

## **Speech by the Hon Chief Justice at the HKU Mentorship Programme Inauguration Ceremony**

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Chairman of Council, Acting Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be invited to speak at this Ceremony. I am delighted to be here and to see so many of you.

Thank you for your warm welcome. I understand that if the audience clap before you speak, that is faith; if they clap during your speech, that is hope; and if they clap at the end, that is charity.

As Henry VIII said to each of his wives in turn: “I shall not keep you long”.

The HKU Mentorship Programme is a pioneering scheme in Hong Kong. I am delighted to learn that since its inception in 1997, the Programme has gone from strength to strength. Those who have participated have found it a most fruitful and rewarding experience. The scheme now has 500 pairs of mentors and mentees. It is so successful that I understand that other tertiary institutions are trying to follow it.

To the mentees, the scheme facilitates their development and growth at an important stage of their life's journey. I hope they will be able to widen their horizons and to appreciate the richness of life. They have wings to fly and mentors can help them to read the compass.

But it is important to remember that mentors should also derive great benefit from the scheme. Youth is the trustee of posterity. We all have a great deal to learn from the young.

In a dynamic society such as ours, I hope and expect our young people to have ideals, to be able to think critically and independently and to be creative. Mentors should give them every encouragement. And I am sure mentors will be enriched by their friendship.

This hall, Loke Yew Hall, resounds with this University's long and distinguished history and traditions and reminds one of your many illustrious graduates, many of whom I see are here today.

At this meaningful Ceremony in this Hall today, I cannot but help reflect that by the time our undergraduate friends reach my stage of life, we will be in the 2030's.

What will the world be like then ? What does the future hold ?

In the 21st century, we will be facing rapid changes resulting from increasing globalisation and the revolution in information technology. And we in Asia are confident that the 21st century will be the Asian century. Many have predicted and continue to predict that that by as early as 2020, Asia and China in particular will account for a very major slice in the world's economy. This will enhance Asia's economic power and its influence in world affairs.

Looking into the future, we can only be certain of one thing, the pace of change in all fields is likely to accelerate.

Amongst these rapid and accelerating changes, I would venture to suggest to our undergraduate friends today that it is important that the values and the goals we live by should remain constant.

(1) Abide always by the enduring values of honesty and integrity.

(2) Strive always for excellence. Make no compromises with mediocrity.

(3) Seize every opportunity for it may well not knock again.

(4) There will be ups and downs in life. Tackle what life throws at you with courage and have faith in your ability to overcome adversity. "For sweet are the uses of adversity" as Shakespeare pointed out.

(5) Remember that the things taught at university are only a means to an education. One must continue to learn in the university of life.

If I may share with you a quotation which reflects the way I look at life. You may be familiar with it. I hope that it may provide our young friends with some food for thought if not guidance. I shall quote substantially from it.

" I believe in the supreme worth of the individual and in his right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

" I believe that every right implies a responsibility, every opportunity an obligation, every possession a duty.

“ I believe that the law was made for man, not man for the law, that government is the servant of the people, not their master.

“ I believe in the dignity of labour, whether with head or hand, that the world owes no man a living, but that it owes every man an opportunity to make a living.

“ I believe that truth and justice are fundamental to an enduring social order.

“ I believe in the sacredness of a promise, that a man's word should be as good as his bond, that character - not wealth or power or position - is of supreme worth.

“ I believe that the rendering of useful service is the common duty of mankind.

“ I believe that love .... alone can overcome hate, right can and will triumph over might.”

Ladies and gentlemen, today's youth will be the leaders of tomorrow. I hope our young friends will contribute to our homeland, Hong Kong, in its destiny as part of the Motherland. If the tide of fortune takes you elsewhere, I hope that Hong Kong will always be dear to you and occupy a special place in your hearts.

Thank you for your patience in listening. Good Health. Good Luck. Good Fortune. To you all.

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