

Welcome-Address

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I should like to extend a very warm welcome to all those present from Western and Eastern Europe at this international symposium of the "International Federation of Surveyors" (FIG Fédération Internationale des Géomètres). The Munich Technical University once again proves to be a university of international fame and a European and global platform for sharing ideas and scientific know-how.

May I take this opportunity to thank the Vice President of the FIG, Professor Dr. Magel, for organising this symposium. The purpose of this meeting is to develop basic concepts which, on the one hand, are to be presented to the FAO for drawing up "global guidelines for land consolidation practice" and, on the other hand, are to be passed on to the World Bank.

Bavaria and Munich are indeed the right place when it comes to **relations with our neighbouring countries in Eastern Europe**. Ever since major political changes took place in Europe in 1989/90 we have maintained intensive relations with just about all of these countries both at an economic and at a cultural level. For a whole decade now we have been making our knowledge and know-how available to our neighbouring countries. It is our wish to accompany and encourage them on their path to a market economy and into the European Union. I therefore wish to extend a particularly warm welcome to those participants from the **14 Central and Eastern European states**.

This symposium will be dealing with the **sustainable development of rural areas**. To provide the best possible conditions for such a development, the political authorities require extensive data to which they can refer. Today, official basic **geological data** are an economic asset and are essential for ensuring a sustainable future. It is therefore paramount for every modern state to have a **well-organised surveying department**.

And there is also a second aspect which is of utmost importance – the **legal certainty of property in land**. This is essential for long-term plans and investments.

After the time of fundamental political change and the transformation process, sustainable development has become a major issue in Eastern Europe. Bavaria, too, has actively and intensively pursued this issue over the past decade and continues to do so today. We have a long, yet successful path behind us. And in Bavaria today, our guiding motto is: **The rural area forms the shape of the future**.

Which decisive developments have led to this conclusion? First of all it was the definite decision that the rural area is an **active area in its own right** and with its own potential. It is not just an escape area, resting or recreation area for the urban population, not merely a rear or standby area. For us in Bavaria it was never solely an area for agricultural production. The rural area was and still is considered **part of our culture**, it was and still is a cultural landscape, it was and still is the **backbone of Bavaria, which is also the area where the majority of the Bavarian population live and work.**

It was not always easy enforcing this concept and the appreciation of the rural area as such. In the course of industrialisation and the economic miracle there was a massive move of the population into the big cities. The rural area was at risk of being left out and there was a threat that its population would age drastically.

The Bavarian State Government has always actively opposed this trend. We introduced programmes to counteract this negative trend and to actually turn it around. Let me briefly outline the course of development here in Bavaria.

A key factor in the sustainable development of the rural area was the **massive development and expansion of the education system.** We selectively located schools leading up to university entrance, universities and technical colleges in rural areas, to put a stop to young people moving away. Today, no young person living in peripheral areas has to move out of his or her home area to get an education. On the contrary: By expanding the higher education system, we have brought people from all over Germany to Bavaria, where they are thoroughly enjoying themselves.

More recently, we have **relocated government authorities** from Munich, Nuremberg or Augsburg to rural areas and this has generated jobs at highly qualified and senior levels. Our motto was to **relieve highly urbanised regions and strengthen rural areas.**

After the war, the iron curtain cut off many transport routes from Bavaria to Thuringia, Saxony and Bohemia. **Improvement in the transport infrastructure** was absolutely essential for the development of rural areas. Extensive upgrading work at all levels of the Bavarian road network, from motorways down to federal highways and local roads has been a tremendous boost to the once structurally weak rural areas which are now linked to the highly urbanised regions.

Bavaria is a state with a large rural population. To strengthen this area it is necessary to set up business clusters throughout the state, which are interlinked by efficient transport routes. It can be generally said that without the fast expansion of the transport infrastructure in the rural areas, Bavaria could not have developed so rapidly from an agricultural state to the High-Tech state it is today.

Since the fall of the iron curtain, Bavaria has become a **hub for trans-European transport flows**. With the eastward enlargement of the EU, these flows will increase even further. Improvements to the transport infrastructure therefore remain a high-priority task.

To achieve sustainability in rural areas we also launched a well-considered **regional support programme**. This support is strictly limited to structurally weak rural areas. Highly urbanised areas are exempt from this scheme. With this regional programme we can support investments for creating new jobs up to a maximum of 28 %.

In recent years, new **cross-border schemes** with Austria and the Czech Republic have been introduced. These activities are also supported by EU funds, from the Community initiative, **Leader plus**, for example, or the **Interreg** programme. In a Europe which is moving together, we attach particular importance to cross-border schemes with the Czech Republic, for instance. Especially because here, areas which were separated for over forty years must join up again, both economically and regarding transport.

Another major objective was to preserve our **farming landscape throughout the state of Bavaria**, also in areas which are disadvantaged by nature. This is because it is only possible to preserve a 'cultural' landscape in those areas where farmers work to cultivate the land.

Measures for reaching this goal included extensive **land consolidation**, to make our farmers more competitive. Further assistance came from the **Bavarian cultural landscape programme**. It has since become one of the biggest agricultural-environmental programmes in Europe. With this programme we reward supplementary ecological achievements in agriculture on 60 % of the agricultural land which makes up approximately two million hectares.

We have additionally launched a **village renewal programme**. This is an extremely successful project. Within the framework of this programme we have provided approximately 800 million Euro as financial support for improving the working and living conditions of citizens in rural areas during the past 20 years. These funds have triggered further investments amounting to over 2 billion Euro. And this again has generated work for many small and medium-sized crafts and trades in the rural areas. Already over 1 400 village renewal schemes have been completed. There are approximately 1 800 villages actively participating in the programme at present. 2 700 more villages are on the waiting list. Approximately 800 000 citizens in Bavaria have benefited from this village renewal scheme to date.

The village renewal scheme is an **independent and long-term task of structural policy** in rural areas. The village renewal scheme also generates **democratic processes** and encourages the **identification of the people with their domestic environment**, which is very important.

One of the success strategies of the Bavarian village renewal program is to be seen in the **involvement of the citizens** in what's going on. **Citizen participation** in the development of ideas and plans and also in the implementation process is a key aspect of village renewal schemes. We have always attached great importance to citizen participation.

A sustainable development in rural areas, however, does not only involve measures of structural policy, but also the **information and advice given to the citizens**. And we are continuing to boost rural areas through

- increased use of renewable energy and renewable raw materials;
- reactivation of regional product cycles which cover shorter distances and establish closer ties between farmers and customers;
- decentralised public utilities, energy-conserving building techniques and promotion schemes for solar energy. Some villages are to be highly praised in this respect. In Lower Bavaria, which is where I come from, the village of Windberg, for example, has the second highest rate of solar energy of all Bavarian municipalities.
- Another major objective is the **reduction of land use**. Currently, 26 hectares of agricultural land is being reallocated for non-agricultural purposes every day. A sustainable development must be aimed towards selective use of existing land and buildings. We cannot reproduce land, as we well know. Greater importance will therefore be attached **to land and facility management**, particularly in a state like Bavaria, where there is a high rate of influx every year.

All these activities led to a stop in the depopulation of rural areas during the eighties. In my homeland of Lower Bavaria, for example, figures on the past twenty years show that there has been an increase in migration.

Currently there are **two major developments** which constitute both a challenge and an opportunity for rural areas. On the one hand we have globalisation and internationalisation. These, however, actually promote **regionalism** as a counter-reaction. In comparison to twenty years ago, people today are more aware of the meaning of terms such as homeland, having roots and ties and being settled in a familiar environment. Regionalism is therefore an opportunity for the rural area to establish a counter-pole to globalisation. And this is where the **principle of subsidiarity** is best implemented. I am therefore not at all worried about the outlook for the rural areas of Bavaria.

Globalisation is moving us more quickly into a **service and knowledge society**. It lives from human resources, from the close network between research, development and business. High-Tech clusters are forming, which attract many young people. This form of society is unfolding especially in **urban areas**. People working here tend to be centered around a town. Service providers, information and communications enterprises,

High-Tech companies from abroad which set up locations in Bavaria, all aim for the cities and the surrounding areas. On the other hand, modern technologies make it possible for people to work from home. It is now possible again, at least in some cases, to combine one's place of residence with the place where one works. The key word in this respect is tele-jobs.

Bavaria also supports the rural area with its **High-Tech-Offensive**, a campaign to encourage the recruitment of High-Tech businesses and to provide highly qualified jobs also in these areas. We are confident that in the so-called third phase of industrialisation, we can maintain the **rural area** as an **active space** with all its **qualities**.

This was just a brief look at the Bavarian way for establishing sustainable development in rural areas. And it has proved to be successful. Each country must, of course, make its own decision on the best course of action to take under the prevailing conditions. However, countries can learn from each other. We live in a world where learning from each other is a prime necessity. This is also one of the purposes of this congress.

An American future research scientist once said at the beginning of the eighties that "*at the beginning of the third millennium, living in the country will be our future way of life*".

Against the background of the rapid growth in the world's population, although this no longer applies to Europe, the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan said some time ago that "*the twenty first century will see us entering the millennium of the cities*".

These two statements couldn't be more different. Here in Europe it is not the sharp contrast between urban and rural areas we must be concerned about, but the synergies that can develop between them. Each area, both urban and rural, has its own individual quality, its own value. There is a constant exchange going on between urban and rural areas. A continuous giving and taking, where one side always complements the other. It is important to develop a strategy from which both will benefit. There should be no losers.

Both - urban and rural - areas require a stimulus every now and again. A momentum from inside to help unfold their own potential, strength and capabilities, and also incentives from outside, from the government and from the science sector to boost their development.

An intensive dialogue between politics and science is essential. Symposiums of this kind are ideal venues for such a dialogue. At these events politics is looking for suggestions on how to reassess concepts or develop completely new ideas.

I am delighted therefore that the world congress of the FIG is also to be held in Munich in 2006, which will be in Germany for the first time. In 2006 the **modern** Bavaria will be celebrating its 200th anniversary. And it was a good 200 years ago that Bavaria also set up its first surveying department. Munich is definitely the right venue for your World Congress in 2006.

May I thank Professor Magel once again for all his efforts in connection with this congress. I hope you will all enjoy these few days in Munich and that you will be able to benefit from the give and take process which acts as fuel to the field of science. Please take some new ideas back home with you and pass them on to the political circles of your own countries.