

Surveyors Role in Delineation and Demarcation of International Land Boundaries

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Key words: International, boundaries, delineation, demarcation.

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the surveyors' role in processes leading to the delineation of International Land Boundaries, as a technical advisor to the boundary makers, who are statesmen, politicians, diplomats, lawyers, etc., whose background is very seldom in geodetic science or geomatics. It is the task of the surveyors to "bring the terrain" to the negotiating room and to provide the negotiators with maximum geographical information. It is also the task of the surveyor to assist the formulation of the delineation document in order to avoid ambiguities in interpretation during demarcation operations and later, in boundary management.

The demarcation, or the transfer of the delineation document to the terrain, is almost purely a technical operation, carried out jointly by the surveyors, acting as boundary engineers, of both parties. The result is a record of great importance in avoiding future disputes.

Two prominent examples are discussed, namely the delineation and demarcation of the Iraq-Kuwait boundary by the United Nations, with the aid of Swedish and New Zealand experts, and of the Israel-Jordan boundary by the parties involved.

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