

Honorary Doctor of Social Science

Dr the Hon Leung Chun-ying, GBM, GBS, JP



Public Orator Professor Kevin Downing

Mr Pro-Chancellor:

Dr the Hon Leung Chun-ying, Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference since 2017 and Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) from 2012 to 2017, is a well-known figure whose influence can be felt in many spheres of public life in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

Graduating from King's College in Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polytechnic (now Hong Kong Polytechnic University), Dr Leung proceeded to earn a degree in Valuation and Estate Management from Bristol Polytechnic (now the University of the West of England) in the United Kingdom (UK). The training he received in the use of land and buildings stood him in good stead when he participated in the land and housing reforms on the Mainland in the 1970s and 1980s, which paved the way for his involvement in the preparatory work for the establishment of the HKSAR. He was made Secretary-General of the Basic Law Consultative Committee in 1990. Between 1997 and 2011, Dr Leung was a member of the Executive Council of Hong Kong and was Convenor of the non-official members between 1999 and 2011. In 2012, he was duly elected the Chief Executive of HKSAR.

In his professional field, Dr Leung served as President of the Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors and Chairman of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Hong Kong

Branch. He established C. Y. Leung & Company Ltd. in 1993, which later merged with another company to become DTZ Debenham Tie Leung. Dr Leung became its Asia Pacific Chairman.

In 1978, barely a year after he returned to Hong Kong from his studies in the UK, Dr Leung joined study tours to the Mainland with other young professionals, where he gave lectures on a voluntary basis on his area of speciality to facilitate the country's march towards modernisation. This early foray into teaching foreshadowed what was to become Dr Leung's passionate long-term support for education. Dr Leung has organised outreach activities for underprivileged children, sat on boards of elementary and middle schools, and, at different times, served as the Chairman of the Council of City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) and Lingnan University. He has given unstinting support to the development of the Jockey Club College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences at CityUHK as well as to the establishment of the CityUHK (Dongguan) campus. In 2022, under his leadership, he founded the Minxin Hong Kong School (Guangzhou Nansha), opening its door to Hong Kong and foreign students.

Since 2017, when he completed his term as Chief Executive of HKSAR, Dr Leung has kept himself busy integrating Hong Kong with the Mainland. Recognising the historical trend that will inevitably bring the two societies closer together, Dr Leung works tirelessly to persuade the Hong Kong community to step out of a habitual self-limiting mindset towards the wider world of opportunities.

That is why, in the face of growing anxiety over the future of Hong Kong in recent years, Dr Leung remains convinced about Hong Kong's competitive edge. He acknowledges that there are obstacles for Hong Kong to overcome, including difficulties that inevitably come with the interflow of human talent, capital, goods and data between Hong Kong and the Mainland, all of which Dr Leung regards as low-level challenges. In his view, the most salient challenge is psychological and lies in a lack of understanding between the two places. Just as many people in Hong Kong are unaware of the latest developments in the Mainland and, hence, the opportunities there, the Mainland does not yet fully appreciate what Hong Kong has to offer. He remains at the forefront of considerable efforts to forge better relations.

Considering the long-standing international credibility and highly mature tertiary-sector industries, Dr Leung recognises that once this mutual ignorance is removed,

Hong Kong is poised to play an instrumental role in putting the final changes to the flowering of the Mainland's economy. China's products will cut a more prominent profile in the international market and get better pricing through sophisticated mechanisms of product testing, branding and trading, all of which Hong Kong is in an excellent position to promote.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, for his immeasurable professional and political contributions, Dr the Hon Leung Chun-ying has rendered remarkable service to Hong Kong, the Mainland and the wider world. With his far-reaching vision, based on long years of edifying experience in public life, he has identified a promising direction for Hong Kong to take as it continues its journey to prosperity. His education work has benefitted many across an array of social sectors, and CityUHK is especially thankful to Dr Leung for his unfailing support for all its endeavours. Mr Pro-Chancellor, it is my absolute honour to present to you Dr the Hon Leung Chun-ying for the conferment of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*.