

**Ávarp rektors Háskóla Íslands, Jóns Atla Benediktssonar, á 10 ára
afmælishátíð Konfúsíusarstofnunarinnar Norðurljós, Hátíðarsal
Háskóla Íslands, 19. september 2018**

Chinese ambassador to Iceland, Jin Zhijan, Vice Rector of Ningbo University, Feng Zhimin, representative of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, Liu Yuening, Dean of the School of Humanities at the University of Iceland, Guðmundur Hálfðanarson, Director of the Northern Lights Confucius Institute, Magnús Björnsson, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my honour and pleasure to open this celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Northern Lights Confucius Institute at the University of Iceland. I would like to start by offering my heartfelt congratulations to all those involved with the Institute. When the Northern Lights Confucius Institute was founded, it was a small sapling, but over the last decade it has thrived and grown into a grand and bountiful tree.

The Northern Lights Confucius Institute is a very important part of the University of Iceland's work and I wish especially to thank our partner institution Ningbo University for all their support. In particular, I would like to mention the visiting lecturers from Ningbo University who have come to teach Chinese studies here in Iceland. They have all proved to be both excellent teachers and popular with

students. Ningbo University also organises a free annual summer camp for University of Iceland students, who stay at Ningbo University for two weeks to learn Chinese and get to know a bit of the country. The institution is also responsible for a lot of lectures and diverse events at the University of Iceland, aimed at both academics and the general public. The numerous other forms of activities by the Confucius Institute are too many to mention here. All this serves to strengthen the cultural and academic ties between Iceland and China in many different ways.

Ladies and gentlemen. A wonderful anniversary programme awaits, both here in the University of Iceland Aula and at Harpa Concert Hall this evening where guests will be treated to musical performances by Icelandic and Chinese artists.

So now without further ado, I hereby declare the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Northern Lights Confucius Institute open and I hope you all have a wonderful time.