

Dr the Hon TUNG Chee Hwa

Citation

Dr Tung Chee Hwa has the unique distinction of being Hong Kong Special Administrative Region's first Chief Executive. He will be remembered as the Chief Executive who shepherded the grand concept of "One Country, Two Systems" into reality. He will also be remembered for leading the restructuring of Hong Kong's economy for sustainable economic growth.

Dr Tung took the helm amidst skepticism about the concepts of "One Country, Two Systems" and "Hong Kong People Governing Hong Kong with a High Degree of Autonomy". From the outset, he emphasized the importance of the "two systems" aspect of the concept, ensuring that our freedoms are protected, our way of life preserved, and the rule of law upheld. He secured the smooth continuity of our splendid civil service via the "through train" arrangements. And he governed with inclusiveness and tolerance.

Today, the successful implementation of "One Country, Two Systems" is plain for all to see.

The transitional challenges were made more difficult by the economic tremors of the Asian financial crisis, and the subsequent burst of the asset bubble. At the same time, with increasing globalization, Hong Kong's cost structure was no longer competitive. Hong Kong needed to move up the value chain as a premier service provider. With China's progressive opening up, Hong Kong was losing its status as the only "gateway to China".

In short, Hong Kong needed to restructure, redefine and reposition itself in a new and evolving environment. Foreseeing the economic advantages to Hong Kong brought about by "One Country, Two Systems", he leveraged these advantages into making Hong Kong the primary financial, logistic and business services provider to a rapidly growing Mainland economy.

He led the Government to initiate, build and shape the CEPA program, and in 2003 successfully secured the Central Government's support for this win-win arrangement. Today, CEPA and the various economic restructuring initiatives underpin our economic foundation.

Dr Tung will be remembered for his dedication to education. Acting on his conviction that education is key to Hong Kong's continuing success and the pathway for upward social mobility, his administration invested heavily to improve Hong Kong's primary and secondary education, the benefits of which are now bubbling to the surface. He promoted the concept of life-long learning, and also set a target that by year 2007 sixty per cent of our senior secondary school leavers should have a place at full-time sub-degree and undergraduate levels. This target had in fact been exceeded by 2005.

But one of his greatest visionary policies was the support of Hong Kong's university education. Local universities, including HKUST, had a loyal friend in Dr Tung. He will always live in our

institutional memory as an ardent believer in our ambitions to bring high quality to higher education.

He guided Hong Kong along the path of transformation into a knowledge-based society, thereby putting UST among others centre-stage in this visionary undertaking. Dr Tung's administration threw its weight behind our far-reaching blueprint for raising the bar of academic excellence. Today, all our institutions of higher learning can boast their own stellar achievements. Notably, UST has gained global recognition as a leading international university. We are most recently ranked the 17th among the world's top 100 technology universities, and our Kellogg-HKUST EMBA program has been consistently ranked among the top three in the world. As our first Chancellor, Dr Tung will be proud that we have come this far that fast. He will also be pleased to know that greater things are being unleashed in our 15-year Strategic Plan.

These are all dreams that Dr Tung had cherished, making it possible for us to hatch our plans and engineer Hong Kong's hi-tech future. This is why his presence today, as a visionary leader who believes that education is the prescription for prosperity, is majestically fitting for our congregation.

His foresight in turning Hong Kong into a knowledge society fit for the 21st century is coming into focus, one student at a time, one project at a time, one dream at a time. We honor him as a visionary leader in the strategic development of higher education.

Dr Tung continues to serve the country on a bigger stage as Vice-chairman of the National

People's Consultative Conference. With his international credentials, his leader's eye-view of Hong Kong and strategic understandings of the Mainland, Dr Tung's sage advice is just what the nation needs. His elevation to the Vice-chairmanship is a high honour for Hong Kong and a platform for his greater service to the nation.

Mr Pro-chancellor, I have the great honour to present to you, on behalf of the University, Dr Tung Chee Hwa, a true son of Hong Kong and proud visionary father of its first SAR Government, and current Vice-chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, for the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences *honoris causa*.