

## The Honourable Andrew LIAO Cheung-sing, *GBM, GBS, SC, JP*

Citation

Seeking to excel throughout his life, Mr. Andrew LIAO Cheung-sing is a remarkably apt fit for our high-flying University. Passionate about higher education, he steered milestone developments at HKUST during his extended eight-year term as Council Chairman. His distinguished public service is equally evident from his leading role in the development of Hong Kong's intellectual property (IP) laws and system, with a lasting impact on the city's endeavor to develop into a regional IP trading center.

A barrister by profession, Mr. Liao has always combined perseverance with a go-getting mindset. He started to create his own future from a young age, with his tenacity first recognized by Ying Wa College, where he became head boy and learned the organizational and management skills that have served him so well in the diverse roles he has held.

Always staying open to new experiences, the young Mr. Liao enrolled in the University of Hong Kong's first LLB cohort in 1969, and later pursued a Master of Laws at the London School of Economics and Political Science, studying the then novel subject of IP. As one of the first Hong Kong lawyers specialized in IP, he played a seminal role in its development, notably the enactment of the city's first substantive copyright law in 1997, the promotion of IP trading since the 2010s, and the introduction of the original grant patent system in 2019.

Among further impressive accomplishments, Mr. Liao was appointed a Deputy High Court Judge of the Supreme Court and a Non-official Member of the Executive Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Hong Kong SAR), as well as a large number of public bodies discharging a variety of functions.

Indeed, throughout his high-achieving life, Mr. Liao has never slowed down. Thus, when appointed as HKUST Council Chairman in 2015, he soon started to unfurl his vision for the University's long-term future, leaving a legacy of achievements small and large, and three towering testimonies.

First, he instituted a groundbreaking governance framework to optimize the effectiveness and diverse expertise of University Council Members – drawn largely from the community with relevant skill sets and experience – in overseeing HKUST's strategic development and institutional public accountability. With its clearly defined structure, processes, and responsibilities, the framework also has the potential to serve as a model for other institutions.

For a world-class university to nurture the next generation of leaders, whole-person development and enriching learning experiences are of paramount significance. And Mr. Liao firmly believes in the creative value of the arts, particularly at this science and technology-focused institution. Under his guiding hand, the magnificent, award-winning

Shaw Auditorium opened on our campus in November 2021 as a landmark arts and events venue for students to unleash their full potential. Bringing the University closer to the community through a top-class eco-friendly art and cultural center was another goal, now fulfilled.

At a broader level, Mr. Liao's vision centered on the expansion of the University's impact beyond Hong Kong, leading HKUST to build a new university campus in Nansha, Guangzhou, after the opportunity arose in 2017. Underpinned by a firm belief that a twin campuses' framework could combine Hong Kong's advanced research infrastructure with the vast market potential of what has become the Greater Bay Area, he championed the establishment of HKUST Guangzhou (HKUST (GZ)).

Development of this fully fledged institution and its unparalleled "Unified HKUST, Complementary Campuses" concept was a mammoth undertaking. While HKUST continued to maintain the high standard in basic research that the University already established, HKUST(GZ) would adopt a unique cross-disciplinary structure, focusing on translational research.

Such a novel collaborative approach to power forward science, technology, innovation, and talents required constant exchanges and efforts with many partners, with Mr. Liao spearheading the project, in

particular the overall strategic direction, model of collaboration, and governance framework. Despite the disruption caused by COVID-19, he ensured momentum never flagged. As a fitting demonstration of the endeavors by all concerned, in September 2022, the innovative, sustainable HKUST(GZ) successfully opened.

Looking back, Mr. Liao counts his time at HKUST as among the most satisfying of his career. Now, after completing his tenure as Council Chairman, he is embracing his new role as Chairman of the HKUST Court, the University's supreme advisory body. With his distinguished record of public service, particularly his significant contributions to the establishment of HKUST(GZ) and the promotion of IP, the Hong Kong SAR awarded him its highest honor, the Grand Bauhinia Medal, in 2022.

Council Chairman, on behalf of the Council of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, I have the high honor of presenting to you, the Hon Andrew Liao Cheung-sing, Senior Counsel and HKUST Court Chairman, for the award of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*.