

# **Dr Philip Chen Nan-lok GBS, JP**

## **DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION *honoris causa***

### **Citation**

Dr Philip Chen Nan-lok graduated from the University of Hong Kong in 1977 with a BA (Hons) in history & political science, and also holds an MBA from the same university (1984). He joined Cathay Pacific Airways of the Swire Group in 1977, and in 33 years of outstanding work for the Group, took up a succession of important posts such as Chief Representative & General Manager of John Swire & Sons (China) Ltd; Chief Executive of Hong Kong Dragon Airlines; Deputy Managing Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Executive and non-executive Deputy Chairman of Cathay Pacific Airways; Director of Swire Pacific Ltd and John Swire & Sons (Hong Kong) Ltd; and Chairman of John Swire & Sons (China) Ltd. Since 2010, Dr Chen has been serving as Managing Director of Hang Lung Group and Hang Lung Properties.

During a long and distinguished career in business management, with a wide range of experience acquired in Hong Kong, mainland China and abroad, Dr Chen has built up a firm reputation as a “company doctor” and an entrepreneurial planner. He turned the deeply ailing Dragonair into a lean, efficient and profitable operation; likewise, during his public service tenure as Chairman of Hong Kong Ocean Park between 2000 and 2003, Dr Chen engineered its turnaround from a money-losing concern into a leading and profitable theme park. He not only sustained Cathay Pacific’s profitability through an extremely difficult period that saw the Asian financial crisis, avian flu and SARS successively plaguing Hong Kong, but also strengthened the company’s legitimacy as an airline based in Hong Kong and belonging to Hong Kong, by further localising the work force. Through a successful merger with Dragonair and a share swap that fortified cooperation with Air China, Dr Chen led Cathay Pacific to foray into the mainland, which further cemented Cathay Pacific’s long-term growth into an international hub airline. He firmly believes that from past ages to today’s world, one of the marks of a great world-class city lies in its role as an international centre of transport and exchange; to him, that is what Hong Kong should be. In his current position at Hang Lung directing its businesses in Hong Kong and mainland China, Dr Chen has enhanced the Group’s management system and corporate brand, as well as dramatically raised the Group’s revenue by expanding its investments in China.

Dr Chen once said that he chose to join Cathay Pacific simply because “I wanted to ride the plane like my classmates could”. As of today, he has not only set foot on six continents, but also put some of his travel experiences in writing, which was published first as a newspaper column and subsequently as seven collections of best-selling Chinese travel prose. Some of his insights were also developed into a research book in English entitled *Great Cities of the World*. In a philanthropic spirit, Dr Chen has donated the royalties from the book sales to two charities.

Indeed, a person who truly flies high also sees further than most people, and certainly beyond himself. Having risen to professional heights from a modest background, Dr Chen has shown a firm commitment to public service. Ranging from education, aviation, social ethics and philanthropy to trade, tourism, logistics and overall strategic development, his multiple areas of service to Hong Kong include far more than the brief list of responsibilities mentioned here: member of the University Grants Committee and Chairman of its Quality Assurance Council; member of the Council of the Hong Kong Institute of Education; member of the Aviation Development Advisory Committee; Chairman of the Corruption Prevention Advisory Committee and member of various committees of the Independent Commission against Corruption; board member and co-Chairman of the

Campaign Committee of the Community Chest of Hong Kong; Steward of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, the largest charitable body in Hong Kong; member of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and Chairman of its Logistics Services Advisory Committee; member of the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Tourism Strategy Group; Chairman of the Joint Council of Travel Industry of Hong Kong; member of the Committee on Logistics Service Development of the Hong Kong Port & Maritime Board; and member of the Commission on Strategic Development.

The above partial list of public responsibilities does not do full justice to Dr Chen's service record, but it may suffice to show that he is a highly efficient doer more than a grand theorist. While touching on his philosophy of life, Dr Chen simply said with a smile: "I believe in the good part of human nature, and in continuous improvement. Whether as a manager or as a human being, you have to be fair, attentive, and aware of the big picture. I also believe that every matter can be done just a little better, from small operational details to a whole business model." What comes across clearly is a natural drive for excellence, an astute management instinct, an unstinting ardour to serve society, an extraordinary level of stamina, and a versatile reason that will ensure the practicability of a good idea.

Not surprisingly, Dr Chen has received multiple honours and awards over the years, both locally and overseas. He has been appointed a Justice of the Peace, and successively awarded a Silver Bauhinia Star and a Gold Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong SAR Government for his distinguished public service, in particular for his contribution to corruption prevention work. He has also been bestowed the honour of Officier de l'ordre national du Mérite by the French Government. In terms of institutional honours, Dr Chen has been awarded an honorary Doctor of Business Administration degree by the Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, an honorary fellowship by the University of Hong Kong, a fellowship by the Royal Aeronautical Society of the UK, and a fellowship by the Hong Kong Management Association. Dr Chen has also been appointed an adjunct professor or a visiting professor by various institutions in Hong Kong and mainland China.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of his distinguished professional achievements and wide-ranging contributions to the Hong Kong community, may I present Dr Philip Chen Nan-lok to you for conferment of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration *honoris causa*.

*English citation written and delivered by Professor Charles Kwong*

# 陳南祿博士 GBS, JP

榮譽工商管理學博士

## 贊辭

陳南祿博士於 1977 年取得香港大學文學士（榮譽）學位，主修歷史及政治科學；1984 年再獲港大工商管理碩士學位。陳博士 1977 年畢業後，加入太古集團旗下的國泰航空。在集團服務三十三年期間歷任要職，包括太古股份及太古（中國）有限公司駐北京首席代表兼總經理；港龍航空行政總裁；國泰航空副董事總經理、常務總裁、行政總裁及非常務副主席；太古股份有限公司常務董事；太古（中國）有限公司主席等。自 2010 年起，陳博士任職恆隆集團及恆隆地產董事總經理。

陳博士多年來開展優秀的商業管理事業，在香港、內地及海外累積了豐富的經驗，更建立起「公司醫生」和企業策劃者的堅實名聲。他把處於水深火熱中的港龍航空扭轉為一家精簡、高效益及重返盈利的企業；同樣地，他在 2000 至 2003 年出任海洋公園董事局主席的公職時，亦成功策劃令海洋公園轉虧為盈，成為一流的主題公園。他帶領國泰航空先後走過亞洲金融風暴、禽流感及非典型肺炎的挑戰，在一段非常困難的時期維持公司的盈利能力。不但如此，陳博士透過員工聘用的本地化，加強了國泰作為一家以香港為本、屬於香港人的航空公司的正統身分。他更成功策劃國泰航空與港龍航空合併，同時透過建立互控關係，加強國泰與中國國際航空的合作，令國泰得以全面進軍內地市場，進一步鞏固國泰的長遠發展，成為國際性的樞紐航空公司。陳博士堅信古往今來，一個世界級城市的特徵之一，正是它作為國際交通及交流中心的作用；在他看來，香港正該如此。他目前掌管恆隆在香港及內地的各項業務，已強化集團各項管理系統及品牌，大大提升了集團的收入以及在中國的投資。

陳博士曾說，當年選擇加入國泰只因「希望可以像同學們坐飛機」。今天，他不但踏足過六大洲，更把部分遊歷經驗付諸文字，初發表於報章專欄，其後結為七集旅遊散文出版，成為中文暢銷書。此外，部分體會亦開展為一本研究性質的英文書，題為《寰宇名城》。陳博士心存善念，將書籍銷售所得的版稅捐贈予兩個慈善機構。

一個真正的飛騰者，誠然比大多數人高瞻遠矚，目光更無疑超乎一己。陳博士以「寒微」之身直上事業雲霄，展現出對公益服務的熱忱。他對香港眾多方面的公職服務，涵蓋教育、航空、社會倫理、慈善事業、商貿、旅遊、物流以至整體策略性發展等範疇，遠不止下列的項目摘要：大學教育資助委員會委員及教資會轄下之質素保證局主席；香港教育學院校董會成員；航空發展諮詢委員會成員；廉政公署防止貪污諮詢委員會主席及公署其他不同委員會委員；香港公益金董事及公益金籌募委員會聯席主席；本地最大慈善機構香港賽馬會董事；香港貿易發展局理事及貿發局物流服務諮詢委員會主席；香港旅遊發展局成員及旅遊業策略小組成員；香港旅遊業聯會主席；香港港口及航運局物流服務發展委員會委員；策略發展委員會委員等等。

上述的部分公職不足以反映陳博士的公共服務的全貌，但也許可以顯示他是一位高效率的力行者多於偉論家。他談到自己的生命哲學時，只是面帶微笑地簡單說：「我相信人性善良的部分，亦相信不斷改進。不論作為管理者抑或作為一個人，處事都要公平、細心、放眼全局。我亦相信每樣東西都可以做得更好一點，由營運的細節到整個商業模式。」他讓人清楚感受到的，是精益

求精的自然動力、敏銳的管理觸覺、服務社會的慷慨熱誠、超乎常人的精力，以及多方面的睿智，能夠保證一個良好構思的可行性。

無怪陳博士多年來曾在本港及海外獲得不少獎譽。他先後獲香港特區政府委任為太平紳士以及頒授銀紫荊星章和金紫荊星章，表揚其傑出的公共服務，尤其是對防止貪污工作的貢獻。陳博士更獲法國政府頒授國家榮譽勳章（官員級）。至於學術機構及專業團體方面的榮譽，則包括香港科技大學榮譽工商管理博士、香港大學榮譽院士、英國皇家航空學會院士、香港管理專業協會院士等。陳博士亦曾獲香港及內地不同院校委任為兼任或訪問教授。

主席先生，為表揚陳博士傑出的專業成就以及對香港社會多方面的貢獻，本人謹恭請閣下頒授榮譽工商管理學博士學位予陳南祿博士。

英文贊辭由鄺龔子教授撰寫及宣讀