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Congratulations to my alma mater on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

Having a decent trip down the memory lane does not come with the territory for everyone. Yet my flashbacks at the kindergarten are indeed the guarantee for such a pleasant journey. My Kindergarten is where I would be happy about 'going to school'. The first babbling with somebody not papa & mama, the first bite not served by granny and grandpa, and probably the first wailing thanks to...I don't really even recall. All of these happened organically in this safe, compassionate, encouraging and inspiring incubator.

Those memories certainly lie in the past, but there are certainly not things in the past. Here you could touch the bedrock upon which who I am now. I learnt to be part of a whole, with respect, empathy, discipline and selflessness and sense of duty. I got the hang of expressing myself decently without camouflage. I brought home – and in fact always with myself, and to others – the very meaning of serving a community by contributing one's share with diligence and intelligence. Above all, I never draw a blank on my roots – a pledge I always renew every time I am back.

Blossoming for 40 years ever since, the Kindergarten does not only shelter with an inward look; rather, it engages with those who put their faith in it. I remember spotting my mother hiding in the last row of the auditorium whenever I was out with the team for dancing shows – a wacky move, but I am pretty sure this would not have been possible without her and my teacher speaking behind closed doors beforehand. Understanding that there is no 'I' in teamwork, 'Tin Ka Ping' is where parents partner with educators and play an essential role in their children's growth – yes, parents here get their hands dirty too, just because they are in good ones as well.

To my alma mater: Regardless of how our surroundings have evolved, and no matter what, where and when, you will always be lighthouse who is there to illuminate my and millions of souls. Looking ahead to its upcoming golden jubilee and beyond, I wish you all the best while reaching greater heights. Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday!

Berlin, Summer 2024

