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Eröffnung Symposium SFB 564

und

Feierliche Vertragsunterzeichnung zum Joint Master Program mit der Chiang Mai University/Thailand

**Redebeitrag von
Senator e.h. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hermann Eiselen
Vorsitzender der Eiselen-Stiftung Ulm**

- Es gilt das gesprochene Wort -

Anrede

Pres. of Chiang Mai University (CMU)

Dean of the Agric. Faculty of CMU

Representatives from Vietnam

President of Hohenheim University

Prof. Stahr

Prof. Stahr has asked me to say a few words. So I take the opportunity to welcome all participants in Germany especially those from Thailand and Vietnam also my fellow country women and men.

First of all I want to express my deep satisfaction about the fact that the Operational Agreement for the Joint-Degree Master Program between the Universities of Chiang Mai and Hohenheim will finally be signed today. It makes me happy that a hopefully long lasting formal band of cooperation could be established. Let me congratulate the representatives of both universities and the students who will benefit from this achievement in the future. It is my privilege to announce that my foundation will support the newly established course by granting a few scholarships to Thai students for their stay in Hohenheim.

Furthermore I'd like to make some remarks at the beginning of your conference. Above all I am glad that this project of international scientific cooperation was successful up to now. Therefore I am confident that it will be funded by DFG also for the years 2010 to 2012. During the next three days you will lay the ground for the future of SFB 564. The remaining years until 2012 will give you the chance to complete your work and to achieve the results you are striving for. Those results in my mind should not only be of scientific interest but also bring about some progress to the people in the mountainous regions of Thailand and Vietnam.

More generally speaking I think all scientific work must be directed towards improvements of the livelihood of human beings. It is not sufficient to enrich scientific literature. Science must be instrumental to create the tools for advancements. Those tools are supposed to be applicable and suitable for conversion into action. In other words: Science is not just a mental exercise, devoted to a personal career for instance. Everyone working scientifically – mostly on account of others – has a responsibility to serve mankind as much as he or she can, as a contribution to an increase of its well-being. Such an attitude becomes more important every day as population grows rapidly. This means a constant shrinking of space for each individual. What are the consequences? The number of disadvantaged people will grow. The natural resources are being exhausted. Food and water scarcity becomes alarming. Peace will be even more endangered than up to now. Almost every single individual is going to be affected by the prevailing trends.

We, who have the insight, are confronted with a gigantic challenge: To help that in the year 2050 – only 40 years from now – more than nine billion people can make a living on our planet while conserving the environment. The overall conditions to reach this goal, however, are not favourable. In any event: Sustainable solutions

can only be found by a human centered science accompanied by appropriate policies.

We as citizens should not tolerate huge investments in arms and space research while on our planet still more than 800 million people are suffering hunger and nobody knows how to feed additional two and a half billion by 2050. The former Director General of FAO, the late Edouard Saouma said in 1980: "The task is enormous but it is difficult to imagine any greater or more urgently needed contribution to the future of the world."

Admittedly those thoughts have nothing to do with the topics of your agenda for the next three days. I just wanted to use the chance to show you the framework and to remind you that you bear some responsibility for tomorrow's world, which as we all hope will be a more peaceful one. It will not come by itself. We all have to work for it.

I wish you a fruitful conference and our international guests an acceptable stay in our country.

Thank you.