

On Behalf of Hungarian Medical Universities and Institutions

Magnifice Rector!

Honoured Guests!

The Medical Universities of Debrecen and Pécs have conferred on me the honour of greeting you on the occasion of this special event. In the history of an Institution there is hardly any occasion other than renaming where there is time to look back to the past but also for to the future. It means a conscious acceptance of life because it means an identity with both the veracities and errors of the name-giver. In this context renaming is an intention to regard the name-giver as an example, and his memory a spiritual inspiration which remains living and topical. I suppose the major objectives in choosing the name of Albert Szent-Györgyi are not only a tribute to the past.

The name and university background of the Nobel prize winning scientist Albert Szent-Györgyi further enhance the scientific and public respect of the University on a national and an international scale alike. I believe that Universal research is the symbol of the near future and progress of the University. Training, medicine and scientific research are the catalysts for the challenges of the 21st century. In one of his works Albert Szent-Györgyi wrote the following: "There might be differences between the two worlds, namely prescientific and scientific eras. It is, however, undeniable that the world of science is also the world of peace."

This was the guiding principle of the throbbing, ever passionate life of Albert Szent-Györgyi. It is also witnessed by his own thoughts when he declares: "Looking back on my past I see that I have been seeking peace during all my eventful life." His scientific and public projects thus always merged.

Albert Szent-Györgyi's Szeged citizenship also involves his nationality and internatiónality. It also involves the fact that he used to be a professor of the Péter Pázmány University of Sciences, and at whatever stage he could he co-operated with Hungarian medical universities. This attitude led later to the pressure-born idea of establishing a laboratory free of walls, which became one of the greatest spiritual ventures of the 20th century and a means of cooperation between top-ranking research institutions.

Some of us present in this room might consider ourselves lucky to have had the possibility to become acquainted with Albert Szent-Györgyi not only through stories and writings but personally. For some of us he was our teacher or colleague, for others an intellectual partner as well. It is foreseeable that some features of his portrait will change along with the historical perspectives, certain elements will be stressed and others ousted. I assume, however, that the paramount impact of the personal contact, the indirect memories mean an inner strength which might initiate expected social and scientific changes.

I do not intend to talk about the scientific results of Albert Szent-Györgyi, since numerous books and papers have been published on them. I would rather say, that choosing a name puts one under obligation and we respect the University for this decision: it is a privilege for the Hungarian medical community to live with the memories of Albert Szent-Györgyi. We hope the idea of a laboratory without walls will further connections not only at international level but also between Hungarian medical universities.

With these thoughts I wish for successful work worthy of the name-giver in *training, medicine and scientific research on behalf of the Medical Universities of Debrecen, Pécs, the Institute for Medical Postgradual Training and my own Institute the Semmelweis Medical University of Budapest.*

Finally let me present to you the respectful message of the Council of my University.