

AUA PRESIDENTS FORUM 2022 REPORT



AUA MEMBERS



Chulalongkorn University



The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology



Indian Institute of Technology Bombay



King Saud University



National University of Singapore



Nazarbayev University



Peking University



Seoul National University



Tsinghua University



United Arab Emirates University



Universitas Indonesia



University of Colombo



Universiti Malaya



The University of Tokyo



University of Yangon

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ABOUT AUA

HISTORY OF AUA

Tsinghua University proposed to establish an alliance of Asian universities in March 2016. In September of that year, prospective members convened in Beijing to discuss the formulation of the Constitution and Framework of the Asian Universities Alliance (AUA). On 29 April 2017, AUA was officially launched at Tsinghua University, marking the beginning of a new era of Asian higher education.

MISSION

The mission of AUA is to jointly address regional and global challenges, specifically related to higher education and economic, scientific and technological development, by strengthening collaboration among member institutions. AUA acknowledges and promotes shared identity and values in working towards this mission.

OVERVIEW OF AUA PRESIDENTS FORUM

Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum (AUAPF) is an annual event that brings 15 leaders of member universities together to discuss challenges and opportunities in the Asian higher education sector. One of the key features of AUAPF is that it allows university leaders to jointly address the issues related to Asian higher education and contribute to the future development of AUA by sharing diverse experiences, bringing various perspectives, and defining strategic initiatives.



2017

The first AUA Presidents Forum (AUAPF) under the theme “Shaping a Better Future for Asian Higher Education” was held at Tsinghua University, Beijing, China on 29 April 2017. The AUA university presidents discussed a myriad of issues relating to higher education systems and development in their respective countries, as well as the Asian region as a whole. Main topics included globalization and its impact on universities; reconciling individual and shared identities to combat mutual challenges; the impact of technology on higher education; the ability of universities to adapt to change; and bringing academia, government and industry together.

2018

On 10 April 2018, the second AUAPF was held as a session of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual Conference 2018. Established in the 1950s, the BFA serves as a platform for leaders in government, industry, business, and academia in Asia and other regions to come together and discuss important issues, challenges and opportunities facing Asia and the world at large. The AUAPF took place in the form of a roundtable discussion related to higher education, titled “The Rise of Asian Universities”. Delegates from AUA universities engaged in discussions on key matters pertaining to higher education institutes in Asia, such as the mission of Asian universities, the role they should play in global higher education, the impact of Asian universities on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and innovation and technology transfer.

2019

The third annual AUA Presidents Forum 2019 took place at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology on 14 April 2019, focusing on two themes—“Roles of Universities in the Sustainability Agenda”, and “Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems”. Comprising two sessions of panel discussions, AUA President Forum 2019 was attended by more than 150 guests, including students and faculty from HKUST and the Tsinghua-Berkeley Shenzhen Institute.

2020

The AUA Presidents Forum 2020 was successfully hosted online by AUA Executive Presidency 2020-2021 Nazarbayev University on November 26th. Thirteen Presidents and senior leaders from AUA member universities attended the panel sessions at the event themed “Knowledge is Power: The Resilience of Asian Universities in a VUCA World”. The distinctive and varied experiences of AUA member institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic have provided several examples of resilience, as well as highlighted the necessary value and importance of partnerships and collaborations, which AUA continues to embody and champion.

AUA PRESIDENTS FORUM 2022

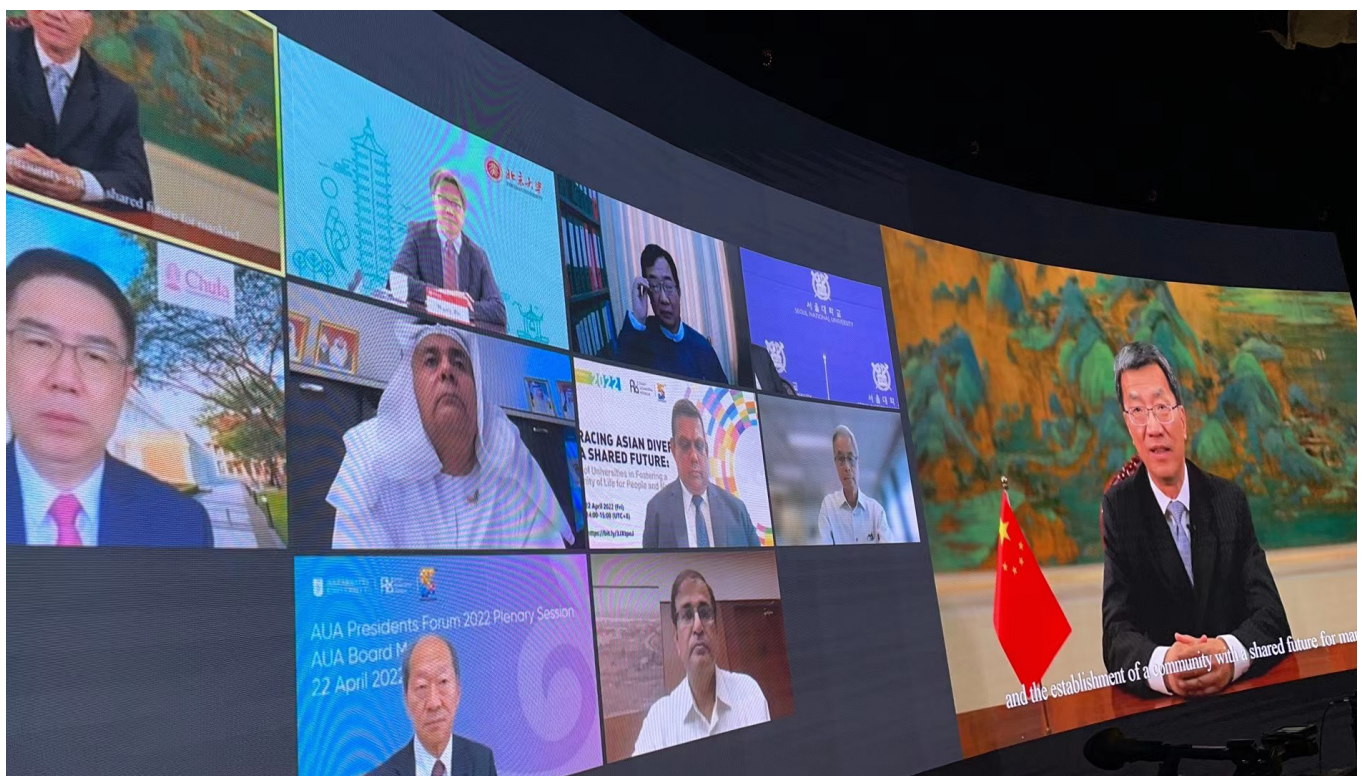


EMBRACE ASIAN DIVERSITY / **SHARE A BRIGHTER FUTURE**

Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum 2022, in celebration of the fifth anniversary of AUA, was hosted online from March 15-April 22. The forum consisted of four sessions, each dedicated to a sub-topic, and was concluded with a plenary session on 22 April 2022.

Humanity is currently facing multiple profound challenges that threaten our future, including climate change, resource depletion, public health crises, and widening social and economic inequality. Universities, as a locus of knowledge creation and dissemination, have a key role to play in leading joint efforts in tackling these issues.

Under the theme of “Embracing Asian Diversity for a Shared Future: Mission of Universities in Fostering a Community of Life for People and Nature”, university leaders from 15 member universities explored new approaches to higher education in response to emerging challenges.



AUA PRESIDENTS FORUM 2022 AGENDA

Session 1

Date & Time	15 March 2022 (Tue), 14:00-15:00, UTC+8
Theme	University Internationalization During and After COVID-19
Panelists	- HAYASHI Kaori, Executive Vice President, The University of Tokyo - YANG Bin, Provost & Vice President, Tsinghua University - Reuben Wong, Associate Vice-President, National University of Singapore
Moderator	ZHANG Chuanjie, AUA Secretary

Session 2

Date & Time	17 March 2022 (Thu), 14:00-15:00, UTC+8
Theme	Creating a University Culture of Innovation and Lifelong Learning
Panelists	- Bundhit Eua-arporn, President, Chulalongkorn University - OH Se-Jung, President, Seoul National University - Mohd. Hamdi Abd. Shukor, Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Malaya
Moderator	Loretta O'Donnell, Vice Provost, Nazarbayev University

Session 3

Date & Time	23 March 2022 (Wed), 14:00-15:00, UTC+8
Theme	Future of Learning: Interdisciplinary Education and Innovative Pedagogy
Panelists	- Loretta O'Donnell, Vice Provost, Nazarbayev University - Lionel Ni, President, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou) - Chandrika Wijeyaratne, Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo
Moderator	Yong Zulina Zubairi, Associate Vice-Chancellor, Universiti Malaya

Session 4

Date & Time	25 March 2022 (Fri), 14:00-15:00, UTC+8
Theme	The Networked University for an Integrated Education and Research Ecosystem
Panelists	- Ghaleb Ali AlHadrami AlBreiki, Acting Vice Chancellor, United Arab Emirates University - Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay - Tin Maung Tun, Rector, University of Yangon - Agustin Kusumayati, University Secretary, Universitas Indonesia
Moderator	King L. Chow, Acting Dean of Students, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

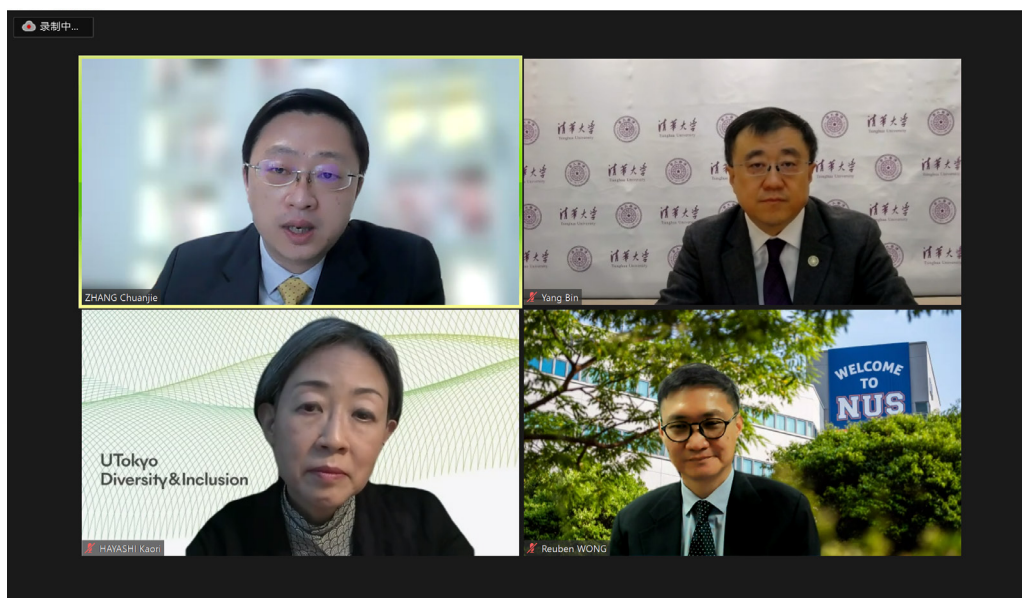
Plenary Session

Date & Time	22 April 2022 (Fri), 14:00-15:00, UTC+8
Theme	Embracing Asian Diversity for a Shared Future: Mission of Universities in Fostering a Community of Life for People and Nature
Panelists	- Messages of Congratulation - Remarks by Leaders of AUA Member Universities - Speech by AUA Founding President QIU Yong - Speech by AUA President WANG Xiqin
Moderator	YANG Bin, Provost & Vice President, Tsinghua University

SESSION 1

University Internationalization During and After COVID-19

On March 15th, the Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum 2022 (AUAPF 2022) kicked off the first session themed “University Internationalization During and After COVID-19”. It brought to the forefront critical challenges the pandemic has posed to higher education and innovative strategies to move forward.



As a locus of knowledge creation and dissemination, universities have a critical role to play in leading joint efforts in tackling a new range of challenges. Academic leadership is responsible for developing and enforcing global strategies toward internationalization. In this spirit, AUAPF 2022, themed “Embracing Asian Diversity for a Shared Future: Mission of Universities in Fostering a Community of Life for People and Nature”, brought together university leaders from across Asia to explore new approaches and opportunities in higher education. Prof. Kaori Hayashi, Executive Vice President of the University of Tokyo; Prof. Yang Bin, Provost and Vice President of Tsinghua University; and Dr. Reuben Wang, Associate Vice President of the National University of Singapore attended the session, which was moderated by Dr. Zhang Chuanjie, Secretary of Asian Universities Alliance.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Zhang Chuanjie highlighted the importance of exchanging best practices among AUA member universities, and the significance of ensuring that higher education remains open, accessible and dynamic in the face of new challenges. The panelists shared their universities’ best practices in navigating the COVID-19 crisis.

University leaders were forced to act accordingly and create new programs for their students. One of the noteworthy changes is the shift to hybrid and online classes, and the importance of unwavering commitment to internationalization during and after the pandemic.

MAKING EDUCATION MORE ACCESSIBLE

Prof. Kaori Hayashi introduced the University of Tokyo's various initiatives to overcome difficulties posed by the pandemic, including the "Global Unit Courses" program which attracted 88 participants from 17 countries. She also talked about the University of Tokyo's online "Short Term Education Programs", which has received positive student feedback and made education more accessible. For continued academic exchange, the University of Tokyo also implemented the "Global Fellow Designation Program," which invited scholars from overseas to participate remotely in research and education practices.

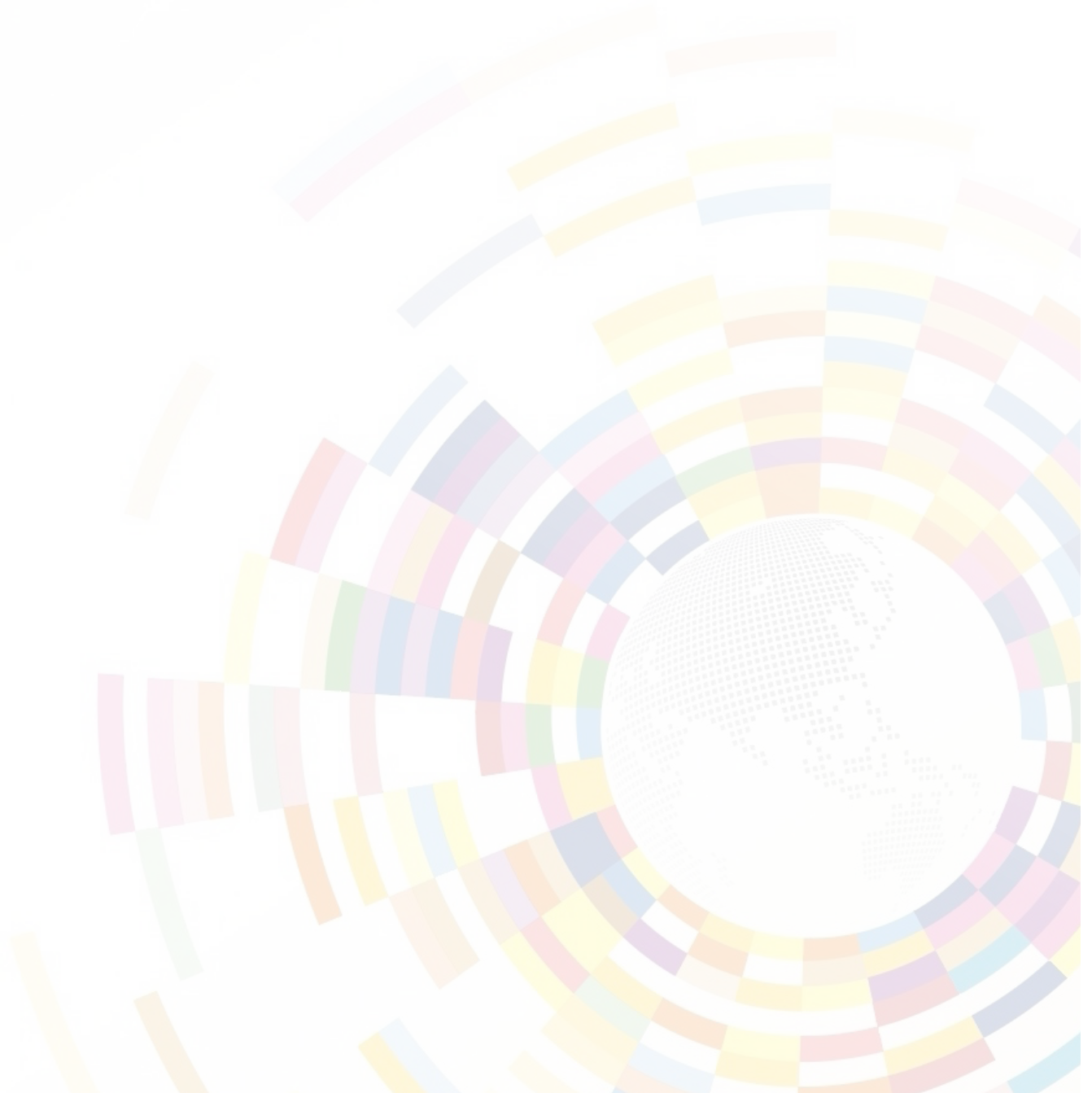
CONNECTING YOUTH ACROSS BORDERS

Dr. Reuben Wong shared the experience of hosting the first online "Young Asian Leaders Initiative" for Singaporean and Southeast Asian students. "This was a fantastic way of connecting youth across borders," according to Wong. Technology provides a unique opportunity for students from all kinds of financial backgrounds to participate and connect on an equal footing. To document virtual learning, the National University of Singapore has encouraged students and faculty to produce online content, such as making videos and blogs. Wong also emphasized the importance of fostering global citizens through interdisciplinarity.

ADDRESSING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

In his remarks, Prof. Yang Bin pointed out that despite the challenges, the pandemic has also brought a transformation in digital education for Tsinghua University. Many international students who are unable to come to campus and the hundreds of volunteers serving the Winter Olympics are now taking hybrid classes, and learning alongside their classmates who are physically in the classroom. Yang pointed out that the pandemic has highlighted the importance and urgency of joint efforts in addressing global challenges. To this end, Tsinghua will put more emphasis on international exchange and cooperation in four particular areas: public health, climate change, online education and artificial intelligence governance.

The panelists also addressed questions from the audience on topics including the quality of online courses and career education during the pandemic. Bringing diverse viewpoints to the session, panelists engaged in a lively discussion and exchanged best practices among member universities. Their valuable contributions embodied the resilience and shared commitment to internationalization at the universities.



SESSION 2

Creating a University Culture of Innovation and Lifelong Learning



Bundhit Eua-arporn
President
Chulalongkorn University



Mohd. Hamdi Abd. Shukor
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Malaya



OH Se-Jung
President
Seoul National University



Moderator
Loretta O'Donnell
Vice Provost
Nazarbayev University

On 17 March 2022, AUA members convened for the second session of the Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum (AUAPF) 2022. This session themed “Creating a University Culture of Innovation and Lifelong Learning”, brought together Prof. Bundhit Eua-arporn, President of Chulalongkorn University; Prof. OH Se-Jung, President of Seoul National University; and Prof. Mohd. Hamdi Abd. Shukor, Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Malaya. Dr. Loretta O'Donnell, Vice-Provost of Nazarbayev University, moderated the session.

FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

In a candid discussion, panelists deliberated the role and responsibility of universities in enabling a sustainable future for all, by cultivating lifelong learners and driving innovative solutions to common challenges. On the question of fostering a culture of innovation, President Bundhit discussed how the Chulalongkorn University Innovation Hub, since its launch in 2016, has created spinoff innovation enterprises, commercialized products at a faster rate, and changed the way projects are incubated and funded. The hub has incubated over 300 startups, benefiting over 2 million people and reaching over 52 provinces out of 60 in Thailand. President Bundhit stated that in terms of funding, it is more beneficial to reduce dependency on governmental funds to allow startups and entrepreneurs to commercialize their projects at scale.

President Oh discussed how Artificial Intelligence Institute of Seoul National University, since its establishment in 2019, has boosted joint research among different disciplines and promoted collaboration between industrial and academic sectors.

Additionally, SNU has embarked on an ambitious “2031 Initiative” aimed at significantly reorganizing the existing curriculum and education system into a more student-oriented one, where interdisciplinary studies are the norm rather than the exception.

For Universiti Malaya, the culture of research has transformed over the last 10 to 15 years from a primary focus on producing papers in high-impact journals towards creating more tangible



impact. Vice Chancellor Hamdi believes that the university must strive to create more visible outcomes for society at large, including contributions to global SDGs and ESGs. To that end, UM is also allocating more efforts in promoting multidisciplinary research. He emphasized that universities should continuously adopt innovative approaches in higher education.

ACCELERATING LIFELONG LEARNING

“Lifelong learning is the key to developing global citizens”, according to President Bundhit. The panelists all agreed that creating a culture of lifelong learning is essential to adapting to and solving global challenges. In an effort to overcome the challenges of long-distance learning brought by the pandemic, their universities have developed various online education programs. These include SNU’s Extension College, Center for Teaching and Learning, and Academy of University Administration, Universiti Malaya’s Centre for Continuing Education, and Chulalongkorn’s CU Neuron, CUVIP and Degree Plus.

While the panelists acknowledged the pandemic poses new challenges to innovation and

lifelong learning, it has also brought many opportunities. According to President Oh, SNU created an integrated knowledge hub which shared latest updates and research about the pandemic with the public. SNU also launched online international summer programs which were well received by many students. President OH mentioned that the remote learning system is quite effective as adult learners can reeducate themselves while managing their time according to their needs.

President Bundhit added that the pandemic has indeed accelerated lifelong learning, with a larger number of learners engaging in the online learning system. In terms of innovation, the research of Chulalongkorn University in the last two years was more oriented towards providing practical solutions related to COVID-19 challenges.

In Universiti Malaya, despite COVID-related lockdowns and temporary closure of the campus and labs, researchers managed to adapt to the challenges and continued their innovation effort. Vice Chancellor Hamdi also shared UM's hybrid full-degree programs, which have enabled many international and adult learners to pursue their academic aspirations. More precisely, the distance learning system implemented by Universiti Malaya allows alumni and professors as well as learners of various backgrounds to complete their selected modules virtually and create a flexible schedule. Consequently, the capacity of these programs has also increased.

The session also addressed the need to adapt to the "mobile phone era", ways to incentivize faculty members to contribute to lifelong learning, and content development for more engaging education programs. The insightful responses and wisdom shared by the panelists serve as a testament for lifelong learning in action, which many can learn from.

SESSION 3

Future of Learning: Interdisciplinary Education and Innovative Pedagogy

Why is interdisciplinarity the emerging and desirable trend in higher education? What strategies are Asia's leading universities exploring to promote interdisciplinarity? How can the 'future of learning' meet the new demands of the rapidly evolving society?

These were some of the critical questions examined in the third session themed "Future of Learning: Interdisciplinary Education and Innovative Pedagogy". The panel included Prof. Lionel Ni, President of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou); Prof. Chandrika Wijeyaratne, Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo; and Dr. Loretta O'Donnell, Vice Provost of Nazarbayev University. Prof. Yong Zulina Zubairi, Associate Vice-Chancellor Universiti Malaya, moderated the session.

In her opening remarks, Prof. Zubairi noted that the complex and multifaceted nature of emerging challenges warrants the need for imaginative solutions. "Universities thus have a vital role to play as we seek effective solutions," she said, "Transcending disciplinary boundaries and incorporating multiple perspectives can take us a long way." The panel discussion that followed assessed the strategies as well as challenges universities face in their quest to promote interdisciplinary education and innovative pedagogy.





Panelists



Loretta O'Donnell
Vice Provost
Nazarbayev University



Lionel Ni
President
The Hong Kong University of
Science & Technology
(Guangzhou)



Chandrika Wijeyaratne
Vice Chancellor
University of Colombo



CREATING SYNERGY

For universities to strike a balance between “theory and practice” as well as “depth and breadth” is as crucial as it is challenging. Interdisciplinary education needs to be geared towards bridging these gaps through innovative curriculum development and engaging real-world problem-solving. According to Dr. O’Donnell, “When we think about interdisciplinarity in terms of education, we essentially think of the word synthesis,” so the question that needs to be asked is, “How do we look at a range of different mental models and synthesize them to come up with complex answers to the complex questions”. Consequently, Nazarbayev University (NU) strives to build on the concept of the “T-shaped student”, who possesses knowledge spread across a range of disciplines, but also holds depth in a certain specialization. This approach is meant to equip graduates with the ability to solve problems from a range of different perspectives. NU’s compulsory core curriculum that includes ethics, writing and history is designed to achieve exactly this.

O’Donnell also reflected on the dichotomy between successful academic careers, that incentivize scholars to specialize in a very narrow field, and the complex thinking skills required to tackle practical challenges such as climate change, gender equality, public health and issues of well-being. By allocating collaborative research grants, NU is encouraging scholars to pursue multi-disciplinary studies. As a national university, NU’s mandate also includes cross-institutional collaborations with other universities in Kazakhstan. O’Donnell emphasized that a collaborative culture “is a step forward to many things, from solving a particular research problem, towards creating more harmony and more understanding across cultures.”

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

On “budgets and boundaries”, President Ni of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou) (HKUST(GZ)) offered a candid assessment. “Whereas all higher education practitioners know the importance and benefits of collaborations, when you come down to budget allocation and performance assessment, boundaries come into play,” he said. He explained that the establishment of HKUST (GZ) creates an exceptional opportunity for new resources, organizational structure and physical settings needed for the systematic development of cross-disciplinary programs in concert with the disciplinary-oriented efforts at HKUST’s Clear Water Bay campus. At HKUST (GZ), cross-disciplinary education and

research will be realized through four “hubs”, namely, function hub, information hub, systems hub, and society hub. The university encourages theme-based labs which are accessible to all the interested faculty and students. Ni also firmly advocated randomly-allocated and multidisciplinary spaces for faculty members, “I don’t say this department or that department. The person next door may be from a different discipline, which allows them to communicate.”

Promoting innovation through interdisciplinary work is key to education at HKUST (GZ). Ni noted, “We encourage students to learn from different disciplines. Graduate students, especially PhD students, need dual advisors from different disciplines.” Commenting on the impact of COVID-19 on education, he asserted that by forcing universities out of their comfort zones, the pandemic has offered a unique opportunity. “We had no choice; we stuck on to further improve, to a point where I think we’re effective now,” he remarked while describing the speed with which online teaching was eventually embraced. Despite initial reluctance and skepticism from faculty and students, “today our evaluation of online classes is better than the traditional classroom,” he noted. Ni also stressed that ultimately a mindset-change is very important to “making a change, and making an impact.”

TOWARDS PROBLEM-SOLVING

While assessing the system of exam-based learning in many Asian societies, Vice Chancellor Wijeyaratne noted that this culture needs to change. To shift away from traditional learning methods and encourage “out of the box” thinking, the University of Colombo (UoC) has established staff development centres and young academic mentoring initiatives. “We reviewed this situation because we had a little more time during this pandemic,” she discussed, further elaborating that a “new reality” has opened the eyes of young professionals to new opportunities, with more focus on real-world challenges. UoC has responded by expediting education in more practical sectors, increasing emphasis on emerging fields such as entrepreneurship, and establishing better connections between job providers and the university.

According to Wijeyaratne, “The goal for universities should move beyond ‘simply teaching or learning’ and instead include practical application, and to equip students with enough flexibility to change their course over time in order to achieve richer career outcomes.” UoC has encouraged different competitions and created new avenues to inspire students and faculty members to connect with the real world and evolving trends in the job market.

All panelists agreed that today universities find themselves on a fast track to think about academia differently and more holistically. In this light, Asian universities have a unique opportunity to transcend disciplinary boundaries and incorporate multiple perspectives in finding viable and imaginative solutions for a better world.



SESSION 4

The Networked University for an Integrated Education and Research Ecosystem

On 25 March 2022, AUA members convened for the fourth session of the Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum (AUAPF) 2022. With the theme of “The Networked University for an Integrated Education and Research Ecosystem”, the session brought together Prof. Ghaleb Ali AlHadrami AlBreiki, Acting Vice-Chancellor of the United Arab Emirates University; Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay; Dr. Agustin Kusumayati, University Secretary of Universitas Indonesia; and Prof. Tin Maung Tun, Rector of the University of Yangon. Prof. King Chow, Acting Dean of Students of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, moderated the session.

DRIVING INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION

Panelists openly shared their initiatives and experiences in creating an environment for integrated education and research through the optimization of institutional resources and by strengthening connections between academic units. According to Prof. AlBreiki, the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) is now driving interdisciplinary education by dismantling its traditional academic units. Their colleges are going through a process of restructuring, where

new interdisciplinary programs are under discussion and planning. With some undergraduate programs suspended, due to relatively low enrolment, the UAEU will focus more on graduate programs that can contribute to the national economy and knowledge creation.

Students of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) are encouraged to expand their learning beyond classrooms. Prof. Chaudhuri believed that this is especially important for undergraduate education, “because graduate education automatically involves research and knowledge development.” The undergraduate student body are provided with various research opportunities from the second year onwards, including 24/7 access to makeup spaces and labs and additional credits for research work.

Dr. Kusumayati stated that interdisciplinary collaboration is the only way to solve interconnected problems and improve resilience against crises as large as the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the national education program “Emancipated Learning”, Universitas Indonesia now encourages students to learn outside their programs for a maximum of three semesters, either from UI, other universities, or the industry. “When they [students] are doing an independent project or developing a new business, they have to work together with colleagues from other disciplines and learn from them,” said Dr. Kusumayati.

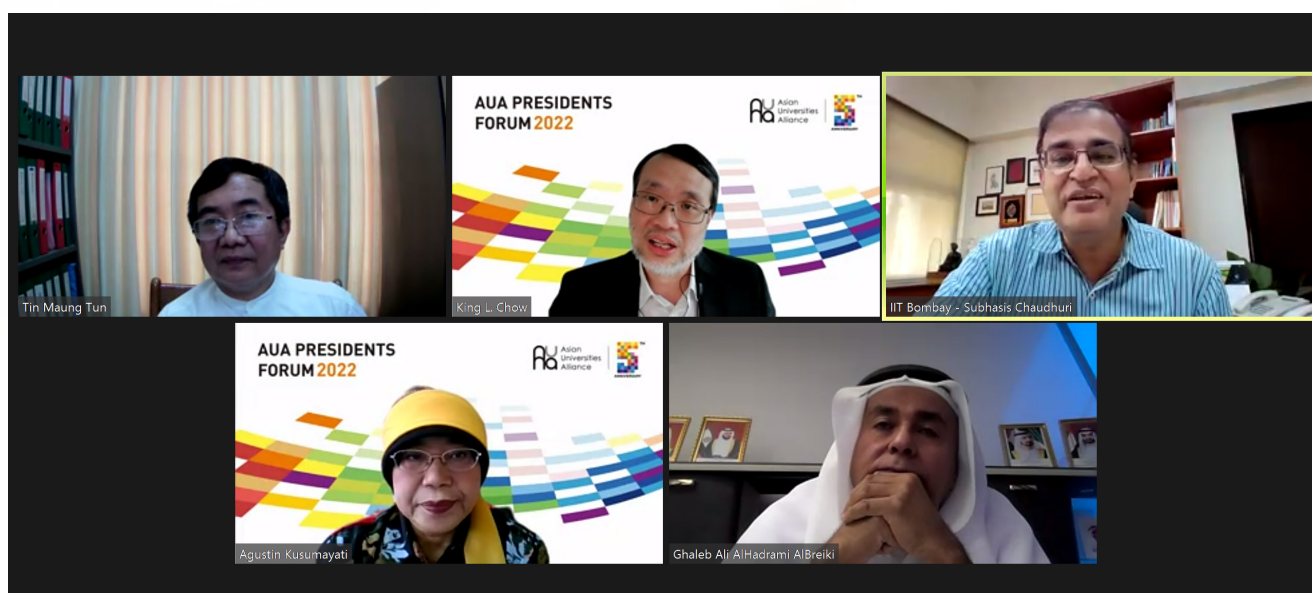
Prof. Tin Maung Tun agreed that interdisciplinary research is essential to finding solutions to new problems and grand challenges. This means that the university curriculum will have to change in order to meet such demands. He also stressed the importance of creating an institutional culture that encourages innovation and collaboration.

BUILDING COLLABORATION NETWORKS

Panelists also elaborated on the importance of building trusting, reciprocal, and enduring relationships with other universities and organizations. As many universities are facing budget cuts, Prof. Albreiki suggested that universities could form a network that allows students to fulfill part of their program requirements by taking courses from other universities as a way to deal with the financial challenge. According to Dr. Kusumayati, the program of “Emancipated Learning” has greatly encouraged Indonesian universities to seek collaboration with many kinds of stakeholders. “We want to send our students into the field, industry, and research institutions,” she said. By providing knowledge and technology to these partners, a university can gain additional support for its education and research. Prof. Chaudhuri also supported the

university-industry partnership, emphasizing that higher education institutions in developing countries like India have the responsibility to support their industry with their learning.

While the universities gain support and benefits from such a network, they are also giving back and sharing what others need. For example, IITB works with local governments to solve water and power problems in rural areas. It has also joined the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning to provide free quality education to anyone interested in learning from the IITs. “We will have to see that what we do makes an impact on the life of the common people on the street,” commented Prof. Chaudhuri. In a similar spirit, Universitas Indonesia assists younger and/or smaller universities in terms of their curriculum development and university management. Dr. Kusumayati added that the university is also expanding its courses to students from other universities under the “Emancipated Learning” program.



Additionally, this session addressed resource allocation for the arts and social sciences, the balance between long-term educational goals and short-term difficulties and concerns, and ways to minimize the digital divide during the pandemic.

During his summary, Prof. Chow emphasized that building an integrated education and research ecosystem is important not only for an institution itself, but also for the whole community. He hoped that AUA will lead the joint effort to “raise the entire Asian education community to a different level.”

EMBRACING ASIAN DIVERSITY FOR A SHARED FUTURE:

Mission of Universities in Fostering a Community of Life for People and Nature

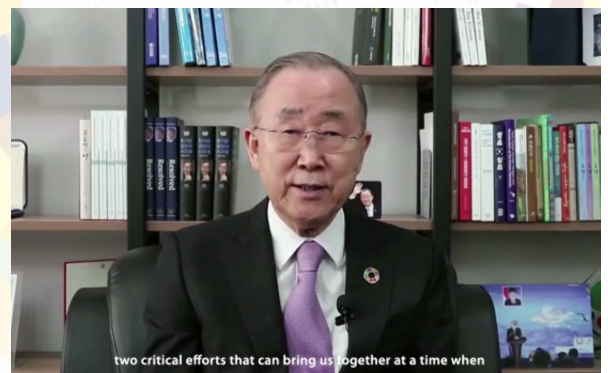
The Plenary Session of the Asian Universities Alliance Presidents Forum 2022 was held on April 22, marking the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the alliance. The theme of this year's forum was "Embracing Asian Diversity for a Shared Future: Mission of Universities in Fostering a Community of Life for People and Nature."

Huai Jinpeng, China's Minister of Education, and Ban Ki-moon, the 8th Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chairman of the Boao Forum for Asia, delivered remarks as the guests of honor at the forum, attended by leaders and representatives of all the 15 AUA member universities and other distinguished guests.

Minister Huai extended congratulations on behalf of his ministry to AUA on its fifth anniversary and remarked that the establishment of the alliance by distinguished universities from different

Asian countries and regions reflected the general trend of common development and win-win cooperation in Asian higher education. He urged AUA members to promote regional connections of higher education through digitalization, to deepen the pragmatic cooperation between universities by focusing on talent cultivation and scientific research and innovation, and to promote communication between peoples and appreciation to diverse cultures. He said he was hopeful that AUA would make greater contributions to jointly addressing regional and global challenges, promoting the common welfare of Asian people, and advancing the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Ban Ki-moon congratulated AUA on its fifth anniversary, saying, since 2017, AUA has served as a robust platform for regional collaboration, partnership, and dialogue. He called on AUA to scale up its cooperative regional efforts to help forge tangible



progress on the UN's development and climate goals. "Your role is extremely important, as we need to ensure that the UN Global Goals are local business, throughout Asia and beyond. With your elevated efforts, I am confident that we can construct a more healthy, sustainable, peaceful, and prosperous world for all," he said.

Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China, Prof. Dr. Anek Laothamatas, Thailand's Minister of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, and Dr. Nyunt Phy, Myanmar's Union Minister for Education, sent congratulatory messages on AUA's fifth anniversary, which were read out respectively by Wei Shyy, President of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Bundhit Eua-arporn, President of Chulalongkorn University, and Tin Maung Tun, Rector of the University of Yangon at the forum.

Following that, Chairman of Tsinghua University Council Qiu Yong, who served as the founding president of AUA, addressed the forum. He noted that AUA has grown into a cohesive consortium of Asian higher education with an increasing impact and thanked AUA members and the greater Asian community for their strong support. "The diversity we embrace forms the foundation of our alliance. With each of us sharing a unique set of knowledge and experiences, I am confident that we will be able to continue collectively tackling our common challenges and building a brighter future for all," he said.



Tsinghua President Wang Xiqin, on behalf of the entire AUA community, presented a token of appreciation to Professor Qiu in recognition of his distinguished leadership during his time as AUA Founding President. Last month, former President Qiu Yong was named Chairman of Tsinghua University Council, and Professor Wang Xiqin was appointed President of Tsinghua University, making him also AUA President. President Wang Xiqin said that he is honored to serve as the new President of AUA and he looks forward to working closely with all the AUA members to enhance AUA's unique contribution to building a shared future for Asia and beyond.

The forum was moderated by Yang Bin, Provost and Vice President of Tsinghua University.

Eight leaders of other AUA member universities delivered their remarks at the forum. Ghaleb Ali AlHadrami AlBreiki, Acting Vice Chancellor of United Arab Emirates University, Bundhit Eua-arporn, President of Chulalongkorn University, and OH Se-Jung, President of Seoul National University highlighted that higher education was experiencing important paradigm shifts due to global challenges. AUA has been providing a unique space and platform for innovative, multilateral and institutional collaborations among flagship universities of Asia, leading the development of new research and strengthening intercultural understandings. It was an excellent example of leveraging international collaboration to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, while also reinventing the roles of universities.



Subhasis Chaudhuri, Director of the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, H. D. Karunaratne, Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo, and Wei Shyy, President of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology emphasized that Asia is a region with diverse and rich cultural heritage. In the era of global Asia, it is significant to build a closer bond with a shared future among Asian universities. AUA has an important role to play in cultivating the spirit of collaboration and respect among young people and future talents in Asia. Student exchange programs and credit transfer among member universities can be further encouraged in the future.

Shigeo Katsu, President of Nazarbayev University and Tin Maung Tun, Rector of the University of Yangon said that AUA has made great strides in the past five years and has become a place to share best practices, which benefited all member universities. They stated that they would continue to deepen the collaborations in higher education to address regional and global challenges and promote a shared future for humanity.



APPENDIX

List of Panelists



Ghaleb Ali AlHadrami Albreiki
Acting Vice Chancellor
United Arab Emirates University



Subhasis Chaudhuri
Director
Indian Institute of
Technology Bombay



Bundhit Eua-Arporn
President
Chulalongkorn University



HAYASHI Kaori
Executive Vice President
The University of Tokyo



Shigeo Katsu
President
Nazarbayev University



Agustin Kusumayati
University Secretary
Universitas Indonesia



Lionel Ni
President
The Hong Kong University of Science
and Technology (Guangzhou)



OH Se-Jung
President
Seoul National University



Loretta O'Donnell
Vice Provost
Nazarbayev University



QIU Yong
Chairman of University Council
Tsinghua University



Mohd. Hamdi Abd. SHUKOR
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Malaya



Tin Maung TUN
Rector
University of Yangon



WANG Xiqin
President
Tsinghua University



Chandrika WIJEYARATNE
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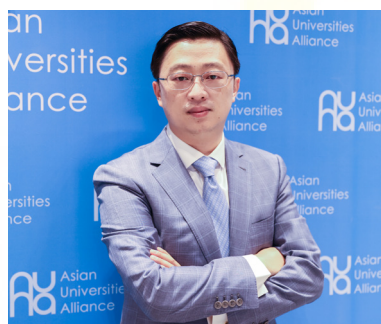
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