

**Welcoming Address by Professor Hualing Fu, Warren Chan Professor in
Human Rights and Responsibilities; Dean of Law, The University of
Hong Kong at the 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner of the
Faculty of Law of The University of Hong Kong (24 November 2019)**

The Honorable Chief Justice, Mr Geoffrey Ma Tao-li, The Honorable Council Chairman, Professor the Honorable Arthur Li Kwok-cheung; President Zhang Xiang; Distinguished Guests, Donors, Alumni, Colleagues, Students, Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Evening. Tonight we gather here to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Faculty of Law. On behalf of the Faculty, I would like to extend our warmest welcome to all of you to this Gala dinner. And thank you for joining us at this challenging time.

The Faculty was born 50 years ago. The Department of Law, as it was called, was established out of reflections prompted by Hong Kong's most serious post-War political crisis. We soon took on a firm identity of promoting rule of law in Hong Kong for transformative social change. We were determined to incubate local legal talent to help shape the legal system in Hong Kong - for Hong Kong.

The Faculty has since become an integral part of Hong Kong's legal system. We have grown and developed responsively while sustaining academic quality. We have witnessed Hong Kong's social and economic take-off and its political transformation. In particular, we have faced the challenges that history presented and, 50 years after our creation, we continue to contribute to the continuation of the common law in Hong Kong and to the health and durability of the rule of law since 1997.

The Faculty has been successful in achieving our major objectives in research, teaching and societal contributions. We are successful because we have our alumni community, donors, the University, colleagues, students and friends firmly behind us. On behalf of the Faculty, I would like to take this special occasion to thank all of you for your guidance, your support, and your generosity.

I want to thank the first batch of law students in Hong Kong, the class of 1972, for setting such an excellent example for the subsequent classes to follow; I want to thank the donors, alumni community, friends of the faculty in the judiciary, DoJ, the professions, the media, and the larger society for your support. You have given us full-bodied guidance in challenging times; you have offered us courage to stand firm on controversial issues; you have donated generously to support Faculty research

and teaching; and you have provided mentorship, internship, and advice to our students.

I want to thank the senior management for your support and your patience with us. We are a unique institution in HK and the University in many ways and I thank you for your understanding.

I want to thank my colleagues for your contributions to make the Faculty great and my predecessors for their visions and leadership. It is not easy to have six law deans from the same law school to share a meal.

I want to thank our students for their passion, dedication, commitment and at the same time being reasonable and rational. I want to thank the Law Association in particular, for working with us closely in the past many months.

Ladies and Gentlemen, At 50, we know our destiny. Today, we find ourselves in the middle of another crisis that poses an even greater challenges to Hong Kong. How best can we fulfill our foundational commitment to promote the rule of law for a broader social transformation? How best can we maintain our credibility as a pivotal intellectual source which can contribute to the heavy-lifting now much-needed? And

how best can we educate future lawyers who can carry the same mission forward in the challenging times? These are hard questions which the Faculty, our alumni, the larger legal community, and the larger society need to ponder as we work towards robust collective answers. The Faculty has “a special standing in the world”, to quote Dr Munn. We, with your support, will continue to make unique contributions in sustaining and developing the rule of law in Hong Kong between now and 2047 - and for long thereafter.

Hong Kong has experienced revolutionary changes in the past 50 years and significant changes will continue to happen over the coming 50 years and beyond. The Faculty will adapt to meet the challenges as it did in the past and it will remain strong. Power comes and goes. the Faculty of Law will endure as an exceptional institution.

Thank you and enjoy the evening.