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Graduation Address

Professor Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, AIT President,

124th Graduation Ceremony, 16th December 2015

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- **Graduation Speaker**, Dr. Rafiul Ahad, Vice President, Oracle Corporation
 - **Prominent Alumnus Speaker**, Dr. Twarath Sutabutr, Director-General, Thailand's Energy Policy and Planning Office.
 - Members of AIT's Board of Trustees and Executive Committee
 - Excellencies, Honored Guests and Partners
 - Members of the AIT Alumni, Faculty, Staff
 - Graduands, and Family Members

Good morning and a very warm welcome to AIT's 124th Graduation Ceremony.

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to the graduands. It is a very proud moment for all of you on the recognition of your accomplishments, hard work and efforts. Today also presents to you a good occasion to pay tribute and respect to all your professors who have mentored you throughout the course of your studies at AIT. For most of you, your graduation today may not be possible without the generous support of donors. So, it is a fitting occasion to express our grateful appreciation to AIT's partners and friends, for their continued support of AIT and its mission. Last but not the least, equally important has been the support of your family and loved ones. Many of them are here with you, and many



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more are watching today's proceedings live at home. It is indeed a proud moment as well for them.

We are honored to have with us our Graduation Speaker Dr. Rafiul Ahad, Vice President of Oracle Corporation. Dr. Ahad is an AIT alumnus and supporter of AIT's Library Modernization campaign. He exemplifies the AIT success story of how an individual can rise from humble beginnings to become a senior executive with one of the world's most influential business software firms. On a lighter note, AIT is also the place where Dr. Ahad met his wife, who was one his classmates.

I also would like to acknowledge the presence of our prominent alumnus speaker, Dr. Twarath Sutabutr, Director-General of Thailand's, Energy Policy and Planning Office. After completing his Masters in Geotechnical Engineering from AIT, Dr. Twarath went on to pursue his Doctoral Degree at MIT. Prior to his current appointment, Dr. Twarath has held several high-level positions in the government, and is a rising star, which is a source of great pride for AIT.

By the way, Dr Twarat is a second-generation alumnus of AIT. His father, the late Dr. Prathes Sutabutr, was the 2nd batch Water Engineering Graduate of AIT in 1962 and was a former Director General of Thailand's Department of Energy



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Development and Promotion and interestingly, a well-known member of Thailand's National Soccer Team in the SEA Games.

We look forward to listening to Dr. Ahad and Dr. Twarath and I am sure they will inspire our graduating students.

Dear Graduands, I would like to take this opportunity to inform you about an important role that AIT took upon, which you, as Graduands, should be proud of.

Our Institute has received a lot of media coverage worldwide of its activities on climate change after we organized the Regional Forum on Climate Change (RFCC) in July this year. As a result, the region was able to convey its Regional Input to the World's Climate Change Conference - COP21 that was just concluded in Paris last week.

"Climate Change" is an issue that each one of us as global citizens should pay attention to and make whatever contribution we can to safeguard our planet earth. It is now beyond doubt that climate change is a reality that needs to be addressed. By continuing business-as-usual, our globe will be 4 to 5 degrees Celsius higher by the end of this century, which will make this world difficult to live.

At COP-21 in Paris, history was made in the form of a new climate agreement, applicable for all countries, post 2020. What



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will be required after COP-21 is climate evidence-based policy to foster implementation of remedial measures.

Since its inception, AIT has always taken pride of its important role in resolving transnational cross border challenges. AIT has always managed to keep its entire academic and research focus on the most pressing issues, cutting across nationalities and disciplines. Just, last Friday, with the support of Dr. Bindu Lohani, ADB's former Vice-President and AIT alumnus, AIT Faculty together with 15 international experts held a brainstorm session at our campus, to discuss the needs and opportunities for building regional capacity in climate change. As a result, the meeting agreed that **AIT should provide Asian solutions to Asian problems in relation to climate change, using global knowledge.** Thus, AIT shall look forward to this vary exciting assignment in the years ahead.

My dear graduands, life is a journey. All accomplishments you have achieved during your precious period at AIT should be taken as a starting point for further achievements. Graduation is not an end in itself; it is a part of the larger journey of your life. You will soon join other AIT alumni before you, who are success stories in both the public and private sectors in more than 90 countries around the world. When you actually leave AIT, you will always treasure the fond memories of your quality time,



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especially of your hard work, and your associations with your professors and fellow students. One day, you will also find that giving back to AIT not only is great but makes you feel great. It helps this great institution continue to serve the future generations of world-class citizens.

Thank you and congratulations once again!