

Welcome Speech (Impulse Speech)
at the
Opening Ceremony 2008
of the
“Master’s Programme Land Management and Land Tenure”
at the Technical University Munich
on
Monday
13th October 2008, 10.00 am
by
Willi Lange
Hanns Seidel Foundation

Professor Dr Vogt, Professor Dr Magel,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Students,

It is a great pleasure for me, at the opening ceremony of the “Master’s Programme Land Management and Land Tenure for Urban and Rural Development” at the Technical University Munich, to welcome you in the name of the Hanns Seidel Foundation and in my own name, and to address some words to you.

My thanks go to the Dean of the Technical University, Professor Dr Vogt, as well as to the Director of the Institute of Geodesy, GIS and Land Management and Director of Master’s Programme, Professor Dr Holger Magel, who have given me this opportunity of speaking to you.

We have been professionally closely associated with Professor Magel for many years. It was he who substantially developed the concept for cooperation between the Hanns Seidel Foundation and China in the area of rural development. I will come back to this. We have moreover been “travelling companions” in connection with our village development projects in Nan Zhang Lou in Shandong Province, in Chongqing and Ningxia, and with international meetings on the development of rural areas in which leading personalities have participated. Not least we have also found points of contact in our cooperation with Mongolia. Our sincere thanks for the innovative cooperation over many years in which we have had complete confidence.

Students, a new and important stage of your life is now beginning. You have been given the opportunity, at one of the best German universities, the Technical University Munich, to participate in an excellent three semester Master’s Course on a subject – “Land Management and Land Tenure for Urban and Rural Development” – which is of great importance for your home countries, and which will be even more important in the future. Theory and practice are combined in an exemplary manner in this course with the support of experienced teaching staff.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation has for many years regularly supported young students so that they can participate in this excellent programme. We are glad that, in this year also, our scholarship holders once again have the opportunity of participating in the programme.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation, in cooperation with the Institute of Geodesy, GIS and Land Management at the TU Munich and with the Bavarian State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, has for many years supported the development of rural areas in the People’s Republic of China.

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 was conceived together with Professor Magel for the project in Qingzhou:

- a) Further training of skilled personnel 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 supported by the Hanns Seidel Foundation already 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 in providing support for the work of Bavarian experts in the model projects for land consolidation and village development.

We also want, through the graduates of the Master's Course, to promote cooperation with universities such as the Renmin University in Peking. Over the course of time this will increasingly result in a *network* in the area of land management in China, which will be strengthened by the association with the Master's Programme here in Munich and which involves various authorities in the People's Republic of China. These "lateral links" are increasingly important in a country (China), in which overall solutions are more and more being sought for the development of rural areas.

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

It is also of decisive importance for our Chinese project co-workers that participation in the Master's Programme here at the Institute gives them the 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 network are the main

results of the Master's Programme and an important pre-condition for our partnership project work in China.

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

The work in China (in the future perhaps also, even though to a more modest extent, in Mongolia) in the field of land management, in addition to the involvement of experts from the Bavarian State Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, has been substantially influenced by the work of Professor Magel. (He was most recently at the end of September in Peking, in Shandong Province, in Nigxi Province and in Mongolia in support of our project work).

We thank you very sincerely for your commitment, your wealth of ideas and your connections with other institutions.

Students, these few examples should on the one hand give you some impression of part of the work of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, and on the other hand an impression of the need to support rural development and of the need for young students to become qualified in this area. It is only by educating and qualifying young people from the regions concerned that a self-supporting, qualified and sustainable improvement for these regions can be achieved, also under the aspect of "help for self-help".

For this reason I am happy that you have decided to embark on this Master course and to complete it successfully.

You will spend the next one and a half years in Munich and will graduate from a very intensive Master's Course which contains both theoretical and practical elements.

I hope that in addition to the academic challenge you will also find the time to enjoy Munich with your fellow students, and I am confident that under the care of the Technical University Munich and of the Institute, Professor Dr Magel, you will very soon feel – almost – at home.

The Hanns Seidel Foundation is based here in Munich. Our door is always open for you. The way from the TU to us is not very far. When you have time, come and visit us.

I wish you a good start in the Master's Programme and much success.
Thank you.