

**Graduation Ceremony of the University of New South Wales: Award of the
Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws to the Honourable Chief Justice Andrew K N
Li**

Chancellor, Vice-chancellor, members of the Faculties, graduates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to begin by expressing my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the University for the high honour conferred on me and for the kind and generous citation. I am very proud to be admitted to the eminent rank of Doctor of Law of this distinguished university. It is an award which I accept with deep humility and which I shall treasure.

The university of New South Wales is acknowledged to be an eminent Australian university, with a distinguished Law School. The University provides quality tertiary education to many Australian and overseas students, including those from Hong Kong.

It gives me particularly great pleasure to receive this award from an Australian University. The relationship between Australia and Hong Kong is a close and long standing one. There is and has been substantial trade between us. And we are bound by ties of family and friend. Quite apart from tourists, there are many Australians living in Hong Kong and there are many Hong Kong people living in Australia. We share many common goals and values as open and free societies. And we have similar legal systems based on the common law tradition. There are a number of Australian lawyers working in Hong Kong, both in the private and the public sectors including the Judiciary. And we are fortunate to have three eminent Australian jurists, including two former Chief Justices, Sir Anthony Mason and Sir Gerard Brennan, serving as non-permanent judges on our Court of Final Appeal, Hong Kong's final appellate court.

To all the students graduating today, I wish to offer my warmest and heartiest congratulations. With your dedication and hard work, you have deservedly earned your degrees. I am sure that all graduates will agree with me when I say that you owe a great debt of gratitude to your families and the teaching staff of the University. It is a debt of honour which I am sure you will never forget. Throughout the past years, they must have given you their unstinting support and wise guidance. Without them, I doubt if you will be here today. They must be very happy today and have every reason to be very proud of your achievements. To them, I also wish to extend my congratulations and best wishes.

It is now some three decades ago since I started my working life after graduation from university and the completion of professional training. In the late 1960s, the world was very different from what it is today. Then, for the great majority of us, our horizons were narrowly confined to one's own small community which then seemed such a large world. At that time, it appeared sufficient for us to identify ourselves as citizens of one's own community, and to focus our life and attention on events happening in it.

Today, however, sitting at our computers, we are linked in a matter of moments to the rest of the globe. The rapid advances in science and technology, the amazing revolution in the field of information and communication technology, the increasingly free exchanges of ideas between societies and the dynamic growth in international trade have brought all of us closer together. We talk today - without poetic licence - of living in a 'global village'.

These developments have brought about rapid and profound changes in all spheres of society. Only one thing is certain about the future. The pace of change is likely to accelerate. In order to respond to the difficult and exciting challenges ahead, it is crucial that we continue to adapt ourselves. Above all, in order to be able to contribute to and indeed survive in the 'global village', we need to be 'global citizens'. But what does this involve?

First, global citizens should see things from a global perspective. They must have a good appreciation of global issues which are constantly shaping and changing the political, economic, social and technological landscape of the world. They should be alert, well informed, analytical and insightful, and know where they stand in the sea of continuing change. They must understand that they are living and working in a highly competitive environment. And in this environment, they would be competing not only with people they meet day in and day out, but also with their counterparts around the world. They should be highly resourceful, knowing that cross-fertilization of ideas and global collaboration will always present opportunities and help to provide solutions to problems. And they should have an understanding of the diverse cultures around the world, and should be capable of communicating and working with people with different backgrounds from around the globe.

Secondly, global citizens should view life with an inquisitive and open mind. They should always ask 'why' and explore new answers and solutions to old problems. They should accept and embrace change and they should not set limits to what can be achieved. They must never take things for granted, always striving to make improvements and

prepared to challenge orthodoxy. They should be flexible and innovative, with the courage to try things out.

Thirdly, global citizens should constantly educate themselves so that they would have the knowledge and skills required from time to time. They should understand that the means of survival lie in the life-long pursuit of education in all respects. Things taught at schools and universities are not an education but only a means to an education and there are no limits and boundaries to learning. Global citizens must therefore believe in and practise learning for life. They must continue to acquire and upgrade all their skills including language proficiency and information technology. And they must be keen to continue to learn from experience in the university of life.

Fourthly, global citizens should act with integrity, generosity and commitment. Understanding the importance of interdependency in all spheres of human activity and endeavour, global citizens must look beyond their self-interests in the pursuit of the well-being of the community at large. They must have a strong commitment to their families, their work and their fellow citizens. And they must abide always by the enduring values of honesty and integrity. They should always have the welfare of the under privileged in mind. They should be generous and ready to share with others. And they should be earnest in working towards the betterment of mankind.

Finally, global citizens should face and overcome difficulties with faith and courage. Living and working in such a competitive environment, global citizens would be bound to experience ups and downs in life. Sometimes, the sun will shine on you. But at other times, life can be stormy. Sometimes, the sailing will be plain. At other times, the territory will be rugged. But there could be no turning back. It is important always to move on with faith and courage and tackle what life throws at you with confidence in your own ability to overcome adversity.

The students graduating today are fortunate to have received an excellent university education. Graduating from this great university, you have concluded a stage in your life's journey and will be embarking on your next stage. You are and have to be global citizens and as global citizens, you will find life challenging, exciting and rewarding. I wish you good fortune and every success and happiness. Thank you.

16 June 2002