

37th AWARD CEREMONY

Great Hall of Acts, “Sala dos Capelos” University of Coimbra

Salutatory address by Professor Sir Fraser Stoddart

President of the World Cultural Council

Bom dia.

I would like to begin my salutatory address by expressing my heartfelt thanks on behalf of the World Cultural Council, absolutely no holds barred to the University of Coimbra, its Rector Professor Amílcar Falcão, other university dignitaries including Professor Claudia Cavadas the Vice-rector for research and doctoral studies, its officials and authorities for their warm hospitality and last but not least the University of Coimbra for hosting this year's celebrations, not forgetting their stickability and patience following the commitment to host the event four years ago in 2019.

The wonderful occasion we are witnessing yesterday and today should have taken place in 2020. Plans to hold the event were put on ice if you like a cool idiom or put on the back burner if you prefer a warm idiom.

The outcome was well worth waiting for because it has given the World Cultural Council the opportunity to add three outstanding role models to the pantheon of all time WCC grades - Physicist Victoria, Vicky Caspi from McGill University who is in receipt of the “Albert Einstein” World Award in Science, Visionary Educator extraordinaire Claudia Mitchell also from McGill University who is in receipt of the 2022 “Jose Vasconcelos” World Award in Education, and Architecture pedagogue Meejin Yoon from Cornell University in receipt of the 2022 “Leonardo da Vinci” World Award in the Arts.

Congratulations to all these three laureates.

The WCC glass ceiling has been well and truly shattered for its part the University of Coimbra has every reason to claim pride of place as the oldest university here in Portugal and one of the first universities to cut its teeth in Europe.

The university has also every reason to be proud of its cultural heritage and to be cherished for its present-day commitment to environmental remediation and sustainability.

On behalf of the World Cultural Council, I express my gratitude to the university authorities and staff.

To use a very British phrase, they are playing a binder. If I replace this phrase with an American counterpart, you're hitting the ball out of the park.

Thank you one and all and finally, I return to this three Award Winners and the Special Recognition Recipients.

Congratulations to all of you as well as to your families and friends for working on a mission with a vision and commitment to a brighter future here, there and everywhere.

Thank you.