

Congratulatory Address
Year-End Party for KAIST International Community
Dec.5, 2017

Good evening everyone.

Thank you for coming to this year-end party. It is a pleasure, as always, to be with colleagues, students, and their family members.

I would like to thank the entire KAIST international community for their dedication, commitment, and passion they have exhibited throughout the year. Especially, thank you to all of the family members for your patience and support.

Thank you and congratulations to all the staff of the International Office who made this wonderful party happen.

Colleagues, students, and family members,

The academic year is now coming to a close. It's been a challenging year. This year is also very special to me personally as this is my first year as the president of KAIST.

As the president, I am proud of what we have accomplished together. I would like to offer my heartfelt congratulations to all of our faculty, students, and their family members who have worked so hard. I look forward to another successful year in 2018 along with all of you.

When I took office in February, I proposed a vision of KAIST as a world-leading university which can create global value. Without any doubt, the globalization of KAIST is my most urgent mission and it is a priority to realize this vision.

I would like to take this opportunity to share my three agendas for making KAIST more globalized.

First and foremost, I want to make our campus a more welcoming environment for the international community. I will make a campus where the entire international community will be able to live without any difficulties communicating at KAIST.

English fluency is a must for all employees at KAIST. It is the top criteria in hiring our staff members. This year, we hired 22 very outstanding young administrative staff members to support your academic life, research, and wellbeing here. I believe you will not have any communications problems when working our staff members going forward.

Next is diversity and inclusiveness. KAIST highly values the diversity of our campus. Diversity is a big asset. It enriches and strengthens our community. We are working to make the campus more inclusive so that all of the members of our community feel valued regardless of nationality, faith, gender, and age.

Currently, 184 faculty members and researchers from 29 countries, which represents 8.7% of the total faculty, are working at KAIST. Also, 901 international students from 92 countries, representing about 8.4 % of the total students, are now studying at KAIST. I hope to double each ratio during my term.

Lastly, we plan to enhance the global visibility of KAIST more proactively. To this end, we are expanding our networks and partnerships. We hosted Embassy Day in June to showcase the innovations and academic experience of KAIST. Nearly 100 diplomats including 31 ambassadors from 65 countries attended Embassy Day.

More noticeably, KAIST partnered with the World Economic Forum in October for seizing the momentum of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. We co-hosted a forum with the WEF on the Future Jobs and Inclusive Growth in Korea. And last month in Dubai, I agreed with WEF Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab to co-host a global forum next April in Korea. The forum reflects Chairman Schwab's strong belief that Korea will be a role model country in shaping the Fourth Industrial Revolution. He believes that KAIST will play a leading role to make Korea advance into the new industrial revolution.

I also appreciate the foreign media's recognition of KAIST's global emergence. Media from countries including Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, China, the US, and Canada featured stories of KAIST's innovations in education as well as our technology breakthroughs.

I am so proud that the global ranking institutions are acknowledging KAIST as a leading innovator. Thomson Reuters ranked KAIST the most innovative university in the Asia-Pacific region and the sixth most innovative university in the world for two years. THE invited me to share KAIST's innovation initiatives as plenary speaker at the Research Excellence Summit in May. Even more, the global university employability by THE ranked KAIST second in the world best university preparing students for the digital revolution. I believe you are in the right place.

As such, KAIST is really making significant strides to complete on the global stage now.

I do believe we could not reach this level without your hard work. I truly appreciate all of your continued effort and support.

KAIST will mark the 60th anniversary in 2031. Now, we are preparing for the next half century of KAIST. The Vision 2031 of KAIST is undergoing the final touches and we will have a declaration ceremony on March 20, 2018. Please mark your calendars now. I believe next year will be even more special for KAIST. Please join me in celebrating the new chapter of KAIST together.

I wish you and your families a happy new year filled with prosperity and joy.

Thank you very much once again.

Sung-Chul Shin
President, KAIST