Welcome Speech at Opening Ceremony to Master’s Program  
Land Management und Land Tenure – Academic Year 2003–2005  

by Program Director Univ.-Prof. Dr.-Ing. Holger Magel  
on 10 October 2003

Dear master students from nearly all over the world, estimated Mr. Dean,  
estimated chair of the German Geodetic Commission at the Bavarian  
Academy of Sciences,  
Honourable consul generals, presidents and director generals,  
professors and lecturers, distinguished guests and colleagues, dear  
friends, sponsors and patrons,

let me start with a very private comment: It is exactly 40 years ago that I  
have started my study of Geodesy at this university. And it is 40 years  
ago that one of the greatest and by young people and students highly  
estimated leaders of the world President John F. Kennedy was  
murdered. Why do I mention this at this hopefully inspiring opening  
ceremony?

I´ll give you my answer:  
John F. Kennedy has died a long time ago, but never has died what he  
has left as a legacy to me and many others of my generation and what  
he unforgottably has demonstrated in his outstanding presidential  
inaugural speech on 20 January 1961: To cope with your life, to cope  
with the challenges and to finally succeed human beings, either a  
politician, an economic leader, a professor or a worker, need a vision or  
– what was later said in August 1963 by Martin Luther King – need a  
dream! Both had visions and dreams on Freedom, Liberty and Equality.
Some people of this assembly today had a dream or a vision too – and I am very happy and even a little bit proud, that these visions and dreams become reality today!

First of all reality for you, dear students, because now you can start with your study at our university. Welcome to munich, welcome to our university and faculty – we will try to help make your dream a final and successful reality. After a hopefully pleasant but also hard time of studies you should and you will leave our university having attained the internationally acknowledged academic degree of Master of Science in Land Management and Land Tenure.

Contrary to our under- and graduate students of Geodesy and Geoinformation you will have a very decisive advantage: You already have got your jobs and positions at home, so you must not be worried not to find at once a job after your study like some of our young students. After your return you can fully concentrate on your new challenges in your home country. I wish you that you then can make happen the third step of your dream: After having firstly started and secondly successfully finished your study you thirdly should get the position and chance, to implement your knowledge and to serve for a more sustainable and even more just world in your country! Now in the spirit and sense of J. F. Kennedy you can ask yourself: What can I do for my country?

It´s a wonderful day for me, Babette and our Institute too: Our dreams became and become more and more reality too. It´s great that now we have already 17 students of a limited number of 20 and that these 17 students come from 13 countries, from Asia and Africa as well as from East-Europe and the CIS-Countries.
It’s a great day for our strong and reliable partners as well like World Bank, DAAD, GTZ, HSS and the “Förderkreis Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung München e. V.”

And I think it’s an affecting day for our generous sponsors and patrons too. A special welcome and thanks to you all for your financial patronage on behalf of our students and according to our idea “building a better world”. Thanks to your support this year we could solve the financial problems of paying the tuition fees. We further need your financial support and gratitude at least as long as the problem exists that DAAD and Foundations are not allowed to pay the tuition fees. Everybody knows that many students can’t pay it by themselves or by their employers. With the support of our university and our new dean we are trying to solve this problem on the national level; it’s unfortunately no bavarian problem. Otherwise I would be very confident or even quite sure to solve this problem very quickly.

You ask me for my optimism?
On the occasion of this start of our new master’s program I’ve get some very nice letters and wishes of bavarian ministers and politicians.

Let me quote two wishes as a essential headline or even philosophy of our Master Program:
Former viceminister for science and minister for environment and development Dr. Thomas Goppel has confirmed: “Sustainability in land management and development, as it is a goal of your program, is an indispensable precondition for a carefree, peaceful, and future oriented survival in the more and more cramped planet earth.”
And our retiring minister for science, research and arts Dr. Hans Zehetmaier has written: “I enjoy very much the success of your master program and the new record figure of 17 participants from 13 countries. Please continue in successfully providing the students with wellgrounded scientific knowledge and at the same time with human values for their professional life.”

Dear all, I think nobody better could have described the vision of our master program than our minister: you, the students, belong to the elites of your country, you therefore have to bear a special responsibility, you have to develop both your technical knowledge and your character, values and your personality. You now are an special ambassador of your country at our university – I am proud to introduce you to the community now:

1. Mr. Maxwell Adu-Nsafoa, Ghana
2. Mr. Mouaiad Mustafe Ali Al-Omari, Jordan
3. Mss. Imelda Barrios Baleta, Philippines
4. Mss. Ceren Berzenc, Turkey
5. Mr. Chuo Savuth, Cambodia
6. Mr. Namikat Nelson Duut, Ghana
7. Mr. Zemen Haddis Gebeyehu, Ethiopia
8. Mrs. Nino Geladze, Georgia
9. Mss. Svetlana Gavrilovic, Montenegro and Serbia
10. Mss. Judy Wambui Kariuki, Kenya
11. Mr. Jun Liang, China
12. Mr. Branimir Maicica, Croatia
13. Mr. Mak Visal, Cambodia
14. Mr. Taufique Mohiuddin, Bangladesh
Ladies and gentlemen, back to visions and dreams, but now forward to our dreams and visions for the next years:
I am really confident that our university becomes more and more one of the worldwide acting and well-known Centers for Land Management and Land Tenure - more and more also for students from Latin America. Our first “new Masters” have in the meantime returned to their home countries and are strongly contributing to improve the lifes of many people in urban and rural areas and to guarantee sustainable and secure investments in land and human resources. And they are always acting as ambassadors of our university inspiring other elites to come to and to study in munich; and they are convincing their ministers and high ranked ministerials that this master program as a special kind of international development cooperation is one of the most sustainable and one of the best offers of Germany. Therefore the financial support of this master program will become part of the policy of the german or bavarian international cooperation and development.

Then we really can join the promise J. F. Kennedy once has made: “To those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling the bonds of man misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.”