

September 25th 2023

Congratulatory Address for the 2023 Fall Commencement Ceremony

Yasunori Mitani, President
Kyushu Institute of Technology (Kyutech)

It is a great pleasure for us to welcome you to the 2023 Fall Commencement Ceremony here today.

First, I would like to congratulate all of you on your achievement and new start of your prosperous future. I would also like to express my heartfelt congratulations to all the parents and families who are also happy and proud of the graduates after giving financial and emotional support to this day.

As we are finally coming out of the long tunnel of the covid-19 pandemic in this year, not only domestic activities but also international exchanges have become more and more active. Learning from our experience during the pandemic, we are starting a new way of living rather than returning to the same way of living before the pandemic.

On the other hand, as we can see now, international conflicts are becoming greatly intense, and in the face of the ravages of war unfolding in the real world today, we humans are now in the great danger of repeating the same mistakes we have made many times in our history.

I believe that the progress and development of modern science and technology is because of the innovation that has been created through the meetings and exchanges of people with various intelligence and personalities in a free and open environment. However, the world now has been facing problems of many social divisions, and if the divided society deprives the opportunities for such exchange from us, our loss is immeasurable.

Therefore, global communications and exchanges among people and among institutions are important today, and it is one of your most important roles in society after today's graduation under these circumstances. You must have spent your university life, sometimes worrying and helping each other with the people from many countries and regions at Kyutech together. I believe each of you has built various human networks during this time.

You will be now walking on our separate ways from today, but I expect and hope that you can continue to strengthen your networks you have built at Kyutech with strong bonds even more than ever.

We, as academia, can create relationships where we can connect remotely even when we are physically separated, deepen our interactions when we meet face-to-face, shake hands, and hug with each other, then figure out solutions to our problems through intensive mutual discussion but not by fighting against each other with weapons.

In divided society, you lose your control to make the right decisions and find the right directions when you are dominated by the idea of eliminating those who are different from you. I am certain that your knowledge, skills, experience, inquisitiveness, curiosity, human networks, and everything you have gained at Kyutech is not because of AI but meeting and working with your supervisors and mentors, making friends, and interacting with students and researchers from many different countries and regions in Kyutech.

Our life still goes on with the virus which is mutating time to time and conflicts around the world continue, and it does not seem to end soon unfortunately. However, it could give us an opportunity to take this moment to appreciate and think of the importance of our health, our lives, and cooperation instead of dividing.

Human Intelligence can always continue to advance and evolve based on our experience and I think what is needed is the wisdom to fully utilize our knowledge with curiosity which Artificial Intelligence does not have yet.

Kyutech has this important keyword, “creation of diversity”. Diversity is an essential element for recombinant innovation to occur. As a hypothetical example, imagine a situation in which we are conducting research only with male students who have graduated from schools from neighboring areas, the results of this research will strongly reflect the perspectives of men in the area, and opportunities to generate further ideas will be limited. However, when different gender, people from different areas, from overseas, and from industries join and work together on the research, the possibility of creating ideas that would not have been possible in a limited group will increase dramatically. In other words, high diversity has a strong correlation with greater opportunities for innovation.

I believe you have made many good friends, and I am confident that all the encounters you have during your life at Kyutech will enrich your future which could also give a positive impact on the future of Kyutech.

Finally but not least, I wish each of you joyful and prosperous life with all blessing of many valuable meetings and experience you have with us at Kyutech, and once again, I would like to send my congratulations on successful departure for your new journey.

Thank you very much and congratulations.