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Dear Professors and Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed my great pleasure and honor to be here today in front of you as an alumnus of the Asian Public Policy Program, as well as a representative for hundreds of APPP alumni over the past 10 years. First of all, I would like to congratulate the School of International and Public Policy for its 10th anniversary. I wish all the best for the School's development in the coming time under one of the best universities in Japan and the world.

There are so many memories coming back to me when I recall my graduate school years during 2001-2003 at APPP. It will be impossible to list all of them in this brief remark, so I would like to ask you in advance for forgiving me if something is left unsaid.

I was in the second batch of APPP, and at that time for myself and most of my classmates it was the first trip abroad and became one of our richest learning and living experiences, that is learning Japan as a new country, meeting many new people all around the globe, studying in a new university, and exploring a new professional knowledge.

At APPP, we were living and studying in a very facilitating environment, where professors and program manager were as our parents in daily life and as mentors in our academic life, while classmates were as our brothers and sisters. We could share our good and bad moments with all people around, so APPP was like our sweet home. Although we came from different institutions in different countries with different backgrounds, we did not feel isolated and tired of studying or doing research since professors and classmates were always enthusiastic supporters to us. Training at APPP, based on the foundation of state-of-the-art research and cross-cutting issues, provided us various skills in strong analytical framework and evidence-based policy analysis and advocacy. More importantly, the 'workshops on the current

topics' as well as in-campus seminars and field trips, which were provided by well-known professors and practitioners, helped us widen our view on public policy - from socio-economic to cultural and health issues in different parts of the world. For this, I have been beneficial and could decide my life-long topics of policy research and consultancy, that is population aging and social protection. This is also true for many of my 'cohais' and 'sempais' as I know through our APPP community.

In 2012, I became the youngest associate professor in economics in Vietnam, and in 2014 I became one of the youngest director of an institute at the National Economics University. I am proud of these milestones, but they also always remind me about responsibilities in public policy research and training. Now as an expert in aging and social protection, I have various opportunities to use skills that I studied at APPP. I have provided a number of policy consultancy work to ministries in Vietnam, in which some of my research findings were important inputs for policy reforms. In addition, my knowledge is also shared with other regional countries via my consultancies to their governments (such as Indonesia and Myanmar), as well as my lectures (such as Thailand and Singapore). I am really happy that policy reforms have improved quality of life for million poor and vulnerable people.

Through APPP Community and Hitotsubashi University network, I have widened the network for my National Economics University. I have suggested a number of people to study from and work with Japanese people. I am happy to welcome any Japanese delegates to Vietnam for exploring education, training and business opportunities with Vietnam. I am sure that the names 'Hitotsubashi University', 'IPP', and 'APPP' will be more popular among young people in Vietnam, who are seeking for professional training in economics and public policy.

In my research area, we always have a big concern, that is 'getting old before getting rich'. However, for Hitotsubashi University in general, and IPP and APPP in particular, I strongly believe that 'getting old' means 'getting stronger and richer' in training, research, and consultancy.

Number '10' remarks important milestones that IPP has experienced and grown. This will be an important turning point for IPP to continue its growth. IPP is as a tree, while its alumni from different programs - including us at APPP - are as green leaves who can provide quality socio-economic 'environment' in our respective countries and regions in a variety of ways.

On behalf of APPP alumni, I would like again to congratulate IPP for its 10th anniversary. I wish IPP would be a stronger tree in economic and public policy field, while I promise that APPP alumni will be greener leaves.

I wish you all here, Professor, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good health and good luck!

Thank you for your attention.