

Remarks by Symposium Chairman Professor Dr. Frank Otto

Dear participant of the 10th International Symposium on Environmental Geotechnology and Sustainable Development,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you here in Bochum in the smallest and oldest university of the Ruhr District. The Ruhr District is an area in the centre of Europe with more than 4.5 million inhabitants. In the last centuries this district was dominated by heavy industries like hard coal mining and steel production. But since 50 years there is a change in this region from heavy industries to a service oriented industry. Coal mines and steel factories were closed. Therefore, for example, many universities were founded. The first was the Ruhr-University Bochum in the 1960's. So it's much younger than this university, the University of Applied Sciences Georg Agricola, founded 1816 and situated in its actual building since 1899. So, in the Ruhr District you can find all aspects of changing area, especially the environmental geotechnologically aspects with subsided land, contaminated areas and abandoned industrial sites. But we are on the best way to solve these problems.

Now we are here together in Bochum to discuss the solutions for such geotechnical and environmental problems and use the time for a fruitful exchange of ideas, creating new contacts and future cooperation possibilities.

I have to admit that organization an event like this 10th symposium requires lots of effort. Many people have been and still are involved in this process. I would like to thank all of them, friends from outside and helpful persons inside this company and especially Mrs. Patricia Otto. Without her help I would have been lost.

Why this symposium is being held in Bochum? Early in 2007 my friend, Prof. Zhengfu BIAN from CUMT, asked me if I would join the 8th symposium in Ljubljana. In May 2007 we had have the 16th Conference on Engineering Geology in Bochum and in August 2007 I travelled to Slovenia. They asked me and I couldn't say no.

Thank you for coming and I wish you a very successful symposium and interesting exhibition.