

## Professor Nancy IP

Distinguished guests, members of the Class of 2023, parents, friends and colleagues,

A very warm welcome to HKUST's 31<sup>st</sup> Congregation! Thank you for joining us as we celebrate the outstanding achievements of the Class of 2023. I am honored and delighted to address our accomplished graduates on this momentous occasion.

Graduates, my heartfelt congratulations to all of you. As I look out at this sea of bright faces, I am filled with immense pride. Not only have you worked tirelessly, dedicating countless hours to the pursuit of knowledge, but you have also demonstrated resilience, determination, and an unwavering commitment to your studies during a unique period in our global history - the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic brought unprecedented challenges, testing the strength and unity of our community. Our faculty and staff worked hard to ensure that your educational journey remained uninterrupted, and you met the challenges head-on with determination. I applaud all of you for persevering under these difficult circumstances. Your success is a testament to your commitment to learning, growth, and personal development, and shows that you are capable of overcoming any obstacle that comes your way.

Today, we celebrate not just your scholastic achievements but also the transformative power of education. Education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge, but the power that unlocks the doors of opportunity, empowering individuals to shape a brighter future. At HKUST, we are committed to providing an education that not only cultivates knowledge and skills but also fosters curiosity and creativity, broadens minds, builds self-awareness, and strengthens character.

As you embark on the next chapter of your lives, you may be feeling daunted and ambivalent. We live in a fast-paced world that is constantly evolving. And our world is facing numerous complex challenges. Climate change, social inequality, global health crises, and technological disruptions are just a few of the issues that demand our attention and collective action.

Graduates, HKUST has provided you with a world-class education and nurtured values such as integrity, compassion, and a commitment to excellence. You represent the very essence of 1-HKUST, and the innovative can-do spirit that defines our University. You have the skills to not just adapt but thrive in the world at large. So, go forth with confidence and aspire to make a meaningful difference around you. Embrace challenges you encounter as opportunities for you to become change-makers, innovators, and

leaders. Channel your talents, your creativity, and your voice to generate actions and innovative solutions. As graduates of HKUST, you carry a legacy of excellence. Carry this pride with you, wherever you go.

And remember, even though you are physically leaving the University, the bond you have forged among yourselves, your fellow graduates, and your alma mater, will forever connect you as members of the great HKUST family. You are now part of a rich and diverse community that spans the globe, a community that will continue to support you throughout your life's journey. Your success is our success.

Today's momentous occasion is made all the more special, as it marks the first time we have performed our university anthem at a congregation. With its melody, lyrics, and musical production reflecting the dedicated efforts of our HKUST family, I hope this anthem will forever stay in your hearts as you carry our 1-HKUST ethos and the spirit of innovation into the community.

On behalf of the entire HKUST family, congratulations Class of 2023! Your achievements are a testament to your strength and determination. Now go forth with confidence as you embark on this exciting new chapter of your life. Embrace challenges, seize

opportunities, and honor the values, principles, and bonds of friendship you cultivated at HKUST. Your future is full of endless possibilities, and I have no doubt you will go on to accomplish great things.

I wish you all the very best in your future endeavors, and look forward to seeing you again as HKUST alumni. Thank you.