

AS AN INTRODUCTION

By Colonel(R)VGM. **ALBERTO V. APARICIO**

Invited by the UNDEF, Colonel Alberto V. Aparicio, Secretary of Extension of the ESGC pronounced these words on 9 June 2022, at the beginning of the commemorative act for the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War.

“In 1967, I started first grade in Fiambalá, a small border town in the province of Catamarca; beyond it was the border with the Republic of Chile. At the back of the classroom, there was a world map, common in schools at the time. Among my earliest memories was the image of the Falkland Islands, as my height meant that my eyes were at that level.

I also remember the Manual Estrada, a textbook for primary school, widely used in those years; on one of its pages there was a drawing of the capital of the islands, a simple outline of little white houses, fences and green roofs. I mention these memories because when I touched down on the airport runway on 11 April 1982, those images immediately came to mind. Let these experiences serve then to symbolically link those provincial beginnings with the higher education in which I work at this National Defence University, which today is holding this event so dear to patriotic feelings, to emphasise the fundamental role of education in the construction of meanings about the Malvinas cause in the Argentine

collective conscience. To put it in a nutshell, the Argentine Army gave its best.

The courage and dedication shown in the combats of those dramatic days of 1982 were the result of a conviction that had long been deeply rooted in our hearts, which pushed our soldiers into action, and which also led to the spontaneous, sincere and patriotic support of society, regardless of the causes that guided political decisions. War as an extreme act of a society, means families in a long mourning, perhaps unfinished, with the pride of the hero who left his lineage high, as well as the pain for the loved one who did not return.

I ask for the understanding of this illustrious audience for these self-referential mentions, with the intention of transmitting to them my experiences as a war veteran, as a retired member of the Argentine Army, and my present as a teacher at the Joint War College.

The calm and reflection that higher education entails should serve as a spur to put the best of our talents and our energy into making these unredeemed islands and their surrounding areas return to the bosom of the homeland. Thank you, National Defence University, for your fervour in commemorating the 40th anniversary of the conflict, for keeping the Malvinas flame alive”.