

CITATION

for



PROF SIR SABARATNAM ARULKUMARAN

**DELIVERED BY
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It is a great honour for me to give this citation for Prof Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran, someone I respect and whom I had worked with for many years in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the National University of Singapore.

Prof Sir Arulkumaran has been Professor Emeritus of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the St George's University of London since January 2013, after he retired from his position as Professor and Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the same institution where he worked from 2001 to 2013. His distinguished career includes being the Foundation Professor of Obstetrics and gynaecology, St George's Medical School, University of Nicosia, since 2014. He served as president to prestigious organisations such as the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics from 2012 to 2015; the British Medical

Association from 2013 to 2014; and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, UK, from 2007 to 2013. He has been awarded Honorary Doctorates and Honorary Fellowships from various universities and institutions in the UK, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand, the US, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India and South Africa. He is an author of 280 peer-reviewed, indexed publications and 175 book chapters, as well as the author/editor of 32 books. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of *Best Practice & Research: Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology*.

For his service to medicine and healthcare, he was honoured with a Knight Bachelor by Her Majesty, the Queen of the United Kingdom, in her Birthday Honours List in June 2009.

On a personal note, I recall when I was a resident under Prof Sir Arulkumaran. I asked him what his

advice would be for me to emulate his footsteps and become an influential person like him. He sat me down and said: "EL, the secret of success is hard work." I told him that I was working rather hard already and he replied: "EL, you must work 6.5 days a week." And I exclaimed that I already worked 6.5 days a week! What Prof Sir Arulkumaran actually meant though, was that you have to work day and night for 6.5 days a week, and on Sunday, you work half a day. I understood his dictum after I observed that when I started work at 7.30 am, he had already put in a couple of hours of work, and when I left at 7 or 8 pm in the evening, he was still at work, finishing up manuscripts. I then realised that his success is truly due, in large measure, to sheer perspiration! We can understand this from his speedy response to our letters and emails. Even to this day, whenever I or any of his friends in the audience here today write to him, whatever the time, wherever he is in the world, there will almost always be an instantaneous response.

In terms of his research work, Prof Sir Arulkumaran was always pacing up and down the delivery suite putting catheters into each mother's uterus to measure intrauterine pressures during the delivery phase and relating this to the cardiocotogram. This, he did in a very focused and dedicated manner. This work led to seminal publications on fetal cardiocotography, and uterine pressures and parameters to assess fetal conditions during the intrapartum phase of labour. Today, we all use this painstakingly



collected data to help us in interpreting cardiocotograms and monitoring the health of our second patient: the fetus.

But above and beyond this, Prof Sir Arulkumaran is simply a wonderful human being. Many here in this audience would have experienced this aspect of him. He would never refuse anybody who asks him for help, nor would he ever have anything negative to say of anybody, regardless of how the person has behaved. His remarks have always been positive and encouraging. Because of his supportive and caring attitude, and his vast clinical experience, many of us rely on him when we encounter difficult cases, especially those involving medico-legal issues. He will unfailingly offer his time and energy to give us his support. What's even more wonderful is that he does this regardless of whether you are a president, a chief executive officer

or a humble registrar. In fact, when he visits the department, everyone – from the most senior professors, nurses, office staff, and even to the attendants who push the operating theatre trolleys and the person who cleans the toilet – will welcome him with happiness and want to take a selfie with him. This reflects his humility and greatness as a person who cares and gives his time to all persons regardless.

Last but not least is his immense integrity and courage in face of difficult situations and decisions involving the life and death of mothers and their babies. This we will learn more in his lecture today.

I would, therefore, like to congratulate the SMA for inviting Prof Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran to deliver the SMA Lecture 2016 on Health and Human Rights. In my opinion, there is no better person qualified to give this talk. ♦