

Inauguration Ceremony for New Students

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 25, 2010

Loke Yew Hall

- Distinguished guests, colleagues and new students:
- Every year, when I stand here to welcome new students in the Inauguration ceremony, I'm filled with joy and enthusiasm.
- Today, however, please allow me to share with you a piece of very sad news. My heart sank when I heard it yesterday.

- I am sure that many of you, like me, watched with horror as the bus hijacking in the Philippines unfolded on Monday.
- And like me, you felt sympathy for all the hostages and their families.
- It was with great sadness that we learned that one of the victims was an HKU alumnus.
- Mr Ken LEUNG Kam Wing was an Engineering graduate of the Class of '77.

- His daughter, Doris LEUNG Chung See, who also died, enrolled in an HKU summer programme in the Arts Faculty.
- According to Mrs Leung, Ken was shot while trying to save her and others.
- He is survived only by his wife and a son who is injured and still in an intensive care unit.
- On behalf of the University, I salute Ken for his courage and his selflessness in the face of great personal danger.

- He will be remembered as an outstanding and brave member of HKU, and a remarkable Hong Kong citizen.
- Our thoughts are now with *his* family, and indeed for all those who suffered in this tragedy.
- Ladies and Gentlemen,
- May I ask all of you to stand and join me for a minute's silence in memory of *all* the victims of this terrible and tragic siege

- Thank you.
- Let us now return to the main purpose of this ceremony.
- It is my pleasure to greet you, our new students, at the beginning of your studies here.
- This ceremony is our chance to formally welcome you into the University Family, and to suggest how to make the most of your time at HKU.

- May I also extend a special welcome to our distinguished alumnus and Honorary Graduate, Dr Thomas Chan Sze-tong.
- I want to thank Dr Chan for so kindly agreeing to speak to us on this special occasion.
- For the remaining time, let me share a few thoughts with our new students.

- Dear Freshmen:
- Each of you have worked hard to secure a place in this First and Foremost University
- Taking a seat in Loke Yew Hall, the great hall of HKU, in this Inauguration Ceremony is obviously a very exciting thing, not just for yourself, but also for your parents and teachers.
- Congratulations!

- Yes – HKU is different
- We have a long tradition in providing whole person education
- While most other universities offer a place for students to study and learn, we ask our students to take part in additional activities, inside and outside of classrooms, in Hong Kong and around the world.
- We believe that university education is a total learning experience.

- We offer opportunities for you to participate and expose you to challenges that, we believe, will prepare you well for your future in this ever-changing world
- We want you to feel comfortable with problems and issues that are unheard of. These are sometime labelled as ill-defined problems!
- To provide you with the skills to deal with ill-defined problems is one of HKU's educational aims.

- How do we teach you how to deal with problems which we cannot grasp?
- The answer is that we don't teach you – you have to learn it by yourselves
- We believe that your ability to deal with such difficult problems will grow with your experience, your ability to research, and your ability to learn to learn
- So, be ready to open your mind and be receptive to new ideas, and seize all opportunities to see for yourself the real world beyond classrooms and campus

- I encourage you to join the various co-curricular activities around you
- I am sure the orientation activities in the past two weeks, in the Halls or in your Faculty, have given you a taste of what is available at HKU
- You will have internships and overseas exchange opportunities in your senior years
- We also have mentorship programmes, where our alumni and community leaders share their experience and provide guidance to students

- There are many, many more, in forms that you may not have ever experienced before
- Through these activities, I hope that you will discover abilities, potentials, strengths, and ambitions in yourself that you have never realised before either
- So [#1], do participate and discover yourself
- But, let me also remind you to set your own pace and list your own priorities; it will be up to ***you*** to define your life in HKU; don't be a blind follower

- That brings to my next point: As HKU students, you are expected to think critically and independently
- Freedom of intellectual thought and personal expression is something that HKU has always stood for
- But, with these, comes great responsibility too
- In a moment, Dr Albert Chow, Dean of Student Affairs will explain what the University motto is
- Sapientia et virtus – wisdom and virtue

- Wisdom of course comes with knowledge, ie your academic learning, but it is virtue I am talking about
- At HKU, you are expected to be honest to yourselves, to hold the highest moral standards, and to be responsible individuals
- Be responsible to yourselves, to your families and friends, and to society
- Finally, I want to say that HKU will be 100 years old next year
- Generations of our graduates have helped build the Hong Kong we know today

- That's 100 years of academic excellence and service to the community
- 100 years of history and heritage
- Dear students, you just joined the HKU Family; you are now a part of these great traditions
- But, your world is not just the local community, not just Hong Kong
- You have the responsibility to make a difference for everyone and to help create a better tomorrow for humankind
- Thank you for allowing me to share a few thoughts with you this morning

- And once again, welcome to the First and Foremost University of Hong Kong
- And now, let's proceed to the Robing Ceremony.
- It is a time-honoured tradition of this University that, at formal occasions and ceremonies, our undergraduate students should be robed in their academic gowns, their gowns of green.
- Hear now the call of tradition, and answer by donning the Green Gowns of the University of Hong Kong.