

Programme Director  
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**Welcome Speech**  
**Land Management Master's Programme 2008 – 2010**  
**Opening Ceremony, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen and Dear Master's Students

Good morning!

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you to the opening ceremony of master's programme session 2008/2010. This is the inauguration of our new students who will today set out the master programme. We are delighted to welcome the new students at the Centre of Land and Environmental Risk Management.

Dear students, we are looking forward to a challenging and enriching time with you over the next 18 months.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Before I go to the background and importance of the Master's Programme, Land Management and Tenure, I would like to quote Hernando de Soto. He said:

*More than four billion people all over the world are presently affected by the land issue!*

I would like to mention about some present phenomena related to land. If we think about one important issue and that is tenure security, we see that majority of the developing countries are experiencing acute problem of that. According to UN-HABITAT at the present time, around one billion people live in slum conditions in the developing world and the number will grow up to 1.4 billion in 2020. It is now a growing concern. Only through providing land title or tenure security this problem cannot be solved, we need to adapt innovative approaches also, like FIG – UN Habitat new approaches (social tenure).

UN-HABITAT, together with other development partners such as the World Bank, DFID and SIDA, has identified the fact that we have insufficient land tools to implement the appropriate land policies for the urban and rural poor.

If we think about the implementation of Millennium Development Goals, we see that the rate of its failure is higher than its success. Some countries are doing very well, others less so, and a few doing badly. In general sub-Saharan African countries are lagging behind on all the goals. South Asian countries are also far behind its goal related to human development. I would like to also mention the present world food crisis situation. This is the first time the food crisis impact is spreading from developing world to developed world. According to World Food Programme, the increasing scarcity of food is the biggest crisis looming for the world. World Bank points that food prices has been risen 75% since 2000. The problem is getting acute because the demand for food is increasing and at the same time the amount of land we have available for growing food on is reducing. It was the comment of chief executive of the national farmers' union in Scotland. But food crisis is also coming from wrong land and agricultural policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the time to act actively to change the situation. We need to build institutional capacity, policies and programme at local, national and regional level to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN's Secretary General said that:

*"The MDGs are still achievable if we act now. This will require inclusive sound governance, increased public investment, economic growth, enhanced productive capacity, and the creation of decent work".*

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am proud to say that our Master's Programme Land Management and Tenure is not only confined with producing graduates in the field of land management. We have cooperation at international level with Mongolia, China, Chile, Palestine, Cambodia and in future Namibia. I am delighted to inform you that just couple of weeks ago we have successfully finished a summer school programme in Cambodia. The main objective was to provide input for institutional development. 160 participants from universities and different ministries in Cambodia participated in that summer school.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

7 years have passed since establishment of the programme, 6 batches has been graduated. It is wonderful to think that we have already produced 72 experts in this

field representing total 28 countries. They are representing also our success in the field of land management.

In the journey of this master's programme, we have received manifold supports from different corners. In this happy day I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to

- TUM, i.e. its President, council and the Dean of our faculty
- The Bayerische Staatskanzlei, DAAD, GTZ and Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung and
- Förderkreis Bodenordnung und Landentwicklung München with all its private sponsors.
- A lot of Bavarian and German authorities which offer us their support.

Without their and our own contributions it was not easy to make this programme successful one.

Simultaneously, I would like to extend my thanks to the lecturers of TUM and abroad and especially my staff.

Dear Students,

As you know that presently the world is passing through a hard time. Now world needs people like you. You have to contribute all the things that you have absorbed – one, formal learning through books and lectures given by the talented teachers that TUM will offer you and second, the international experience that you will gather during the next 18 months. We will offer you all of the resources and will give you all of the skills of thinking, analysis and teamwork that you need to succeed. I am sure that through the experiences during your stay in TUM and in Munich as well, you will be able to translate your knowledge into land management field for the benefit of your country. We promise you that your professional path after being graduated will be diverse and enrich if you make use of the opportunity.

Looking at you today, I know that all of you are ready for the actual journey which begins today. We have high expectations of you. So, let's get started.

Thanks!