

Biography

Federico Mayor Zaragoza (Barcelona, 1934). Political and biochemist spanish. Pharmacy graduate with honors at the University of Madrid, and was awarded his Phd in 1958 with honors cum laude. He began his teaching activity as an assistant professor and deputy of higher education in the capital of Spain and in 1963 agreed to the Chair of Biochemistry at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Granada. In 1968 he was appointed rector of the institution, and, in 1972, Chairman of the Delegation of the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CSIC.

During the period in which was linked to the maximum scientific body in 1969, assumed the direction of the section of Biochemistry in the Zaidin Experimental Station and from 1970 a number in the institution. Also in the CSIC was named vice president in 1971, and from 25 July 1972 until 12 June 1973, the presidency-in-office of this compatibilizo agency, with the presidency of the Spanish Society of Biochemistry.

In his capacity as rector, he was appointed attorney in courts in 1968 and, between 1969 and 1972, he served as National Director of Education. In 1972 assumed the Honorary Rector of the University of Granada, and two years later, on 11 January 1974, he was appointed Undersecretary of Education and Science in the Government chaired by Arias Navarro. From this position he assumed the presidency of the Commission for the Study of a special regime for the four Catalan provinces, and in 1975 ceased to be Assistant Secretary of Education by decree signed in the month of December.

Also in January 1974 agreed to the position of President of the Management Committee of Scientific and Technical Investment of the Presidency of the Government. In April he assumed the direction of the Institute of Molecular Biology, and subsequently, the office of the vice president of the National Commission for Cooperation with the Organization of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO.

In the general elections of 15 June 1977, Mayor Zaragoza is presented as an independent candidate in the list of Union of the Democratic Center (UCD) by the province of Granada, and won a seat as an MEP. In the Lower House occupied the presidency of the Commission of Education and Science and of the Advisory Commission of Scientific and Technical Research.

Despite its intense political activity, Mayor Zaragoza did not abandon his teaching career. In 1978 he obtained the chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Faculty of Sciences of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and was appointed director of the department of Biochemistry. In addition, the 7 of June of that year agreed to the post of deputy director general of UNESCO, based in Paris.

For the first time a Spanish occupied an important position in the United Nations and, as a result of this appointment, he resigned his parliamentary seat and to their status as adviser to the then president of the Government, Adolfo Suárez.

In 1981 he returned to Spain and was appointed Minister of Education and Science in the second government of Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo. In 1983 he was elected president a scientist from the Center for Molecular Biology at the Autonomous University of Madrid, since compatibilizo with the director of the Institute of Human Sciences. He was a candidate on 10 June 1987 to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, in the first European elections, and was elected a member of the European Parliament by the Social Democratic Center (CDS).

In mid-July of that year was submitted to the Executive Committee of UNESCO as a candidate to the general direction of the agency. In the event of voting, Federico Mayor Zaragoza had the support of most of the countries of Western Europe and Latin America, and the 7 November 1987 was elected director general of the world of science and culture, for a period of six years. The 6 November 1993 won re-election to the post and remained in the position until November 1999, when it was replaced by the Japanese Koichiro Matsuura. The author and co-author of several books on biochemistry, has published over one hundred articles on this subject.