

Program Director Prof. Dr. Holger Magel
Welcome Speech at the Opening Ceremony on October 14, 2002

Mrs. Chair of the University Council Vigdis Nipperdey, Mr. Dean of the Faculty, Mr. Graefen, estimated partners and sponsors, dear students, ladies and gentlemen, do you remember what the heads of states have declared at the World Summit in Johannesburg? „All of us are united and moved by a deeply-felt sense that we urgently need to create a new and brighter world of hope“. To create a new and brighter world of hope we do need to implement a wide range of goals and activities as they are described in the Johannesburg World Summit Plan of Implementation and as they affect a lot of our universities interests and research fields. One of the key issues are the land issue and, closely interrelated, urban and rural development. Let me cite only one item of the Plan of Implementation. It is Nr. 38 i: „Adopt policies and implement laws that guarantee well defined and enforceable land and water use rights, and promote legal security of tenure, recognizing the existence of different national laws and/or systems of land access and tenure, and provide technical and financial assistance to developing countries as well as countries with economics in transition that are undertaking land tenure reform in order to enhance sustainable livelihoods“. In parallel events offered and organized by international agencies and donors such as USAID, IFAD, World Bank it was underlined that equitable Land tenure, access to Land, resource management and rural development are the pre-requisite or success factors for poverty eradication, hunger reduction and sustainable development. **Hernando de Soto** said: More than four billion people all over the world are presently affected by the land issue!

This is the background or dimension and the scientific challenge to our master's program

'Land Management and Land Tenure'. Welcome to our students from developing countries and countries in transition, welcome to our participant from the States. I am confident that this mixture will bring a high benefit of mutual understanding and learning for all parties.

Welcome to the chair of our university council and at the same time many many thanks to you for your, for presidents and our faculties outstanding support of the idea and implementation of this unique Master program.

I am confident and believe in your further support and in the continuing help of our good partners and friends of GTZ, HSS and DAAD that we can find a sustainable i.e. a long term solution of financing the Master program. We hope that our newly established non profit society for promoting the national and international activities of my chair will get a lot of financial support by enterprises, companies, banks, etc..

What we all, the TU and all partners, are offering is not only a benefit for the students, not only a benefit for our university, our country or the home countries of our students. I think it is an indispensable contribution to the promise of Germany's chancellor implementing the ethical sense of Johannesburg Declaration: „We commit ourselves to act together united by a common determination to save our planet, promote human development and achieve universal prosperity and peace.“