

Program Director
Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel

**Welcome Speech
at Land Management Master Program's 2004 – 2006
Graduation Ceremony on 29 March 2006**

Mrs. Vice President, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Master Students

It's a **happy** day today for all of us – especially for you, dear Master Students, because your dreams become reality, for your families and employers, for our Centre of Land Management and Land Tenure and, Mrs. Vice President, for our University:

We are going to graduate new Masters of Science in Land Management and Land Tenure with a diploma of the TOP University in Munich and we will say good-bye to new friends and alumni of TUM, but also – that's my hope – to new friends and ambassadors of our country! Therefore, that's a happy day also for Germany and Bavaria.

Dear Master Students, this is a **proud** day for you and for your lecturers:

The academic goals could be achieved by hard work, big enthusiasm and mutual affection. As responsible Program Director let me, therefore, thank both the very likeable students and the lecturers of TUM and from abroad, and especially my staff. And let me finally thank three central friends and pillars of this Master Program:

- the TUM, i.e. its President, council and the Dean of our faculty

- the DAAD who has paid for the travel costs and living conditions for a lot of students
- the Förderkreis Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung München with all its private sponsors, who has paid the tuition fees for the DAAD scholarship holders.

I'm happy to mention and to thank also GTZ, Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung and the Bayerische Staatskanzlei for manifold supports.

Ladies and Gentlemen, every year at the Welcome or at least at the Graduation Ceremony we have tried to explain and to underline the background and importance of this Master Program Land Management and Land Tenure – also the benefits for our own teaching and researching and for better mutual understanding. And, once again, I can assure you, that we really could learn a lot from our students and their thinking, cultural background, spirituality and religiosity for example.

Let me demonstrate an example: In times of a very weakly growing gross domestic product in Germany we still are only focussed on how we can increase this GDP again. Is this really the only right way? Read e.g. the master thesis of our student from Bhutan and you can learn what the 4th King of Bhutan has said: “Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross Domestic Product.” Against the background of increasing discussions in our political parties and governments about the need of values and ethics – I refer to the most attracting attention speech of Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel at the Catholic Academy in Munich in November 2005 – it could be worth to reflect what Bhutan people are aiming at: “Development should be understood as a process that seeks to maximize the growth of **human happiness**.”

We should aim at holistic development of the society that includes both economic and social, and that **equal importance is given to spiritual, emotional and cultural needs** on one hand and material well-being of the society on the other hand.”

Although it is a very bad and widespread phenomenon we are happy – and this is my second example – that our Master Program can provide our students with knowledge, methods, instruments and social skills in the field of land conflicts- and dispute-resolution. Travelling through the world as current FIG President I’m more and more confronted with increasing forced evictions of farmers and with increasing poverty of landless people either e.g. in China or in African or South American countries. European and especially German methods and instruments of urban and rural development, land readjustment and sustainable land management are at least a model or reference which should be reflected and - if necessary and fitting – individually adapted to the home countries of our students. There must be a reason why Land Management is now offered also by other university international master programs like e.g. at ITC in the Netherlands.

Let me conclude with a third example: Three weeks ago I chaired the 5th FIG Regional Conference for Africa in Ghana with more than 650 experts from 50 countries, amongst them 20 African countries. The topic was “Promoting Land Administration and Good Governance”. It was exactly one central topic of our TUM Master Program. Therefore, it was quite **clear** that I could meet all Ghanaian TUM alumni in Accra, who are working in this field and who asked me to greet you, Mr. President, and all honourable guests. Originally, it was not so **clear** to me that the “official” Ghana and all universities were so much interested in these topics that even

the Prime Minister and the President of the National House of Chiefs and some Vice Chancellors of universities actively participated in the conference. Land Administration is a main topic in Ghana – that's the reason why we have started cooperation with KNUST.

WB and some other international donors have spent millions of dollars for this project together with German GTZ, KfW and even Bavarian survey consultants!

The "official" Ghana was present at the opening ceremony – but not the German Embassy. When the embassy staff saw the reports and pictures of the conference in TV and in the newspapers, the ambassador asked the FIG President for a courtesy call. Why do I mention this story? You will understand it when I tell you the end of the story: After the courtesy call – together with the Bavarian consultant – the comment of the embassy was as follows: "We didn't know before how important this issue Land Administration and Land Management really is for the country. Now we know it and we are even proud that Germany is contributing to this essential pillar for the welfare of Ghana."

I'm happy that TUM and all of our partners have realized the importance of academic qualification in Land Management and Land Tenure much earlier, so that we celebrate today already the 4th course of new Masters of Science in Land Management and Land Tenure.

My warm congratulations to all of our masters, congratulation to TUM too!