

On the occasion of the conferring of
the degree of
Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*
upon

Roméo Dallaire

As human beings, we have the gift of language and the gift of imagination. But there are times when language seems small, and the imagination fails.

In our everyday lives, we feel we have known happiness and sadness; we have seen good and we have seen ill.

But there are some among us whose experiences are so far beyond the pale that our comprehension is found wanting.

Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire has seen a world go mad. In the crucible of Rwanda, he lived in a country in the throes of genocide; a land where 800,000 people were killed in a hundred days; where three million people were displaced. He discovered that our world is a place where some people are more human than others. Our mind is not built for such quandaries.

In spite of having walked with the devil, General Dallaire has emerged from the unspeakable horror of the slaughter and has embraced new efforts to force the world to face the growing plague of child soldiers around the world. How can these children be saved?

Eminent Chancellor, I present to you Roméo Dallaire, commander, protector, hero. A man who embodies individual bravery and inspirational leadership.

Words struggle to convey the horror of all he has seen, but given the power of the tongue and pen to sway the actions of others -- a power so defiled in Rwanda -- we must take this opportunity as human beings, to thank this defender of human rights and human dignity who will not be silent.

On behalf of the Senate and the University, I invite you to invest General Roméo Antonius Dallaire with the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa*. *Allons-y*.