

**Welcoming Address at the Opening Ceremony of the Master's Programme
Land Management and Land Tenure on 12.10.2009
By Matthias Riedel, Hanns Seidel Foundation**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be able to welcome here, on behalf of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the new master students at the Technical University Munich. We were able once again to make it possible for three further students from the People's Republic of China to participate in this programme.

Cooperation has existed for many years between the Technical University Munich and the Hanns Seidel Foundation in the field of land development.

Project work at our Education and Research Centre for Land Consolidation and Rural Development (BFL) in Qingzhou, Shandong Province, is based on three pillars, as conceived by Professor Dr Magel for the project in Qingzhou:

- a) Further training of expert staff from the relevant authorities as well as for political leaders at the various levels of government,
- b) Support of model projects for land consolidation and village development in structurally weak rural areas of western China, and
- c) Support of academic work aimed at promoting the decision-making competence of ministries and decision makers.

The Master's Programme Land Management and Land Tenure for Urban and Rural Development is of great importance for all three pillars. Scholarship holders previously sponsored by the Hanns Seidel Foundation now work in the Ministry for Land and Resources as well as at the BFL in Qingzhou. They participate in the development of further training programmes for qualified and leading personnel in China with material and substantive content from the Master's Programme as well as in providing support to the Bavarian specialists in the model projects for land consolidation and village development.

Our colleagues on the spot experience time and time again the importance of field work for an understanding of problems and their interconnections. The graduates of this Master's Programme repeatedly prove themselves as intermediaries between the specialists of our two countries as they are able to combine their experience in Germany with conditions in China. They are thus, in addition to their professional *qualifications*, of decisive importance for *dialogue* in cooperation on the spot.

For our Chinese project co-workers it is also of decisive importance that participation in the Master's Programme here at the Chair of Land Management gives them an opportunity to *exchange* views and experiences with specialists from other countries and to apply these *experiences* in their work in China and in our joint project work.

Professional qualification, dialogue and contacts are valuable results from the Master's Programme Land Management and Land Tenure for Urban and Rural Development and an important requirement for our partnership project work in China. That is why in this year two scholarship holders have also been chosen from our project region in the Changshou District of the municipality of Chongqing, which is directly subordinate to the central government.

May I finally express the wish that in future, in addition to the many sponsoring German institutions, more and more relevant institutions and authorities in our partner countries will be ready to sponsor scholarship holders for this programme and then to make use of them in important positions "at home"

The work in China in the field of land management has in particular, in addition to the involvement of specialists from the Bavarian State Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, been substantially influenced by the work and commitment of Professor Dr Magel, to whom I should like at this point to express my special thanks.

I wish the master students all the best and much success for their studies in the coming two years.

I thank you for your attention.