurd for any single professional association to limit itself only to a particular aspect or attempt single-handedly to capture every aspect, much less prescribe solutions. On the other hand, shying away from the holistic approach, just because of the scale of the task, is no longer an option. Two years ago, the PNGIVLA and ASPNG took the initiative in organising a joint conference at this same venue. At the end of the conference, the general consensus was that there was the need to continue such joint sessions, but what do we see now. Every association is going its own way because we still believe in our individual associations and do not want to accept the need for progress and change. In effect, we do not want to accept the notion of globalisation. We must accept the fact that many of the problems that we face today in PNG are a by-product of the process of globalisation. Yet globalisation also holds the key to solving these problems, because it has the capacity to unlock new sources of wealth in the country and around the world.

I would venture to simplify the theme of this year's congress into a simple question:

"The world is rapidly changing in many ways, how should surveying and allied land professions adapt to these changes?"

In attempting to answer this question, it is essential to understand the changing relationship between people and land over the centuries, and the effect on land management. Most of the land issues have come about as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the growth of cities. The need for efficiency has often led to these changes. In PNG, surveyors have played a very significant role in opening up the country. Surveyors' expertise has been required in construction, road building, mining and petroleum activities and general development. Surveyors have also supported urban planning and land development. This period can be described as the golden era for surveying. However, the changing world and changing technology will inevitably result in changes to the profession. The lessons from the past seem to suggest that change is continuous and inevitable.

New technologies and globalisation however would lead to a diversification of these traditional activities. With the emergence of geospatial information technologies, the surveying profession as we know it today may soon become fragmented or may be consumed by geospatial information specialists or the geomatic engineers. These are the current trends and we need to be prepared to accommodate these new changes. The profession seems to be dominated by the traditional cadastral surveyor to the detriment of other existing and emerging opportunities for the profession.

The options for the surveying profession in the light of the foregoing are many. In attempting to define the role of the surveyor in the foreseeable future, it is important to realize that we will be part of a global world and will continue to live in a virtual world with society being mobile; where the private sector will permeate all activities. To meet these new challenges, the surveying profession must provide new levels of management skills with an interdisciplinary focus in order to build the identity of the profession up to that of a profession dealing in land management, rather than simply land measurement. The surveying profession must see opportunity in developments like the advance of technologies, globalization, privatization, and sustainable development. Too many of us see a threat in these developments while others fail to recognise the relevance of them for

our various professions. Too often, people question the future of individual land related professional associations. The future is rich in opportunity if the various land professions will embrace this broader role. Globalization of services is not a threat. It should be seen as an opportunity and as a demand for professionals to develop new means and tools to meet the challenges of the future. This will imply a new profession incorporating measurement science, spatial information science and land administration and land management. Although these professions are currently fragmented, there is the increasing recognition that they must amalgamate to get stronger.

This calls for a new approach to our professional duties. The first step in this new positive change is to improve and enhance our professional competence. "Professional competence" is not the same as "competence to perform a task". Professional competence can be broken down into four component parts, which can be applied to all surveyors and allied land professionals:

1. Knowledge competence - "the possession of appropriate technical and/or business knowledge and the ability to apply this in practice";
2. Cognitive competence - "the abilities to solve technical and/or business related problems effectively using high level thinking skills, to produce specific outcomes";
3. Business competence - "the abilities to understand the wider business context within which the professional is practising and to manage client expectations in a pro-active manner";
4. Ethical and personal behavioural competence - "the possession of appropriate personal and professional values and behaviours and the ability to make sound judgments when confronted with ethical dilemmas in a professional context". (Kinnie et al. 2000)

Globalisation of services is a topical issue and it is on the very top of the international agenda. Globalization of services is not a threat. It should be seen as an opportunity and as a demand for ASPNG and allied land professional associations to develop new ways and means to meet the challenges of the future. We need to respond to these challenges and this is the least society expects of us as professionals. If we are to succeed in this global village as an association, then we must make sure, that we are up to date and hopefully ahead of what is going on internationally regarding globalization of service sector.

I will conclude by with this statement made by Professor Ian Williamson of the University of Melbourne at the 39th Australian Surveyors Congress: "*Change is constant and inevitable, and as a result, the surveying profession must change to survive and grow. However, the underlying philosophy of the profession, that is, the relationship between measurement and land, has not changed. This is the strength and strategic advantage of the surveying profession. While the traditional image of the profession must change for the survival of its members, there must be great optimism about the future. At the same time, the importance of cadastre and parcel based land information has never been stronger. The profession has an excellent opportunity to build on its traditional cadastral strengths to ensure it remains at the forefront of spatial information developments. While there should be great optimism about the future of the profession, such a vision will only be achieved by those who understand its history, understand what is happening in the world around us, recognise that change is constant and inevitable and reach out to grasp the opportunities.*"

Mr Chairman, once again, on behalf of the PNGIVLA, I wish you a very successful Congress.

Thank you.

REFERENCES:

Williamson, I. P. (1998): "Cadastral Reform and the Future of the Surveying Profession". Proceedings of the 39th Australian Surveyors Congress, Launceston, Tasmania, Nov. 1998, Pg. 305-322.

Kinnie, T. et. al, (2000): "Assessment of Professional Competence – A draft Framework for Assuring Consistency of Assessment", RICS, UK.

Einemark, S. (2001): "Land Administration Infrastructures for Sustainable Development" 7th UN Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (UNRCCA).