

Opening speech by Mayor of the City of Turku, Mrs. Minna Arve

Visit to Turku from the University of Strathclyde, Turku City Hall, 15 February 2018

**Dear vice rectors, deans, our Scottish visitors,
business representatives, ladies and gentlemen,**

I am delighted to welcome You all to Turku, Turku City Hall, and this event.

The City of Turku and Southwest Finland are currently enjoying powerful economic growth and have strong future prospects. The atmosphere is very positive. In our region, the marine and automobile industries are experiencing long-term growth, and the entire regional economy is booming alongside them. Over the last year, Southwest Finland has become an engine of growth for the entire country, and Turku is at the core of this development.

This role brings great joy but also great responsibilities.

As the economy grows, so do the public sector assignments and challenges in the region. We must ensure that companies have access to competent employees, transport connections work, housing is available for everyone, and that high-quality education, health care services and leisure services are available to children, young people, and adults. We must extensively ensure comfort and functionality in the city.

A city with appeal, good services, and sustainable development is the best starting point for the location and growth of companies as well.

Competence is essential for the future of Turku as well as the entire country. Top-level expertise may be the single most important element for the competitiveness of companies, the city and country alike. Southwest Finland is home to several companies which operate globally and are even world leaders in their respective areas, whose products and services are tested in tough international competition every day.

If we want to play in the world series, we must have top-of-the-world competence today as well as tomorrow.

Turku is a strong university city with long-standing traditions, and the higher education establishments in Turku form the cornerstone for the development of the entire city. During the past two years, we have actively built a new kind of cooperation with all of the technical universities in Finland. We are aware that the challenges of the developing technologies of tomorrow are so extensive that they can only be overcome through multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary, and cross-border cooperation.

The region needs more experts in an increasing number of fields.

All the world's wisdom can never lie in one place; unfortunately, not even here in Turku. At least not until we get the world's best partners to move in.

I am very pleased that Turku has raised interest at the University of Strathclyde and that You wanted to come and find out the objectives and tangible means for developing cooperation with the Turku region and Turku University of Applied Sciences.

We all know that Strathclyde is a highly respected university with extensive high-quality research.

I hope that this visit can motivate both the University of Strathclyde and the Turku University of Applied Sciences to look for their own and shared interests, and to find a tangible cooperation which can promote the success of the Turku region and local companies.

From the perspective of the City of Turku, the matter is simple. The City wishes to offer its companies a good and high-quality operating environment. This means that we also want to offer the best possible competence and education possibilities. We aim to offer companies in Turku an extensive range of top quality expertise and education of new talents.

Business is global, higher education is global – the City also has to go global.

The City of Turku wishes the cooperation built between the University of Strathclyde and the Turku region to succeed. We want to support and encourage this new shared process in any way that we can. The results may be quite significant for the Turku of tomorrow. This is our common goal.

Thank You.