

## 185<sup>th</sup> Congregation of the University of Hong Kong

**By Professor Lap-Chee Tsui**  
*(please check against delivery)*

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Ms Anna Wu, Graduates and Family Members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to speak to you at this 185<sup>th</sup> Degrees Congregation of the University of Hong Kong.

Graduates of the Class of 2011, today marks both the end of one chapter in your lives, and the beginning of another.

We gather here to celebrate your achievements as you graduate from one of the finest institutions of higher learning in the world. The University and I, and all those who have joined you here today, are certainly very proud of you.

So, on behalf of the University, let me extend my warmest congratulations to you all!

As you now turn your thoughts to the road ahead, do not forget about the people who have helped you on your way – your family, your teachers and your friends.

All along, they have believed in your talent and abilities, and have supported you, and they deserve your gratitude and respect.

To them, and to you, my dear graduates, on this special day, I would like to convey the following message to you:

From today onward, you are a graduate of HKU. No one will be able to take away this distinct honour from you.

More important, you are part of a lineage that links you all the way back to the 23 students who made history in 1916 by becoming the first cohort of HKU graduates.

Today, the University is celebrating its Centenary, and YOU, as the Class of 2011, are 7,406 strong. And you now stand with over 140,000 graduates who have gone on to serve their community with the knowledge and leadership education received from this First and Foremost University.

Indeed, Congregations have always been important events at HKU, and they still are!

My dear graduates, HKU has always been very proud of its history.

When HKU was founded over a hundred years ago, Sir Frederick Lugard, the then Governor of Hong Kong, and the first Chancellor of this University, said (and I quote):

*“It is my belief that the graduates of the University ... aim to make their country better and greater, and to share with others the benefits they have themselves received”.*<sup>4</sup>

What a profound vision for a University! And I can say it loud and clear that, 100 years on, the graduates of HKU have lived up to Sir Frederick's aspirations.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, to illustrate this point, please allow me to introduce an exemplary graduate of the University – the Honourable Anna WU Hung Yuk – who has been doing exactly that. She has spent a lifetime courageously standing up for the dignity and rights of the individual, while tirelessly working for the welfare and improvement of society.

She is currently a member of the Executive Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Chairperson of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority, and a member of the Law Reform Commission.

Anna received her LLB degree from HKU in 1974 and her PCLL in 1975.

She was a member of the Legislative Council from 1993 to 1995, during which time she initiated the Equal Opportunities Bill, the first Private Member's Bill dealing comprehensively with all forms of discrimination.

The current anti-discrimination laws and the Equal Opportunities Commission came about as a consequence of her initiative.

Anna was the Chairperson of the Equal Opportunities Commission from 1999 to 2003. During her term, she successfully litigated against the government in several high-profile cases on gender bias in education and discrimination against people associated with mental illness in employment.

Anna is also a member of the Operations Review Committee of the Independent Commission against Corruption of Hong Kong, ensuring that the watchdog against corruption is itself being watched and that it operates within the realm of the rule of law.

Anna is a Justice of the Peace, and was awarded the Silver Bauhinia Star in 2000 and the Gold Bauhinia Star earlier this year, in recognition of her outstanding public services.

I am pleased to add that Anna has also maintained strong ties with her *alma mater*! She is a strong supporter of our public law programme, particularly in the areas of human rights and anti-discrimination.

At the University, we are of course grateful for Anna's unwavering support and loyalty. She was conferred an Honorary University Fellowship earlier this year.

My dear graduates, Anna represents an example of the pride in HKU that I spoke of earlier.

Graduates of the Class of 2011, like Anna, you are now equipped with the best university education you can get in Hong Kong, and I am confident that you will be able to compete and excel, as well as to serve and contribute, in whatever challenges or opportunities that come your way.

Yes, you will face many challenges ahead. As the humanities evolve and technologies advance, the world is getting more and more complex and competitive by the day. You may fall but you

will stand up again. I hope that you will all be true to yourselves, uphold your moral principles and personal integrity, and, act as true leaders of society.

Have confidence in yourselves and stand tall!

The world needs you!

At the same time, please remember that YOU will always be a member of the HKU Family. Share with us your stories. Make us all proud of you! Or, let us know how we can be of assistance to you. Your teachers and my colleagues are always available.

Finally, please keep in touch with your *alma mater*, support its causes, and make sure that it continues to make history in years to come.

I wish you the very, very best in all your endeavours!

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Graduates and Family members, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to present to you an individual who represents respect for human rights, commitment to public service, and lifelong loyalty to the University – the Honourable Anna WU Hung Yuk, who will now speak to the Congregation.