

Welcome Speech at the Opening Ceremony 2007 of the Master's Programme Land Management and Land Tenure

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Dean of Faculty, honorable consuls, estimated sponsors, dear lecturers and colleagues, dear guests, dear master students welcome to this year's opening ceremony.

I want to start my speech by giving my appreciation to our key supporters which are,

- the TUM, i.e. the President, council and the Dean of our faculty
- the DAAD and the Hans Seidle Stiftung Foundation and the Förderkreis Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung München who sponsored a lot of students
- the private sponsors and companies who supported the program.

Only because of the common effort of you all, we – my classmates and new students – have been able to join this master's program at TUM. Thank you once again.

Let me introduce myself with the great honor of being in the alumni of the master's program Land Management and Land Tenure and the PhD student in the Chair of GIS in the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy. I was born in Izmir in Turkey. Honestly I had been thinking that the most beautiful town in the world until seeing Munich two years ago. At the end of successful years in primary and high school, I decided to be an architect. It didn't work out "fortunately" and I became a GIS specialist city planner. I was graduated from the Izmir Institute of Technology which had been my favorite place to go on with my academic future. And I found the chance to know the Technical University of Munich which owns the title "elite" deservedly. My opinions about my future were a bit changed again indeed! This has been such an effect in my life that I have willingness to stay for more couple of years to write my dissertation here in TUM.

The master's program Land Management and Land Tenure has been my new horizon with the participants who own a qualified bachelor and are already professionals in their field. This privileged master's program had a valuable attraction by giving "higher and internationally oriented qualification, including research and management skills" which enables the graduates to enter decision-making positions and to become multipliers for sustainable land management and development in their home countries.

The master's program, Ladies and Gentlemen, has given us – as the alumni – a valuable opportunity to interact and therefore exchange ideas at great levels. We have learnt that land issues are not and should not be restricted to developing countries. We can point out with confidence that countries all over the world need land management in one form or another. For example in the context of the EU this is evidenced by the Village Renewal and Land Consolidation programs. Through this program we have become aware of the dynamism in land management issues. These range from land conflicts, informal settlements and customary tenure systems. Sharpening and bringing at par our skills was thus inevitable. The interdisciplinary approach to the issue of Land Management and Land Tenure in addition suited our desire to contribute substantially in the formulation of an integrated approach towards land management and land tenure in our respective countries.

Now my dear classmates who were graduated last semester with me are back in their home countries, and had key positions in private and national agencies. I decided to stay for more couple of years here in TUM to write my dissertation in case of GIS based disaster management. Now I am thankful once again to Prof. Magel for introducing me to Prof. Schilcher who has been my supervisor for my master thesis and who gave me the great honor of being his PhD student at the Chair of Geo-Information Systems. As you may easily see it in experiences, this program opens new horizons for its participants and apparently so it will be in the future for you our dear new students. It's my pleasure to see now the growing number of students and to look at more and more faces from more diverse countries this year again.

With my kind congratulations to all of our masters.