

**Esteemed honorary doctors, jubilee doctors, and new conferred doctors,**

**Ladies and Gentlement,**

**Dear Doctor Razane Tajeddine,**

Thank you for your kind words about Aalto University. I think you touched on topics that are at the heart of all of us after a long journey towards a doctorate.

The way is not easy – that is true. The thesis requires hard work, results come unpredictably, often at a slower pace than what you expect, and it takes a lot of creativity and criticality before the project is complete. Only perseverance can pull one over the finish line, but courage and passion for exploration help a lot along the way.

Thesis work is also an adventure and a huge opportunity. Now, after achieving your goal, you are truly entitled to savor this moment before starting a new chapter of your life. Give yourself time to consider your next steps and future endeavors in science and technology. By a scientific background – which I

know will take you far – you have laid a solid groundwork for your future, and for a better world.

I am more than delighted to hear that you called Aalto home and the people you have worked with like a family. The Aalto University of today is a community of curious minds from all over the world and a home of over one hundred nationalities.

Actually Aalto has become one of most international universities in continental Europe. The Times Higher Education just ranked Aalto as the 50<sup>th</sup> most international university in the world, ahead of universities like Stanford, Harvard or Princeton.

This is a great possibility for the university because of the huge amount talent all over the world that we have but it is also a big challenge to make sure that all members of the community feel included, respected and appreciated.

I think that this community is up for the challenge. We believe in diversity and dialogue within and across borders of any kind. At Aalto we want to foster an empowered community that shines by working together.

We are a community that is one-of-a-kind, vivid, energetic and co-operating. While offering academic expertise is a must – an ambitious must – it's our diverse community with its shared values and ambitions, that sets us apart. It is all about people: professors, teachers, staff and fellow students. You can call it your second family. As it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a university community to graduate a PhD student!

Dr Razan Tajeddine, once again thank you for your inspiring words. I am so proud and honoured that you consider Aalto your second home.

On behalf of the entire Aalto community I would like to thank the honorary doctors and jubilee doctors for their significant contributions towards Aalto University and congratulate once again all the newly conferred doctors. We are so proud of you and wish you the best of success in the next phase of your lives.

Thank you.