

Graduation Ceremony 2011/2012

Speech by
President Lei Heong Lok

We are here today to celebrate the graduation of the Class of 2012 of Macao Polytechnic Institute – the first time for the Institute to hold its graduation ceremony in June. It marks the day when MPI sends off another batch of graduates with the knowledge and skills to become future pillars of society, an achievement made possible by the unfailing attention and support of MPI from the SAR Government and the local community, as well as the hard work and dedication of all MPI students, staff and faculty. We are honoured to have the Chief Executive of Macao SAR, Dr Chui Sai On, and many other distinguished guests from Mainland China, the US, the UK and Portugal, in addition to parents of graduates, to share this auspicious occasion with us. First of all, let us extend a warm welcome as well as sincere thanks to all of them. At the same time, please join me in offering our heartfelt congratulations to all our graduates on the successful completion of their studies and on moving into a new phase of life, wishing them all the best in their future endeavours.

As you are to leave MPI soon, you have every right to be proud of your Alma Mater. Over the years Macao Polytechnic Institute has grown from a small institution offering mainly three-year higher diploma programmes and certificate programmes at its inception in the pre-handover period, into a multi-disciplinary teaching and research higher education institution today offering 18 bachelor's degree programmes, along with 9 joint Master's and 2 joint PhD programmes in cooperation with several leading universities overseas and on the Mainland. This phenomenal growth is primarily attributable to the wise leadership of the SAR Government. With the imminent announcement of Macao's new tertiary education law, I believe we will definitely benefit from the Government's vision and blueprint for further development of higher education in Macao. With MPI's commitment being "rooted in Macao and backed up by the motherland while facing the world and striving for excellence", we will redouble our efforts in nurturing more local talent of higher quality, in return for the continuing, longstanding support of the SAR Government and local community.

I would also like to thank all MPI students and parents for the unswerving support you have afforded us over the years. The trust you place in us and the invaluable advice you provide have always been a strong impetus to our progress. MPI has been continuously improving the quality of its teaching as part of its core work, by implementing a number of measures including student course evaluation questionnaires, regular student dialogues and reforms to our syllabi. In order to collect information on the outcomes of our education, MPI

has conducted Graduate Destination Surveys over the past decade. The results have been gratifying: over 90% of MPI's graduates have been successful in either finding employment or pursuing further studies at other higher education institutions, and the majority of employers and higher education institutions surveyed have expressed satisfaction with the performance of MPI graduates. With its educational quality having been widely recognised by the local community, the number of applications for enrolment on MPI's programmes by local high school graduates has remained the highest among local higher education institutions in recent years. Meanwhile, the number of Mainland students applying for admission to MPI keeps rising year by year, despite MPI's admission requirement for Mainland students to meet the entrance examination scores of state key universities. In addition, MPI has endeavoured to obtain professional accreditation of its degree programmes in line with international standards. For example, last year the BSc Programme in Computing at MPI was successful in achieving the highest level of certification granted by the UK's Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET). Students of this programme will thus be recognised as having the academic qualifications required to be an IET chartered engineer upon successful graduation. We are striving to obtain professional accreditation for more of the degree programmes offered by MPI.

The achievements of MPI have been the result of the joint efforts of all our staff, faculty, and students, who have been working painstakingly in the quest for excellence with one heart and one mind, inspired by the motto: "Go forward and never stop." With China's national strategy of strengthening economic and cultural exchanges and the SAR Government's commitment to constructing a service platform of economic and trade cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries, MPI has pledged itself to assuming a key role in enhancing teaching and research in Portuguese language and culture and promoting educational cooperation with them. This year, I have had the privilege of being selected as one of the foreign corresponding academicians by the Lisbon Academy of Science of Portugal, as well as being awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Lisbon. These honours are not just a recognition of myself personally, but also of MPI as a whole. We earn it together. I wish to take this opportunity to say a big "thank you" to all my colleagues and students for having stood beside me in MPI's endeavours over the years. Let us continue to work hard to contribute to Macao's prosperity and the nation's growth, and for peace and friendship among the peoples of the world!

Dear graduates: The sunny and bright June in Macao is beset with occasional rainy and stormy days. Similarly, while the prospects for human progress are bright, the road itself has many twists and turns. If you encounter setbacks in whatever you pursue in the future, don't lose heart. Remember that June of your college graduation, and the motto quoted by your president: "Go forward and never stop." As always, the most beautiful rainbow and sky will appear after the rain.

Finally, I wish each and every one of our guests, parents, and friends present here great health, happiness and prosperity. Thank you all very much.