

Transcript: Mr Zhenhai Huang's distinguished address at the UTS Hong Kong Alumni Reunion, Friday 26 June 2015

Distinguished Ms Yvonne Chan, Distinguished Professor Attila Brungs, Distinguished Professor William Purcell, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good evening.

I am deeply honoured to be here with all of you today. Being a graduate of UTS myself, I feel particularly at home here among Professor Brungs, Professor Purcell, as well as many other fellow alumni.

UTS is one of the most internationally recognised universities and it has nurtured countless brilliant minds over the years. Today at the UTS Hong Kong alumni reunion, I have the pleasure to meet many of them and I am sure in the near future many more will join our big family.

Over the last few decades, I have been working in business operation and management. With the recent trend of globalisation I was presented with opportunities to acquire new knowledge and learn from the experience of tackling new challenges. Through my work, I have gained valuable insights from issues encountered in the domains of corporate strategy, restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, corporate governance, product and service certification, management system certification, international standardisation and sustainable development. I have also conducted research on topics including quality concept in modern society, risk management, carbon emission, international technical training and vocational education as well as cross-border education, and was very fortunate to have some of my ideas published. In my opinion, sustainability of an enterprise is achieved through continuous innovation, which strengthens its core competency and competitiveness.

With technologies advancing at a rapid pace, competitions between enterprises have grown increasingly intense. Innovation has become the core element for an enterprise to establish its competitive advantage and attain sustainability. Innovation is built upon a foundation of knowledge on a theoretical and practical ground. The process of innovation itself is the demonstration of entrepreneurship at its finest. After years of operating and managing business, I have personally come to appreciate the importance of a solid theoretical basis, which is an essential building block of successful businesses.

My learning experience at UTS had bestowed upon me not only knowledge, but also an open mind with an international perspective. I was encouraged to think independently and constantly improve myself life-long learning even when I am no longer within the four walls of a university. What benefited me the most was the guidance and the support provided by my Supervisor, Dr Yang Jingqing. His meticulous method in conducting academic research and his way of critical thinking had exerted enormous influence on me. Even now we still regularly exchange ideas and have discussions on various issues, sometimes with valuable input from other great minds.

I consider the friendship I have forged with the staff and the alumni of UTS one of my greatest life assets. I truly valued the years I have spent as a UTS student and believe that my life will never be the same without them. UTS is a highly-regarded and innovative institute. Its academic values shaped my character and I am forever in debt to those who helped me through every step to become who I am today.

Although as a business manager I am accustomed to focus on the practical side of every new idea and innovation, I have never lost my passion for pursuing knowledge and truth in its purest form, be it in the areas of natural or social science. It is this passion that drives academic research and in turn allows practitioners of theories to satisfy their scientific curiosity through innovation.

With the recent advancement of cyber-technologies, the internet has infiltrated into every aspect of our daily lives. Our work patterns and business operational models are also revolutionised. We are not only presented with more opportunities but also face challenges that we never faced before. Under the current circumstances, continuous innovation by upgrading business models, products and services are necessary for the majorities of the businesses to survive. While some might seize and benefit from these opportunities, others suffer from this ever-increasing degree of uncertainty.

There is only one way to ensure sustainable development while fulfilling our duties of protecting the environment and the ecosystem, and that is constantly learning to innovate. Similarly the future of universities is also clouded with uncertainties in terms of changes in educational needs, mission redefining, core competency building and competitive advantage restructuring.

However I am confident that with its international vision and enviable reputation for a fusion of innovation, creativity and technology, UTS will continue to be an educational leader both domestically and internationally.

Thank you.