

## **Holger Magels Farewell Greetings to Eugene Chigbu**

### **Three aspects of Eugene, which we will never forget and make him an extraordinary Professor**

Dear Eugene , its time to say good bye and as your first boss and especially your Doctor Father I would like to try giving you orally a kind of a testimonial and certificate of conduct what we call in Germany “Arbeits- und Führungszeugnis” - but its only my view, my very personally quite unusual testimonial .

What should be content of such a testimonial? It has three aspects:

#### **A: His outstanding technical skills**

Eugene showed remarkable interest in the original themes of our Chair, which made it quite famous in Germany and abroad : rural development, village renewal and territorial development and finally territorial justice. First, he wrote his master thesis on village renewal in Weyarn and made progress quickly in writing his doctoral dissertation. He remained extremely determined throughout the years of his research. Fahria, his mentor, can confirm this. I have always enjoyed Eugene’s excellent writing skills and his high and quick intelligence. He had a goal, and he didn’t lose sight of it, even not during the time when he and his wife were expecting their babies. Eugene was always focused and ready to make his dream come true, and he did it. And what I have also enjoyed very much is that he always had his own ideas and opinions and defended it with great temperament even, when I had opposite views! But all disputes ended with relieving laughter and jokes.

Eugene’s hard work and dedication were an important part of our team. On behalf of the Chair and already under the interim directorate of Thomas Wunderlich, he took the lead of the GLTN project of preparing a manual for land use planning for tenure security, and he completed it with dignity and success. He represented the Chair in many international platforms, including the World Bank conference, African Good Governance Network and GLTN and wrote many articles together with Walter de Vries and even with me in memory of a great friend of our chair Prof. Rafa Crescende from Galicia.

#### **B: His clear ethical and philosophical basis**

Eugene was the first LMLT student from Nigeria who introduced us to the country and its rich culture. Already in my FIG time, I met colleagues from Nigeria, who I perceived as very proud and practical people, but friendly and cooperative. These characteristics also describe Eugene quite accurately. He was always open for everybody and empathic - based on ethical principles and endowed with a sensitivity, which he expresses lively in his poems. I am quite sure that Eugene is open for messages coming from Pope Francis. Therefore, I would like to mention some important quotes from his new encyclical “Tutti fratelli”, which could even be a guide for Eugene’s new life

as a professor, scientist and hopefully influential consultant of governments and institutions around the world:

What I am going to quote is about the base and frame of our work at the Chair according to our mission “For a just world”. It is about human rights, human dignity, justice, international cooperation and commitment and finally, service for the public :

*213. The **dignity** of others is to be respected in all circumstances, not because that dignity is something we have invented or imagined, but because human beings possess an intrinsic worth superior to that of material objects and contingent situations.*

*22. It frequently becomes clear that, in practice, **human rights** are not equal for all. Respect for those rights is the preliminary condition for a country’s social and economic development. When the dignity of the human person is respected, and his or her rights recognized and guaranteed, creativity and interdependence thrive, and the creativity of the human personality is released through actions that further the **common good**”*

*137. We need to develop the **awareness** that nowadays, we are either all saved together or no one is saved. Poverty, decadence and suffering in one part of the earth are a silent breeding ground for problems that will end up affecting the entire planet.*

And finally, the quote which describes many years of my life as a representative of the Civil Society and NGO:

*77. Each day offers us a new opportunity, a new possibility. **We should not expect everything from those who govern us**, for that would be childish. We have the space we need for **co-responsibility** in creating and putting into place new processes and changes. Let us take an **active part** in renewing and supporting our troubled societies. Others may continue to view politics or the economy as an arena for their own power plays. **For our part, let us foster what is good and place ourselves at its service.***

That is why my gift to Eugene is “The Tyranny of merit : What’s become of the common good ?”, the new book of the great Harvard Professor Michael Sandel, who is like Pope Francis deeply concerned about the decline of common good and an increasing societal divide by excessive highlighting of academic carriers – surely a paradoxical challenge not only for the Ivy League in USA but also for our TUM and other Elite –Universities who steadily push the idea of merit ! .

And this leads me to the third aspect:

### **C. Our Friend Eugene**

Dear Eugene, my beloved “doctoral son”, always remain humble and thankful for what you have achieved in your wonderful academic carrier. Try to give back to society and the people who trust you and your competences and empathy.

Dear Eugene, remain as humorous and joyous as we see you in this picture taken in Dr. Zülsdorf’s garden. I hope you can find many new people and even friends around you in Windhoek who will also sing along with you in the future.

All the best from your Professor and his wife and from your former teammates Jorge, Michael and Fahria, whom you surely will meet in the future again.

Eugene, you are the last team member from the era Magel. You are leaving now the Chair. Keep the best memories what TUM has given you. We thank you for what you have given us!! Once you addressed me: No matter how old you grow I shall always look up to you.

There is no need anymore, Now its my turn: I look with huge pride on you!

Bye-bye, and much respect and good luck, dear Professor Dr.-Ing. Master of Science TUM Uchendu Eugene Chigbu!

Munich , 13 October 2020