

March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## Congratulatory Address in the 2023 Spring Commencement Ceremony

On this occasion that we are here to hold the 2023 Spring Commencement Ceremony today, first of all, I would like to congratulate all of you who are making this prosperous start after all your persistent efforts and diligent study. I also would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the parents and their families who have been providing much love and support for the graduating students until today.

Today is also an important opportunity for all of us to once again appreciate the support of your family, seniors, friends and associates, and supervisors who have supported and guided you continuously.

Three years of living in the pandemic have been testing our response capabilities. Under the constraints of people not being able to gather together, we have overcome difficulties previously thought not to be easily realized through the ability of people to break through and take action, such as the development of remote classes by using communication technology, attending international conferences remotely and interacting with researchers and friends overseas. As the covid-19 will soon be categorized down to the class 5 in the infection disease, it may bring a break from the anomalous state we have seen so far, but there is an extremely important lesson here. It means that things that would have been difficult to move forward in peacetime without precedent were realized in the wake of the coronavirus. This shows that we are not incompetent, but that our thinking and action to get through the difficulty simply did not align well enough.

Now, I believe that the era of mass production and mass consumption which has supported the improvement of our lives has passed and our society is conscious of SDGs; and the demand for small quantities - large varieties products for individual purpose is increasing. Linking flexible and sophisticated software and solid underlying hardware in order to implement fine-grained and diversified functions is important, and a connected infrastructure combining communication technologies plays an important role.

In the era of mass consumption, the concept of depreciation, in which products have

the highest value when they are shipped and gradually lose their value as they age, was common. On the other hand, smartphones for example, the evolution of hardware and communication technology has created a mechanism that constantly upgrades software and increases functions in response to changes in the times. This state is called appreciating accumulation in the sense that experience and knowledge are accumulated and their value increases.

By the way, you have spent a certain period of time studying at Kyutech and you are here today. I would like you to think that graduation is not the goal, but the beginning of a long life ahead; and therefore you should never be depreciated from now on. During your academic life in Kyutech, you have prepared yourselves to accumulate appreciation. Therefore, from now on, please continue to learn various things, constantly upgrade yourself, and accumulate values. As a result, even if unexpected difficulties such as the COVID-19 pandemic occur, you will be able to use your experience, wisdom, and networks to pave the way for the future.

Kyutech is constantly exploring the world's latest technologies and are striving to keep their strengths from becoming obsolete. If you feel uneasy or limited in your own power, Kyutech will always be there for you to continue to play an active role by providing various opportunities such as industry-academia collaboration, joint research, and graduate schools to advance your study.

Looking around the world, unfortunately, there are always conflicts going on in somewhere. Despite of difficult relationships among countries, please remember your friends and classmates from all over the world whom you have interacted during your time at Kyutech, and live your life from now on by cherishing your personal bonds. There is no doubt that these efforts will act as a powerful restoring force to bring the world back to a state of tranquility.

In addition, please make full use of the accumulated power to bring about social change by utilizing the technical skills and human power that you have cultivated in every situation. From now on, economic activities will be forced under many difficult constraints, such as issues on environment, resource and energy, and the international political situation. It gives us great challenges, on the other hand, whether you can overcome or not does depend on your flexible ideas and actions that can turn problems into opportunities. I am looking forward to seeing your youthful power, action, and breakthrough power backed by the solid technical skills and global

competencies you have cultivated at Kyutech, and to become a driving force for the dramatic development of world society in the future.

Last but not least, I hope that you will continue to enjoy life, feel many things, think, learn, and play an active role in this ever-changing era, taking advantage of the many good encounters you have had at Kyutech. I would like to conclude my message to you by offering my heartfelt congratulations on your successful departure.

Thank you very much and congratulations.

Yasunori Mitani

President

Kyushu Institute of Technology