

GRADUATION SPEECH ON BEHALF OF GRÓ GTP 2023 FELLOWS

By Oscar Cahuana Alarcon.

Good afternoon respected authorities, teachers, managers, supervisors, fellows 2023 and all people who are watching online. Before I start, I would like to say: “Takk kærlega Ísland, Við erum í þakkarskuld við GRO-GTP, ISOR og ríkisstjórn Íslands”, it means “Thank you so much Iceland. We are indebted to GRO-GTP, ISOR and the Icelandic Government”. I ask all the fellows please stand up and join me in giving all these amazing people a round of applause.

I was lucky enough to be chosen as the spokesperson today before all of you and reflect on our collective journey in this training.

Fellows, my friends, my family: stepping out of comfort zone is hard and it is tough but if you trust in yourself, work hard, pursue your dreams and seek to be your best version, you can make it, because only outside our comfort zone is where we grow and only there and then is when magic happens. This magic started for us six months ago, when people from different countries have been arriving to this amazing country, 24 people from China, Dominica (not Dominic Republic), El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mongolia, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Uganda and Bolivia, we decided to start or continue with our dreams, and thank to GRO-GTP, we made it.

We built another family here in Iceland, in a crazy house that we call “GRO HOUSE”, crazy but cosy, with some leakages, with some swimming-pools in a few rooms (the owner fixed immediately I must say), but the most important we support each other and we help each other, it is what the family does in difficult situations, so remember “Families are like branches on a tree, we grow in different directions, yet our roots remain as one”.

I will always remember the nights playing Kazakhstan poker, Dominica poker, Kenyan poker, hope you remember the Bolivian poker too, if not you can call Briana. Thank you, fellows, for sharing your typical foods from your countries, I really enjoyed it, even the Kazakhstan food, I can feel the flavours in my mouth, because you described me very well how it was, sorry Mariya for not coming that day, and the next day too. I will miss the pool, amazing games with Moses and Timothy, and we create monsters, just a joke, Hendra and Dr. Samir learn so fast and now they are good players, good job guys. I am sure that everybody will remain in our hearts for each day of this training. Our trip to the south guys was terrific, I can recognize the snoring of each one of you, It was a rock concert every night. I think I will spend another 6 months remembering all the things that we did, but promise this my friends, keep each moment in yourselves, do not forget my friends, my family.

I am sure during the training each speciality has amazing experiences and memories, but everybody knows that Geophysics is the best, with Gylfi that is not only our teacher but our friend, and all our supervisors, thank you we really appreciate your time, guidance and of course your patience with us. Of course, we appreciate the teachings of each lecturer during the training, thank you Gudni, Ingimar, Frida and Daniel for your efforts, without you GTP will not be the same. Frida, I need to tell you, you are an amazing friend taking care of each one of us like babies, you are like a sister for us, worried for each detail, please continue being the beautiful person you are. Thank you for being organized the trips, we learned a lot in each one, Iceland has the most beautiful landscapes that I have seen in my life, I understand now why around the world it is known as The land of ice and fire.

I am sure that my family is watching online this graduation, so I want to tell them: Thank you to my parents, my dad Daniel and my mom Elizabeth, I hope you are proud of me, and I don't have words to express my gratitude with you. To my sons: Piero and Leandro, you are my inspirations of each day. Now, I want to be the voice of our brother Duncan: "Losing my dad and particularly learning of his demise through social media on the eve of his discharge from hospital was extremely terrible, but you GTP family and ISOR helped me recollect myself to complete this programme. Thank you so much, Asante sana". To Hendra: Congratulations brother, being a dad is an immense happiness, I wish all the best for your baby, and we hope that in a few years he will become a new fellow.

Fellows, brothers, sisters, buckle up, you have good times and rough seas ahead. It is just part of life but enjoy the ride and laugh a lot. Life is about to unfold for us in all its forms. Love, heartache, accomplishments, disappointment, testing of faith, life is beautiful, so I repeat, buckle up and laugh along the way. It makes life fun.

I want to share these words with all you my family, there were said by Jhon F. Kennedy:

Let us not be blind to our differences but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if now we cannot end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.

Learning from these experiences, I am sure all of us will remember the families of friends we created amongst ourselves that looked out for each other at every step of the way. If there is one sentiment, I want you to take away from this speech, it is this: Do not forget that we are family, if you need me, I will be there, as a professional, as a friend, as a brother, as a fellow.

So, My family, this is our mission when we leave this country, the land of ice and fire, never be discouraged, never stop, give everything you have and when you fall throughout life and maybe even tonight, after a few beers, remember this fall forward. I respect you. I love you; God bless you. THANK YOU.