

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS delivered by **PROFESSOR P. O'KANE**, University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork on 10th May, 2002 on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*, on **RICARDO MELCHIOR NAVARRO**

A Sheansailéir, a Árd Mhéara, a mhuintir na hOllscoile, agus a dhaoine uaisle,

Ricardo Melchior Navarro was born on February 18, 1947 in the city of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, which are part of the Kingdom of Spain. He studied Industrial Engineering at the modern University of Navarra in metropolitan Spain, specialising in Industrial Organization. Subsequently, he travelled to Germany to study both Engineering and Economics at the Technical University in Aachen, the renowned Technische Hochschule of Rhein-Westfalia. He was awarded the higher degrees of Diplom Ingenieur and Diplom Wirtschaftsingenieur.

In 1977 he returned to the island of Tenerife and was appointed director of CAPSA, the company in charge of the Port of Tenerife, where he worked for four years. In 1981 he was offered a management position as Head of the "New Energies" department of UNELCO, the island's electricity utility company. Since that year he has actively campaigned for the creation of a centre for research and development of renewable energies for the Spanish islands in co-operation with their local authorities.

In July 1987 Ricardo Melchior was elected Vice-President of the Cabildo de Tenerife – the government of Tenerife –, a post he has combined with his work as Island Councillor with responsibility for

- Planning and Economic Development, from 1987 to 1991,
- Agriculture and Economic Development, from 1991 to 1995,
- Agriculture and Water, from 1995 to 1999.

His long-term ambition to create a centre for research and development of renewable energies for the islands, came to fruition in 1990, when he was able to create the Institute of Technology and Renewable Energy dedicated to applied research and development in the field of renewable energies.

Ricardo Melchior has been the president of this Institute since its foundation and has actively participated in the promotion of renewable energies, not only at a local level, but also in Europe. He is a founder member of the Eurec-Agency – the European Renewable Energy Council. He has participated actively in many of the projects of the Institute of Technology and Renewable Energy, frequently in partnership with similar institutes in the member states of the European Union. He has been an active participant in national and international seminars, conferences and congresses related to this area of investigation.

Ricardo Melchior Navarro, was elected President of the "Cabildo" Tenerife's island authority in 1999, having held the position of Vice-President from 1987 to 1999.

As the President of the Cabildo of Tenerife, he is also responsible for the presidency of various enterprises and organizations that belong to the Cabildo and are concerned with

- the development of renewable energies;
- the co-ordination of Research and Development projects in the Canary islands;
- the creation of necessary infrastructure for the development of engineering, local

industry and research;

- the export and transfer of "know-how" to other islands and countries;
- the promotion of beneficial relationships with the national and international scientific community;
- the training of scientific and technical personnel in areas related to renewable energies.

Over the last 25 years, Ricardo Melchior has worked in areas related to the research and development of renewable energies. He is a

- An expert of the European Union's Directorate General XVII (Research and Development),
- a member of the Scientific Committee of the German Institute of Solar Energy,
- a founding member of the European Solar Council (Paris Club), The Communities of Europe for Renewable Energies (CERE) and the European Renewable Energy Agency,
- President of the Board of Trustees of the Teide National Park.

In honouring Ricardo Melchior we celebrate his life-long commitment to the practical realisation of renewable energy, which is so important for the amelioration of global warming and climate change, and for the creation of sustainable wealth and youth employment in island communities, especially on the Atlantic periphery of the European Union.

It is my pleasure and privilege now, to present Ricardo Melchior Navarro for the University's highest honour, Doctor of Science.

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:

Praesento vobis, hunc meum filium quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Scientia, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo totaeque Academiae.