

## **Professor Natarajan D.Univ**

Chancellor

It is a great honour to present Professor Ramamurthy Natarajan for the Honorary degree of Doctor of the University. The Vice Chancellor and I first met Professor Natarajan in 1999 when he hosted a meeting of the Directors of the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Australian Technology Network Vice Chancellors in Chennai to explore possible collaborative ventures between our institutions. At that time, he was the Director of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras , one of the most prestigious institutions in India, and he has remained a strong supporter of collaborative activities between India and Australia and a good friend of the University of South Australia ever since. In 2001 he was elevated to the position of Chairman of the All India Council for Technical Education , a statutory body, based in Delhi, reporting directly to the Minister for Education in the Indian Government with responsibility for the oversight of the development of technical education. He retired from this position at the end of 2004 but remains a very influential figure in research and educational matters .

Professor Natarajan was born and educated in Bangalore in the State of Karnataka in South India. After graduating as a mechanical engineer from the University College of Engineering, Bangalore in 1961, he completed a Master of Engineering in power engineering at the most prestigious research institute in India, the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore in 1963. He then went to Canada and completed a Master of Applied Science and a Doctor of Philosophy in combustion engineering at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, graduating in 1969. Dr Natarajan returned to India in 1970 to take up a position as an Assistant Professor at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, and, in the same year married his wife, Tara, a physicist, in an arranged marriage. We are delighted that Tara is here today for this ceremony.

At Madras, Professor Natarajan progressed rapidly through the ranks. He was promoted to Professor in 1975, appointed Dean, of Student Affairs in 1988, became Chairman of the Institute's Centre for Continuing Education in 1990, Head of its Department of Mechanical Engineering in 1993 and Director of the Institute in 1995. During his distinguished career, Professor Natarajan has held many leadership positions in his profession. He was Co-Chairman of the Board of the National Institute of Ocean Technology in India from 1995 to 2001 and has been the Chair of the Research Council of the Central Fuel Research Institute in Dhanbad since the same year. He is a Fellow and the Vice President of the Indian National Academy of Engineering. He is also a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers (India), the Indian Society of Technical Education and, in recognition of his contribution to engineering education, he is also a Fellow of the National Academy of Social Sciences. As well, Professor Natarajan is a member of the Editorial Boards of numerous national and international journals including Fuel Science & Technology, the International Journal of Engineering Education, and the Indian Journal of Technical Education.

Throughout his career, Professor Natarajan has received many honours and awards including the 'Eminent Engineer Award' of the Institution of Engineers (India), the 'Outstanding Contribution Award for Quality in Education' from the Quality Circle Forum of India and, in 2002, the Dr Homi Bhabha Award of the Indian Science Congress. He has also represented India at international congresses on numerous occasions. He was leader of the Indian delegation to the Technology-Enhanced Learning Project held at Carnegie Mellon University in 1998, he is a member of the India- China Eminent Persons Group and delivered the Keynote Address at the Symposium of the Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers in Edinburgh in 2003.

Chancellor, Professor Natarajan is a most distinguished academic, engineer and engineering educator who has helped to facilitate the University of South Australia's development of its collaborative relationships in India. He is an exceptionally worthy recipient of our Honorary Degree. He is no stranger to graduation ceremonies, having delivered 75 convocation addresses and almost 200 invited lectures in his career. Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Professor Ramamurthy Natarajan for the honorary degree of Doctor of the University.