

UNU Geothermal Training Programme
Graduation Ceremony
October 5, 2018

Dear fellows, Director, teachers and staff of the UNU Geothermal Training Programme,

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends.

It gives me a great pleasure to address this 40th graduation ceremony of the UNU Geothermal Training Programme [UNU-GTP].

The success of the programme continues to contribute to the growing pool of experts in the field. Twenty-four fellows are graduating here today, nine women and fifteen men – from 14 different countries. Allow me to congratulate all of you on your achievements over the past six months and on your graduation today.

You are now a part of a larger network – a group of nearly seven hundred experts from sixty-one countries, bringing together cross-national knowledge on geothermal resources and use. Iceland is proud of having hosted you and contributed to your knowledge and expertise.

In addition, this year sixteen former fellows are pursuing their master's degrees and four fellows their PhDs at the University of Iceland and Reykjavik University, with scholarships from the UNU-GTP.

Let me also mention the short regional courses conducted by the UNU-GTP on site, primarily in developing countries, making the training

available to practising experts who might not otherwise be able to benefit from capacity building in this specialised area.

Iceland's long experience from using geothermal as a clean, sustainable and stable energy resource is a strong example of how the utilisation of renewable resources can enhance economic development and growth.

Promoting sustainable energy is one of the main focus areas in Iceland's development cooperation – paving the way towards ending poverty, combatting climate change and fighting inequality.

To that end, the UNU-GTP – which you, dear fellows, are a part of – plays an important role. For many developing countries that are pursuing a sustainable energy path, lack of capacity and technical know-how to evaluate and harness their geothermal resources is a bottleneck.

Earlier this year the UNU Geothermal Training Programme celebrated its 40th anniversary. The success of the programme is best demonstrated in the meaningful development results it has produced in its partner countries – many of the former fellows are now in leading positions in the geothermal sector in their home countries, playing key role in developing and leading new projects in their organisations and beyond.

My special thanks go to Director Lúðvík and the competent staff of the UNU-GTP. Their commitment and hard work have made the programme into what it is today.

I cannot forgo the opportunity to say a few words on gender equality, which is another priority in Iceland's development cooperation. Besides the obvious, that gender equality is basic human rights, it is our belief that without gender equality and women's empowerment there can be no sustainable development.

I am therefore happy to see that since the turn of the century there has been a steady growth of the proportion of female fellows and I look forward to seeing the UNU-GTP reach parity in the near future and push the envelope further on gender aspects.

Dear fellows,

Allow me to congratulate you again on your graduation. I am sure the last six months have presented challenges to you, your graduation today means that you have overcome them, and I hope you leave Iceland with a positive impression.

As countries embark on implementing the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, learning will undeniably play an instrumental role, with *knowledge, skills* and *attitudes* being important drivers of change. All of you are equipped with these important instruments and can act as change agents in your home countries, powering the transformation required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.