



Microsoft's UltraCam Osprey.

## Oblique Aerial Images to Upgrade Mexican Maps

GeoAir, an aerial mapping company, took vertical and oblique aerial images to upgrade maps for 15 municipalities in the State of Mexico, one of the 31 states of Mexico. GeoAir used the Microsoft UltraCam Osprey to take both required types of images at once, which allowed the company to halve costs and improve efficiency while obtaining accurate, high-quality images for the Instituto de Información e Investigación Geográfica, Estadística y Catastral del Estado de México (IGECEM).

► <http://bit.ly/1FSkmTT>

## Survey-grade 3D Point Clouds without GNSS for Efficient Rail Maintenance

Leica Geosystems has released SiTrack:One, a highly accurate rail track maintenance and refurbishment system incorporating the Leica ScanStation P40 to generate 3D point clouds. SiTrack:One ensures complete coverage of the entire rail infrastructure surface without the need to receive GNSS signals for position information. With a mounting design, this total solution for rail maintenance and refurbishment produces synchronised engineering and survey-grade 3D point clouds for accurate as-built drawings.

► <http://bit.ly/1FSk3IO>



SiTrack:One.

## Social Justice



"Let us strive to build a world of social justice where all people can live and work in freedom, dignity and equality," Ban Ki-moon said in his message for 2015 on the World Day of Social Justice. What did the eighth secretary-general of the United Nations mean by 'social justice'? His message for 2014 provides the answer: "Circumstances such as where a person is born, where they live or their gender and ethnicity should never determine their income or their opportunities for quality education, basic healthcare, decent work, adequate shelter, access to drinking water, political participation or living free from threatened, or actual, physical violence." Discrimination, low income, poor health, lack of personal and professional development opportunities, vulnerability and insecurity are among the many faces of extreme poverty.

"The phenomenon of extreme poverty is not new. Poverty was the natural lot of a large section of the world's population. It is improbable that an accelerated rate of development will come about spontaneously. Before the Industrial Revolution, production everywhere was predominantly based on agriculture and crafts, and there was not much international division of labour. As industrial activity spread, developed countries tended to concentrate on the production of capital goods. The increasing gap in well-being between the developed and the less-developed countries is one of today's most important global problems. The world is in desperate need of policies. Those policies must be based not only on a wide range of interests and a long-term view of the future, but also on a broad view of the relative merits of various socio-economic systems. Our aim must be to find the best system without reference to preconceived

ideas. To choose, on doctrinaire grounds, a sub-optimal system would be stupid. Some activities are best carried out by public means while others can best be handled by private means. Incomes cannot all be equal, but extreme inequality disrupts the team spirit in society to such an extent as to be highly dangerous, aside from being contrary to humanitarian principles. The persistence of poverty must be attributed partly to the functioning of the socio-economic system itself. A low capital stock implies a low level of production, and so of income. But a low income does not permit large savings, and hence the capital stock cannot easily be increased. Low incomes depress the level of nutrition and do not permit sufficient medical services to maintain good health. Ill health in turn suppresses personal efforts in production and may limit productivity. Low incomes do not permit extensive educational facilities and, with inadequate education, skill and productivity levels will tend to remain low. Future socio-economic policies should be based on the interests of the world at large, which must be stated in terms of certain well-defined aims. These aims and the most important means to be used should be specified by the United Nations. The means consist of a number of institutions and instruments, at various levels: international, national and local. The degree of centralisation and the types of political instruments to be used should be pragmatically determined, so as to best serve the interests at stake. Efficiency and solidarity should form the cornerstones of international policy. Efficiency means that an effort is made to determine the best means of reaching clearly defined goals; an efficient policy requires systematic planning, partly at a world level. Solidarity means an element of common responsibility and a regard for the well-being of groups, as contrasted to individual members."

The above (rephrased) statements were written over half a century ago. I selected them from the book *Shaping the World Economy – Suggestions for an International Economic Policy*, published in 1962 by the Twentieth Century Fund, New York. The principle author was Dr Jan Tinbergen, a Dutch economist, who was awarded the first Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel in 1969. Over 50 years have since passed. Have they all been in vain? ▲