

Presidential Address Delivered at the Commencement Ceremony Kyoto Junior College of Foreign Languages, March 20, 2013

Graduates, Parents, Chancellor Morita, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen assembled here today on this happiest occasion.

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Kyoto Junior College of Foreign Languages, I welcome this opportunity to congratulate our newest graduates on their successful completion of the mighty challenge of the two-year junior college study. For this reason alone, I am very proud of each one of you for your fine accomplishments.

My fellow graduates, as you stand today on the threshold of the world beyond classrooms, I can feel the hope that fills your hearts. I see optimism in your eyes, and I hear confidence in your voices. This is a tough time to be young, and I admire you for having these qualities.

Ladies and gentlemen, when we look around the world, we find the one timeless universal truth of life—the truth that exists in a compelling and sobering irony in today's chapter of human history.

We all know that we are living in a globalized world, and yet, in spite of living closer than ever before in many ways, we are still cruelly and sadly separated, indeed ravaged by war, conflicts, and disagreements.

We once believed that our climate, our oceans, the migratory paths of animals, and the diversity of plant life were all independent of our human affairs.

We assumed that endless progress in productivity and efficiency would bring us boundless happiness in life. We seldom stopped to think of the consequences of that erroneously complacent assumption, nor did we think of the far-reaching implications of our actions.

Thus, we ceaselessly pursued the twin goals of productivity and efficiency without a single moment of doubt.

As a result, we find ourselves today surrounded by serious and critical problems of ecosystem, such as global warming, environmental contamination, and even, nuclear threats. All these problems, I regret to say, are man-made problems that are accompanied by mass-production and consumption.

The great irony of all this is that the more we try to be happy, at least in a material sense, the more we do fail, it is because as material wealth increases, our self-described

happiness steadily does decline. After all, we have learned that single-minded material success results in escalating isolation and a loss of the sense of belongingness. This is sad and indeed unfortunate.

Happiness is missed when it is our goal. But, happiness comes to us naturally when we live with a purpose that gives meaning to our lives. That seems to me a great irony of life.

We may find purpose in study, in our work, and in our hobbies and interest. However above all, we find purpose in these things by rising above selfish goals and by finding purpose in living for other people.

Being selfless is the best way to take care of our selfish interests and concerns.

This is what I call the whole truth and a compelling truth of life.

How, then, ladies and gentlemen, do we find meaning in life? How do we find purpose in living for other people?

My advice to you today on this turning point in your life is that the key to success in life can be found in good communication and in compassion rather than in competition and the search for efficiency at any cost.

Fortunately, we all share pride in our university's motto, "*PAX MUNDI PER LINGUAS*" which means "World Peace through Languages." We have proudly made efforts to contribute to world peace every one of the past 65 years by translating into action this lofty ideal of our university's motto .

Our university's motto most eloquently expresses our hope, our will to find meaning in our lives—the meaning that will bring the people of the world together.

Now you are proudly graduating from Kyoto Junior College of Foreign Languages, leaving your beloved Alma Mater behind.

As many of you are already aware, in the Western world people call graduation from university a commencement, which means a beginning, or the start of doing something new.

My fellow graduates, remember this: Never stop starting anew. Today is the best opportunity to remind you of the importance of continuing education throughout your life time. I say this, because I believe that to continue to study in life is the surest key to joy and happiness, and above all to success in life.

So, continue to live and learn as long as you live on our planet, Earth.

Congratulations once again on your remarkable achievements! I wish you joy, love, and happiness in the communities, in the careers, and in the families that you will build in the coming years ahead.

I thank you very much for your kind attention.

Takeshi Matsuda
President