

**Opening Remarks for
The Risk Quotient 2020 Conference on
“COVID-19 Pandemic and a Brave New World”
(October. 29, 2020)**

Hello everyone and welcome to the Risk Quotient 2020 Conference livestreaming from KAIST.

It is my very great pleasure to co-host this conference with the National University of Singapore. Thank you to all the speakers, audience members, and colleagues for joining us today.

NUS is a very special partner of KAIST and we have very closely collaborated in many fields over the years. My special thanks to President Tan Eng Chye, a very good friend of mine and Professor Tze Yun Leong from NUS who helped make this conference possible.

Thank you to Professor Sang-Yup Lee and Professor So-Young Kim at KAIST for your hard work.

This conference will explore the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic to help major stakeholders in Asian countries navigate the post-COVID-19 era.

I hope these sessions will lead you to think about how we can shore up resilience against this pandemic and build a new better future together.

Dearest participants,

Nuclear weapons, climate change, and viruses have threatened humanity for decades. Now, the Corona virus has claimed more than one million human lives in less than a year. This is an unprecedented tragedy we never witnessed in modern history.

COVID-19 is not just a pandemic but a socio-economic crisis.

While the impact of the pandemic will vary from country to country, it will most likely increase poverty and inequalities on a global scale.

More importantly, the crisis is global, but its impacts affect local areas. Countries cannot solve this on their own because global crises require global solidarity and collaboration.

Some say that the best way to predict the future is to create it.

Above all, we should rebuild the world during these uncertain times and reset the norms for inclusive and sustainable growth. Especially, intertwined with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we should create new technology and education platforms.

Advances in technology hold the promise of a new future that is more resilient to disease and sustainability. However, the barriers to digital access around the world are both complex and pervasive. It is obvious that this digital disparity will accelerate educational inequalities, eventually leading to irreparable socio-economic disparities.

I would like to stress that technological breakthroughs should be used to benefit us all. The private and public sectors should collaborate to facilitate inclusive learning opportunities.

Meanwhile, education will be a valuable platform to sustain new workforces that will need to adapt to the new normal. Especially for workers in times dominated by ever-evolving technologies, online education will be instrumental for upskilling and reskilling their careers as a lifelong education platform.

I believe that online education will eventually become an integral component of our education system. Successful education needs the full support of communities and equal access to opportunities.

This is a golden opportunity to make technologies more widely accessible while expanding educational opportunities. I hope that this disruption will bring about opportunities for new technology and knowledge that we can leverage to reshape the future of education.

Lastly, we should step up actions for a sustainable recovery. Many countries are making green measures a central part of their stimulus packages in the wake of COVID-19.

For instance, the Korean government recently announced its green and digital new deal. This new deal plans to reform Korea's economy by investing 160 trillion won (\$133 billion) in digital transformation, social security, and the green economy by 2025.

KAIST also launched its new deal initiative in May with funding from the Korean government to cope with the coronavirus. KAIST will concentrate on antivirus technologies, infectious disease-related big data management, and non-contact service platforms.

I cannot stress enough that one single country and stakeholder cannot resolve a global crisis. We should stand in solidarity and work collaboratively to reset for inclusive and sustainable growth around the globe.

Singapore and Korea are two of the major powers leading Asian countries. Both countries have played a key role in setting the new standard in responding to this pandemic. Consequently, the roles and responsibilities of NUS and KAIST, two leading universities in both countries, are ever growing.

I look forward to more collaboration between our two institutions as we continue to address global challenges.

Thank you very much.

October 29, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Shin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sung-Chul Shin

President, KAIST