

# INTRODUCTION AND DEDICATION TO LIBER AMICORUM JOSÉ MARÍA ABASCAL

SPOKEN IN HONOR OF JOSÉ MARÍA ABASCAL ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE ITA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AT THE 2012 ITA WORKSHOP,  
ON THE 21<sup>ST</sup> OF JUNE

In the summer of 1996, I found myself on a road on the grounds of the United Nations in Geneva. It was a warm, sunny, summer day; I was lost.

I had been appointed as a Commissioner to the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) and was there looking for the building in which we were to have our first meeting. I did not know that it was one of those days of good fortune in life, for along the road came a man who knew where the building was. He was my co-panelist and would become a dear friend: José María Abascal

José is a great human being. He has the spirit to appreciate fine music and to be moved by great literature. This spirit is expressed and treasured in every way he meets the world: teacher, mentor, listener, storyteller (if you know him at all), and wise and compassionate friend. This same spirit has meant that, in the law he is, among other things, a distinguished negotiator and diplomat and therefore, not surprisingly, was year after year the Chair of the UNCITRAL Working Group on Arbitration.

We served for seven years together on the UNCC. But our friendship and work together has continued and grown here within ITA where José has been at the heart of ITA's Americas Initiative and work within Latin America. So much was possible because of José's efforts, dedication and counsel. Thus when Luis Enrique Graham, Pilar Perales Viscasillas, and Aníbal Sabater approached ITA with a proposal to celebrate José's 50 years, a half century, in practice, we embraced their effort.

So tonight it is my pleasure on behalf of the World Arbitration and Mediation Review, the three just named special editors, my two co-editors-in-chief (Chip Brower and Abby Cohen Smutny), the managing editor (Leah Harhay) and the Board and Staff, as

well some twenty-three authors of twenty articles to present José with this Liber Amicorum in his honor.

David D. Caron

June 21, 2012

The Dallas Country Club, Dallas, Texas