

Honorary Doctor of Science

Mr XU Guanhua

Citation written and delivered by Professor Frances F YAO

Chancellor:

It is my great honour to introduce China's prominent scientist and Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Xu Guanhua, to all of you here today and to read this citation for his Honorary Doctoral Degree of Science conferred upon him by City University of Hong Kong.

Mr Xu Guanhua is an expert in remote sensing application science and geographical information systems. He has been appointed Minister of Science and Technology, an Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and a Member of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. From 1979 to 1981, he attended advanced studies on remote sensing science at the University of Stockholm in Sweden. He has served as the Director of the Research Institute of Forest Resource Information Techniques, Chinese Academy of Forestry; Director of the Institute of Remote Sensing Applications of the Chinese Academy of Sciences; Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences; Vice-Minister of the State Science and Technology Commission; Chairman of the Judging Panel for the State Science and Technology Awards; and Chief Editor of the *Journal of Remote Sensing*. Mr Xu was also elected a Fellow of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, a Foreign Academician of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences, and an Academician of the International Academy of Astronautics.

Mr Xu Guanhua has led many national research and development projects into key technologies and many international research collaborations. He has brought fresh insights into the theory and methodology of integrated remote sensing and serial mapping, and successfully developed the first digital image processing system for remote sensing satellites in China. His outstanding achievements have brought him many national prizes and he has presented many influential papers at international conferences.

In February 2001, Mr Xu was appointed as the Minister of Science and Technology, assuming the mission of planning the development of science and technology in China. He has advocated new approaches for technological advancement and made significant contributions to establishing strategies and plans for the new era due to his thorough understanding of the world trend in science and technology and domestic development situation. He greatly emphasizes the importance of improving China's capability of independent innovations, pointing out that enterprises are the hosts of technological innovations and establishing an enterprise-based technological innovative system provides a breakthrough for a national innovative system. "Experience has shown that in order to make progress in market- and application-oriented innovations, we must have enterprises playing the central role," Mr Xu says.

Mr Xu also stresses that original innovations instigate changes in the quality of science and technology. They are the foundation of technological innovation, the basis of technological competitiveness, and evidence of a nation contributing to civilization. For science and technology to lead us to the future, we must provide stable support and devise proactive plans for both foundational science and forefront technology, both of which play an important role in the long-term development of our country. In terms of management mechanisms, Mr Xu advocates better quality assurance systems to promote more efficient, just, fair and open management procedures for China's science and technology development plans. In addition, Mr Xu gives particular attention and support to nurturing talent and advocates open policies that will attract outstanding personnel from abroad and bring local talent to the attention of the world. Meanwhile, he lays great emphasis on the significance of substantially raising the quality of national technology and making sure that the popularization of science goes hand in hand with technological innovations, so that mankind will benefit from the outcomes of scientific and technological development and the innovative spirit will be the power engine that energizes the community's creativity.

It has been under Mr Xu's leadership that in recent years China's scientific and technological progresses have scored remarkable international recognition in various fields, including information, biology, agriculture, materials, energy and many others. After the Central Government proposed building an innovative China, Mr Xu has been actively involved in fulfilling the specified strategic arrangements under the guidance of scientific development and has formulated plans which map the way forward for scientific and technological development in

China, and provide a powerful technical support for building a well-off society in an all-round way.

Chancellor, may I now represent City University of Hong Kong to ask you to confer the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*, to the Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Xu Guanhua.