

**Speech by YBhg. Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah, AO
Chancellor, Sunway University,
Sunway University Graduation Ceremony, 9 October 2015**

Welcome to the Sunway University graduation ceremony!

First, my heartiest congratulations to the Class of 2015 for achieving this significant milestone in your lives. I take this opportunity to also recognise your parents, families and friends for all their dedication and support. I am certain they are all very pleased to share in your joy, and most importantly, to be part of today's memorable event.

Class of 2015,

From just 200 students in the beginning, we now have tens of thousands of students coming through these hallowed hallways. It is our hope that with each batch, we also graduate global citizens who think globally and act locally: graduates who "Think to Make a Difference," and with the capacity to build a better society for all of us.

We are therefore very proud of our alumni who have risen to the challenge to make a positive impact in the lives of others. For example, celebrity photographer Kid Chan raises cancer awareness through his "Hope for Our Children Campaign" and by being a MenCare ambassador. Anthony Tan, founder of MyTeksi whose app has game-changed how people travel, has also helped raise the income of taxi drivers all over Southeast Asia. Jagadesan Chandra Mohan, recipient of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Community scholarship, is today the Founder and Group Operational Manager at Mitra IT Solutions and he contributes regularly to supporting and mentoring new scholars.

It is successful alumni stories like these, which continue to inspire and drive Sunway University to be a world-class university. In the past few years, we have tied-up with several global education thought leaders, such as Harvard University, University of Oxford and University of Cambridge to bring the best minds to our University to produce even more graduates who seek to make a positive difference in society.

Dear graduates,

Despite having achieved a remarkable milestone in your life today, I urge you not to rest on your laurels. Your own legacy has yet to be built. You would know by now, that you are

graduating in times of tremendous change. The global economy is more interconnected than ever before, the pace of innovation is quicker, and the world is facing a wide range of geopolitical and economic uncertainties.

At the same time, we are watching the rise of a new sharing economy, a progression on human rights, and a long-awaited emphasis on responsibility and sustainability. Volatility is the new norm, but the good news is, I believe you are well-prepared as Sunway University graduates. So take the chance to lead and overcome these challenges.

On that note, allow me a few minutes to share with you three important lessons I have learned by leading a company of 13,000 staff and doing business across 50 locations worldwide. I hope that my sharing will help you when your own paths are uncertain, and to do better than me.

The first lesson: **You must have a purpose in life.** "If you don't know where you are going – you will go nowhere." This is especially true in a fast-evolving world.

Sunway has been around for more than 40 years and we have gone through two difficult cycles but we never wavered. At the heart of Sunway, we have a purpose. We master plan, nurture and develop our communities so that we can, collectively, have a brighter future. In good times and bad we continue to invest in the things that matter most to the communities – be it education, healthcare, or community responsibility programmes. This has paid off for us. Last year, we were named Malaysia's top developer, and that speaks volumes for having a sense of purpose.

Dear Graduates,

In addition to purpose, I hope that you will **develop a sense of personal values.** This is my second lesson.

As we all know, the old approach to success is a relentless focus on the outward markers of success. It used to be about the cars you can buy, the titles that you can have, and the size of your corner office. If you define your success with these external, material things, it will just lead to complacency. A sense of personal values, however, tells us when we are not doing our best, and to keep challenging ourselves. In this hyper-competitive age, none of us can afford to be complacent.

Sunway Group is built upon the values of **Integrity, Humility and Excellence** and we hope

that by journeying throughout our lively campus, you too would have embraced these values. With these values as part of your core character, I have no doubt that each and every one of you will become invaluable contributors, and pillars of strength to your respective communities, societies and countries.

The third lesson relates to **education**. John Dewey once said, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself," and I cannot agree more. I am a firm believer in lifelong learning, which is why we have programmes like the Jeffrey Cheah Distinguished Speaker Series for the community. More recently, we have partnered with Harvard University Asia Centre to bring in the Asia Leadership Institute or ALI to the Sunway campus.

With ALI at Sunway, we can look forward to greater transfer of knowledge via the in-flow of graduates from Harvard, Stanford, MIT and other Ivy-League universities, which will bring with them cutting-edge knowledge and best world practices. For 2016, ALI has lined up more than 20 programmes on leadership and strategy, catering to different levels of students, youths and young professionals. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to join us for a journey of lifelong learning with ALI and Sunway.

On my part, we will continue to give to society by ensuring quality education in perpetuity. Just last month, the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation made history by awarding a record amount of RM45 million in scholarships to more than 3,000 recipients. This is the highest annual disbursement in the history of the Foundation, bringing the total amount of scholarships awarded to RM 210 million to more than 23,000 deserving and bright students.

Class of 2015,

We look forward to your continuous success in your chosen paths beyond Sunway University. Some of you may have planned for a successful career in the public or private sector, some of you may have decided to start a business, and some of you may have decided to continue furthering your studies, here or abroad. But no matter what your chosen paths are, we would like for you to take these paths with confidence and pride that you have graduated from Sunway University, one of the leading private universities in Malaysia.

I hope that in the years to come, we can continue to build upon the relationships we have fostered through your years here through the Sunway Alumni community. It is our hope that the Sunway Alumni will become a repository of your different capabilities, and our shared values, that will help propel even more young people into inventing a better future.

In conclusion, congratulations once again on your graduation and I wish you all the very best in your exciting journey through life. I look forward to your great progress and future success. Remember, it is within you to shape the future, your future, and our future together.

I would like to leave with you what I have always maintained as my purpose, my personal values and outlook towards education, and that is, **I aspire to inspire before I expire**. As you move on to the next chapter of your life, let us go forth together with Integrity, Humility and Excellence to serve society for a better world.

Thank you.