



## **Hope in a World of Chaos**

### **HKBU Honorary Doctoral Degree Conferment President's Address**

Honorary Doctoral Degree Recipients, Distinguished Guests, Colleagues and Students,

Our world is in chaos. We have been hit by social unrests, the pandemic, geopolitical tension, climate change ... Across the world we have youngsters losing hope, parents losing jobs, families losing loved ones, and governments losing leadership. It is against this global backdrop of confusion and distress that we gather here today to honour six individuals who re-instil hope in us and restore smiles to our faces. They show us how to find peace and optimism in a world of chaos.

These six individuals are Dr Cheng Yan-kee, Dr Liu Chak-wan, Professor Jeremy K Nicholson, Professor Sir Fraser Stoddart, Dr Stanley Y L Yim, and Professor Zhong Binglin. The six citations on them are each a chapter on how human ingenuity can change the world.

From science and business to education and engineering, all culminating in service to humanity, the six of them have dramatically changed the way we live. Their vision and capability to make a meaningful impact on society and our lives is especially inspiring at this difficult time as we struggle with newly emerging global challenges and search for opportunities for creativity and growth.

The coronavirus and the tectonic shifts in global politics are transforming the world beyond all recognition. Nothing will ever be the same. But one thing remains unchanged – our honorary doctoral degree recipients' and HKBU's shared commitment to make the world a better place, and inspiring our students with new knowledge, new hope and new responsibility. This has made us more focused than ever to rethink and reflect on what is most important to education and to humankind.

Our honorary doctoral degree recipients are united by their clarity of thought and boldness, and the University is indeed very blessed to be inspired by their talents. They shine a beacon of hope on what can be achieved through hard work and perseverance in this unpredictable new normal.

At HKBU, we are also shaping our future with bold new initiatives. Recently we have launched six new exciting interdisciplinary labs to offer creative solutions to emerging global challenges, be it through artificial intelligence or computational medicine. Despite the unprecedented nature of the current situation, I am sure we are in an excellent position to advance our liberal arts education and develop the next generation of leaders.

Though many friends cannot attend in person today due to the virus, we are much blessed to celebrate the achievements of our recipients and welcome them to the HKBU family in a new form of solidarity and a renewed spirit of togetherness.

Thank you.

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