

**IHO-Nippon Foundation Alumni Encounter - 2016**

**Speech by Mr. Mitsuyuki UNNO**

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**Bangkok, Thailand**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning.

Now, I would like to introduce some interesting data to everyone here today. I have a question. Is there anyone here who uses Twitter?

Recently, we looked through over 700,000 (seven hundred thousand) ocean-related tweets. What words do you think people associate with the ocean? Let me introduce a few of them to you.

“Like, Love, Life, Beach, Beautiful, Music, Swim, Sun, Girlfriend, Talk, Wow...”

This is real. How interesting.

You could say that they express the gentleness and possibilities of the ocean. However, these positive words represent no more than 30% of the total. In other words, the other 70% of the tweets are negative. Here are a few of those words:

“Dirty, Depletion, Stress, Pollution, Hurricane, Death, Lost, Cry, Crisis, Boyfriend...”

People say that Twitter is a real-time reflection of society’s thoughts and feelings. 70% of the people who wrote about the ocean used negative words. And these words indirectly communicate a sense of danger about its current condition.

What is expected from you is not just to fulfill the fundamental needs of many countries by producing accurate nautical charts. You are expected to go beyond just completing your own field of specialty. Be sensitive to changes in the world with the influence of society in general. And by doing so, renovate your mindset.

And please, try to communicate the endless possibilities of our oceans which you can all feel to society at large. Let’s try to change that negative 70% to positive ones.

This is the first thing I expect from you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After the program began, I visited Taunton. It was a short visit, but made a profound impression on me.

It wasn't only because of the excellent facilities and environment. It was also because I could keenly sense the enthusiasm and teamwork of everyone working there, beginning with Mr. Jeff Bryant who is here with us today, even though I hadn't set foot there in 10 years.

After observing each of the Fellows there talking positively about their prospects for the future, I felt that maybe I wouldn't need to go back to Taunton 10 years on.

Looking at you all today who are here as a result of this program, I feel those heated sentiments once again. The ceaseless efforts of the International Hydrographic Organization, the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office and the Japan Coast Guard are the driving forces for the development of this program.

And I would like to express my gratitude to the professors of UKHO who have provided such excellent education to the Fellows under the leadership of the Director of IHO, Mr. Mustafa Iptes.

Dear Fellows,

The objective of the NF-IHO CHART Program is not that you complete the course. The training you do is only one stop on your journey. We want to see you work to become an internationally known name and face who's active on the global scene as a representative of your home country.

“If you don't put yourself out there, people will never find you.”

Please don't stop striving to make yourself known to as many people as possible as a world leader in fields of cartography, of hydrography, and of the ocean.

This is the second thing I expect from you.

Dear Fellows,

The Nippon Foundation now has a network of 1,173 (one thousand one hundred and seventy three) people from 133 (one hundred and thirty three) countries in fields related to the ocean. Of course, this number includes all of you as well.

However, the measure of our success is not in how many countries are producing how many Fellows. What is important is our Fellows using that network to find solutions for complex issues of the oceans and to constantly motivate each other and collaborate together.

There is a limit to the solutions that can be achieved through the efforts of a single country, institution, or individual. It is crucial to build inclusive networks, with an interdisciplinary perspective, in order to accelerate cooperation that goes beyond the existing frameworks within countries and institutions.

You may not realize it, but you already have the tool you need to do this. That is, as I touched on before, the alumni network which Nippon Foundation Fellows have access to.

The network of The Nippon Foundation Fellow programs includes various disciplines and lines of work related to the ocean. For example, oceanography, international maritime law, climate change, ocean management, and fishery resources.

It goes beyond race, religion or nationality. When you want to accomplish something for the ocean, or when you are up against a difficult problem, advice and support from this

network and the colleagues can be an invaluable source of help to you.

Whether or not you make use of this tool is up to you.

That is the third thing I expect from you.

The Nippon Foundation has implemented a multi-purpose alumni fund in order to continue supporting your activities and strengthening the bonds of the alumni network.

This fund directly supports Nippon Foundation Fellows who consult with us. It makes personal ideas a reality through a system that provides opportunities to work with the people necessary to resolve ocean-related issues.

We hope that you will make use of this fund when you start new initiatives for our oceans, together with other Fellows around the world. Nothing would make us happier than seeing opportunity for innovation in the ocean sphere, as a result of a chemical reaction sparked by Nippon Foundation Fellows exchange.

All of you were selected by The Nippon Foundation to participate in the NF-IHO CHART Program. We took on a responsibility when we selected you. In the future, whichever path you choose, we will continue to support you as Nippon Foundation Fellows and alumni of this program.

Thank you.