

Speech for the Opening Session of the 14th PPEPPD

Sebastião Feyo de Azevedo, 22 de maio de 2016

Dr. Vicente Pinto, Vice Mayor of Espinho Municipality

Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Professor João Falcão e Cunha

Professor Maria Eugénia Macedo and Professor José Nuno Canongia Lopes, conference organizers

Dear Professor Arminda Alves

Dear Professor Madalena Dias

Distinguished conference speakers

Honourable guests of this session

Dear delegates,

Dear teachers and researchers,

Dear students,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to greet you all, speakers and delegates of the 14th International Conference on Properties and Phase Equilibria for Product and Process Design. I understand that there are more than 300 delegates registered, coming from 36 countries from four continents. Be sure that it is a honour for the University to host this meeting and for the Rector a great pleasure for right now participating in this opening session.

And, these are not words of occasion, as I am sure you are going to understand from my words.

Firstly and mainly, I firmly believe this is the only way for the future, for all of us. All my life I have been committed to international cooperation. In my application to this position of Rector, I made very clear that international cooperation would be on the top of my priorities

It is clear that the instruments to promote this international cooperation are quite different when we speak of education or of research.

In Education we have been very active and successful in promoting cooperation. We have more than 3500 students from 120 countries, working with us.

In ERASMUS MUNDUS, 2009-2014, we were 3rd in number of projet coordination (9), 5th in number of partnerships (39). We were involved in 5 Continents, 142 Countries, 792

Institutions involved, 7.612 Mobility flows, 151 Million euros in total, 36 Million euros managed by U.Porto .

In ERASMUS+, in just 1 year of the programme, 3 approved networks, with 1 coordination, - 5 Continents, 34 countries, 90 institutions, 255 grants, 1,4M€ /1 M€ Porto

We have further 51 projects submitted (9 + 42) waiting for a decision.

These are facts. They leave no doubt that we are at the top in Europe in this most relevant area of our public mission.

In research, it is clear that it is the individual effort and quality of researchers and research groups that count most.

Therefore, it is very gratifying for the University of Porto to host this meeting. The organisation of scientific events is of course then type of effort and work that meets our strategic aims of internationalisation, to expand our international projection and promote the sharing of advanced knowledge among experts from different parts of the world. We are aware that the proactive contact between research communities is decisive to scientific, technological and intellectual advancement in any area of study.

So, I really want to acknowledge the effort of my colleagues from the organization, from the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Porto and the Technical Institute of Lisbon and applaud the energy that they put into an event that promotes the sharing of knowledge and best practices between academia, innovation centres, entrepreneurs and industry.

But, I want to share with you an extra reason for this pleasure of being here tonight. You may be aware that I am a faculty member from the CE department of the Faculty of Engineering and I can say that I know well and very very much respect the brilliant research work of Eugenia, at home and globally, at European and World level. So, I am sure that you understand that after so many years of close work it is very sweet to me to be saying these words, now in this position as Rector.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A few words about the University.

Although the University was only formally established on the 22nd of March 1911, indeed its origins date back to the 18th century. Those were the days, back in 1762, of the creation of the Higher Education School of Nautics to help in the design and building of ships to fight pirates that were active along the sea coast. Today our institution is the second largest of Portuguese universities. With more than 30,000 students, the University of Porto is made up by 14 faculties covering all major areas of knowledge. We are also the academic partner of a business school, in association with the major companies and institutions of the region.

The University of Porto has 35 certified research units and 9 major interface institutes, being responsible for more than 20% of the Portuguese scientific production indexed in the Web of Science. Several indicators of academic quality show a continuous progress along the years, and particularly a consolidated reputation nationally and at international level.

This high scientific performance has allowed the University of Porto to improve its position in international academic rankings, being the Portuguese institution with the best score in many of those rankings. Today, the University of Porto is catching up with the top 100 European universities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I know that you will do a sightseeing tour of Porto. Therefore, I would like to invite you to enjoy the heritage, architectural, cultural and human wealth the city has to offer.

Discovering Porto will bring you many surprises. For those who visit the city, you can find traces of the medieval period; many works of art from the Romance and Baroque styles; neo-classical and neo-gothic buildings; the old part of the city by the riverside, which was the reason why it received the World Heritage title; some of the finest contemporary architecture; the bridges linking the margins of the Douro River... and of course the must of visiting our Port Wine Cellars.

Take full advantage of everything that the city of Porto and the cities around Porto, the Metropolitan Porto have to offer.

I Thank you for the attention you cared to pay to my words.

22 May 2016

Hotel Solverde, Espinho

Sebastião Feyo de Azevedo, Rector