

THE 6th Graduation Speech for MSc. Land Management Land Tenure

Our Guest of Honor, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Norbert Vogt, Prof. Dr. Holger Magel, Senator E.h. Gerhard Hess, Dr. Thomus Aulig, Mrs. Vera Köppen, my fellow graduands, our invited guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very happy to take this opportunity on behalf of my fellow graduands to thank you for coming to join us on this wonderful occasion as we celebrate our graduation for the Masters Degree in Land Management and Land Tenure. It would be vital if I delivered this speech in fluent German language, considering the time I have spent and shared with people here in Germany. However, odds have not allowed me a chance and I can possibly afford to speak better in English. I will not take much time and will try to finish fast to the convenience of even the most impatient.

I want to begin by extending our sincere appreciation to those people and organisations whose individual and collective sacrifices have made our program stand strong to this day. In that respect, I take the opportunity to recognise the following among others:

- The Germany Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for the continued support and opening up doors to many young ambitious scholars. They have provided financial assistance to the students and also offered important materials such as text books which have been a vital block to the Programme.
- The Hans Seidle Stiftung Foundation for effort and support through offering sponsorship to students, some of who are our fellows here today.
- ESRI for the fundamental support they have extended to the students (ArcGIS Info software and training offer) and the collaboration they have initiated to solve the present and future challenges.
- The GTZ for the different forms of support, and the professional lecturers from both far and near that have offered to deliver quality materials and imparted expert ideas in us
- Our Guest of honor, allow me to thank the Chair of Land Management and Land Tenure under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Holger Magel for keeping a close caring eye on us as we undertook the course to the completion. We are grateful for the services of Dr. Ing.- Klaus Michael and Ing.- Schwiening for their demonstrated effort in uplifting the standards of the program with the assistance of Miss Fahria Masum and Mr. Jorge Espinoza.
- I also take the opportunity to appreciate the tireless efforts of the former programme manager, Dr. Babette Wehrmann who saw us through the first half of the course and with whom we fundamentally shared knowledge and skills.

Ladies and Gentlemen, your support has uplifted the level of service delivery and directly increased the degree of academic excellence. This has brought us to the full understanding of the good and bad practices, professionalism and guesswork, and sharply raised our standards of perceptions and education.

By the words of Thomas Jefferson, *“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be ...”* Our appreciation is therefore part of the realization that through us you have uplifted nations and partly pave the way to freedom, and together we shall make the world a better place. On your shoulders we have stood and seen the beautiful plains in the world of

academic excellence, through which you have also placed a sense of global responsibility on our own shoulders. We shall act accordingly and I believe that we shall not betray our generation and those yet to come.

My interpretation of happiness is that it's not a product one man's moods, but a collection of good feelings and joy upon one's achievement. Since no man is an island, such achievements cannot be realized without inputs from those we collaborate with and neither can we be free when nobody chooses to rejoice with us. Our happiness today emerges from the hearty appreciation of your presence with us to celebrate what you have assisted us to achieve.

As a sign of our gratefulness, I request that you join us to a handclap for our potential supporters.

I take this opportunity to congratulate my fellow graduands upon their successful completion of the course. Of course I congratulate myself as well. Finishing studies is a mark that you have precisely hit and a significant career step you have made.

We have represented and won for our respective countries and we are going back as the Ambassadors of this program to the same countries, indicating that we are going back different from how we came. We therefore are meant to live to the expectations of those whose knowledge we have carried as we demonstrate on this occasion. One thing for sure is that we shall make a difference at individual, local, national levels and beyond, perhaps at different temporal scales.

One chapter has been closed and here we make a step to the world of realism, complicated with challenges. Along the way we expect obstacles, and other different kinds of impediments. We definitely shall be patient to reap from the opportunities the same real world offers and the skills we have earned and upon which we celebrate today demonstrate that we shall succeed.

Of course there are some challenges facing the programme but are not beyond recognition and address. We realize that the level we have reached is not an end in itself but a means to an end. Most of the graduands in our midst have big dreams and yearn to continue with academics just like some of the other alumni. This is where the road sometimes becomes rougher. We realize that a few of our alumni have actually managed to succeed undertaking this journey. We therefore humbly request for your consideration of the avenues to improve on this area so that we can be able to touch the academic roofs by undertaking further studies most especially the Ph.D programme (s).

We appreciate the level at which we have been exposed to the practical and theoretical training which makes the quality of education we have achieved paramount. We have shared and hobnobbed. Ladies and gentlemen, we appreciate your efforts your time and everything that you have offered for the program and us in particular. We believe in and love all that we have been able to achieve. To my fellow graduands all I must say is "aluta continua"-The struggle continues, and I wish you a bright future.

Thanks a lot for your time and God bless you.

Rukundo Bruce