

Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,
Dear guests,

I am glad that we can follow the tradition of the New Year's meetings – the staff of the faculty, the partners, the supporters and friends have already met for the fourth time here.

To begin with, let me wish you all sound health, lots of personal and professional achievements, peace for your families and working places as well.

I would also like to take this opportunity in hindsight of the last year – or let's say summarize. On the other hand, I wish to present, a rough outline at least of what my vision of the faculty for this year is and what necessities are needed in order to fulfil it.

Since the 1st October 2010, the faculty has not only been directed by the new management, but also by some new positions of chief managerial staff in the system that have been opened, these being at the Institutes of Professional Pedagogy and in Administration Divisions. All the controlling positions at the faculty have been finally occupied after the challenging and complex selection procedures. I wish to believe and I will gladly allow myself to be convinced about the fact that keen and independent selection committees chose properly. I am delighted to say that our faculty management team has been extended to two ladies – vice-dean Mrs. Vidova and the manager of the economic and administrative division – Mgr. Nemetzova. There are no women scientific workers in positions of the institutes' directors yet. On the contrary, the faculty's Scientific Board has changed positively towards gender diversity. Personally, I am convinced that these are more than good steps concerning the gender equality at the Faculty of technology and we want to benefit from its positive aspects in the future.

Hindsight of 2010, from my point of view, is connected with extraordinary satisfaction. The qualification structure has markedly improved. Besides the two or three exceptions that are still being tolerated for different reasons, a team consisting of more than two hundred teachers operates at the faculty, all with a minimum qualification of a Ph.D. All of this assures me that along with the planned reduced number of matriculated students within the first year of bachelor's study – fewer than 1000, will meet the last criterion without any difficulty. My delight is even greater due to a lack of concerns about studying at the Faculty last year.

The first degree is characterised by 2.6 aspirants on one study place, the second degree shows 1.7 aspirants and the third degree presents 2.5 aspirants on one study place.

Within this context, let me congratulate our two new professors at the Faculty – Professor Milan Marônek and Professor Peter Šugár who will be given the letters of appointment by the president at an early date. The appointment is even more pleasant due to the fact that both professors are in the “young, active” academic age. Presently, six guest professors are working at the Faculty, two of them from abroad and there are another 15 professors from Slovakia and Germany working part-time from 10 to 50 percent.

Our strength is definitely our fruitfulness within grant resource fundraising from the structural funds. Along this line, I can say without exaggeration that we are the most successful school and research institution within Slovakia.

The Faculty, as the first, completed successfully the excellence centre project within a year in Slovakia. After nearly two decades, using the European funds and

distinctive financial contribution of the University as well as our own sources, we put into operation the new building – the building of 5-axial machining excellence centre which was built in an extremely short time of less than three months.

Alongside, following the medium-term plan – to concentrate all the activities of the Faculty in the campus on Bottova Street – we have completely innovated the energy and media distribution networks (electric power, heat, water, canalisation etc.) If we begin to build in the campus again, and I believe this will happen soon, the problem of connecting the new objects to the media will be already solved. Interestingly enough, during the last year we invested approximately **xxxx** million EUR from all sources - university, faculty and structural ones – into the buildings and repairs.

It is not possible to sit on two chairs at the same time. If we have already decided to create, modernize and reconstruct our scientific and research base at the Faculty, there is now not much time left for more active participation in the scientific and research projects at the agencies like VEGA, APVV etc. We hold an opinion that if we optimally use the European structural funds (and we are successful in obtaining the projects as we have been so far), then, with the new equipment base, we cannot have any difficulties with participating in the European research area in the way of joining FP7, FP8 or EUROATOM in the future. To do so, we are now creating new scientific and research work places and solving the qualification pattern of our scientific and research workers. According to our calculation, we need to create approximately 50 new positions for scientific and research workers by the end of the structural funds drawing period. It is also necessary to occupy these positions by taking employees with a high qualification structure similar to that of the teaching staff.

In connection to this, let me point out one more thing. Administration and organisation divisions' employees were also able to gain and solve successfully the projects at this Faculty. Two projects from structural funds are being solved by the Division of Knowledge Management. Employees of the Division of Academic Activities, Division of Communication and Information Systems and Centre of Technologies Transfer are actively participating in project solution teams as well as in the project FP7.

It is an honour to thank the managers of all administrative divisions of the Faculty as well as their teams for realising the challenge of the Faculty's management to professionalize and implement internationally comparable standards of their work within everyday practice. Certainly, the mobility and constant education of our administrative managers present a great contribution to all this. The student and staff service offered by the Faculty is nowadays comparable to other highly-developed institutions.

Doctoral study at the Faculty (300 students of Ph.D. at present) is becoming one of the attributes important for joining the rest of the world. We present a work place where even more foreign students meet. It is a pity that we could not enrol more aspirants for full-time doctoral study due to the assigned number of places. During the last academic year, 62 students were enrolled for the first year of study, mostly internal graduates from our Faculty – these are the results from which not only our Faculty presently benefits from, but also our whole Alma Mater.

In 2010, our Faculty held the world conference IGIP-SEFI, the two world professional organisations dealing with engineering education quality. More than 400 participants from all continents voiced great satisfaction with the quality of organisation and professional standard. We are convinced that the conference participants will spread the reputation of our institution, our town and region far beyond the borders of Slovakia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We could not imagine our successful activities without our partners from state, public and the private sector. The cooperation is certainly beneficial for both parties. Let me name at least the institutions from Slovakia and abroad that we consider to be our crucial partners: region and town of Trnava, JAVYS, VUJE, Beakert, DELCAM, FZD, IFW, TU Ilmenau, TU Dresden, University of Miskolc, University of Zagreb-Varazdin University of Applied Sciences Koethen, University in Kecskemeth, Izhevsk State Technical University, University of Martha Abreu Santa Clara on Cuba and also many other partners of the University from Germany, Austria, Poland, Croatia, Serbia and the Czech republic.

During the last year, we made a determining step together with the German and Hungarian partners from the University in Magdeburg and the University of Miskolc in terms of establishing cooperation with our Cuban partners and friends from Las Villas University in Santa Clara. We also started to communicate with the Iranian partners.

Of course, there is much more to say at this place. However, it is more important to remind in short of what will come and what we want to improve or realise to our benefit within the Faculty in the coming year.

- to continue in the development activities, mainly in keeping with the ambitious plan of the campus building in Bottova Street
- to set conditions and to increase the pressure for the purpose of a quantitative and qualitative development of scientific and research activities, to involve all the students of the third grade into the grant research within the common European research area
- to support and develop the system of quality at the Faculty with priority and emphasis on the quality improvement of the pedagogic process, to gradually rebuild the relationship of "student-teacher" towards partnership
- evaluate the accreditation criteria fulfilling and corresponding with the passed evaluative period and to make all the necessary corrections in such a way that in the next accreditation in 2013, our Faculty will be above standard within the Slovak University of Technology
- we already know today that the successful faculties and universities of the future need to participate in science and research projects within the common European research area – this is the principal challenge for all our institutes, to participate in the projects preparation FP8 with their foreign partners within the given time span – the structural funds will be exhausted in two years.

To sum it up, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to thank all the sponsors of the Faculty who, within the last year, donated more than 100 000 EUR for the benefit of the Faculty's activities and so contributed to the excellent course of the world conference IGIP-SEFI. Moreover, they contributed to the teachers' and researchers' mobility and last but not least, they enabled the purchase of technology equipment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to wish you all the best in 2011 again concerning your work but also your personal life and, at the same time, I would like you to pleasantly enjoy this meeting.

17.1.2011