

Media Release

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“R2P and the Syrian Conflict: Lessons Learned from Rwanda” Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire to Deliver Lodhi Memorial Lecture Feb. 18

There are disturbing parallels between the Rwandan genocide and the current refugee crisis in Syria, says Lieutenant-General, the Hon. Roméo Dallaire, former head of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Rwanda. Dallaire will be at St. Thomas University on February 18 to deliver the Lodhi Memorial Lecture. The lecture, entitled “R2P and the Syrian Conflict: Lessons Learned from Rwanda,” will take place in the Kinsella Auditorium, McCain Hall at 7 pm.

During his talk, Dallaire will draw parallels between the crisis in Syria and the genocide in Rwanda. He will talk about lessons learned during the Rwandan genocide and explain how the international community has a role in providing assistance in the Syrian refugee crisis.

“Both conflicts are representative of the significant consequences that arise when the international community fails to protect vulnerable populations from grave human rights abuses. Dallaire will provide a first-hand account of what went wrong in Rwanda, drawing parallels to the Syrian conflict, and underscore the urgency of taking action in Syria to prevent further loss of life and displacement,” said Professor Christina Szurlej, director of the Atlantic Human Rights Centre at St. Thomas University.

Dallaire is a retired Canadian Senator, a retired Canadian Army Lieutenant-General, a devoted humanitarian, and an outspoken advocate and champion of human rights. During his distinguished military career, Dallaire commanded the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Rwanda prior to and during the 1994 genocide. His courage and leadership during this ill-fated mission earned him recognition, affection and admiration from around the globe.

A graduate of the Royal Military College of Canada, Dallaire holds honorary doctorates and fellowships from over three dozen universities in Canada, the United States and abroad. He is author of two best-selling books: *Shake Hands with the Devil – the Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* and *They Fight Like Soldiers; They Die Like Children – the Global Quest to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers*.

Dallaire is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a Grand Officer of the National Order of Quebec, a Commander of the Order of Military Merit, recipient of the Pearson Peace Medal, the Meritorious Service Cross, the United States Legion of Merit, the Aegis Award on Genocide Prevention, the Harvard Secular Society Humanism Award, the Edita and Ira Morris Hiroshima Foundation for Peace and Culture Award and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Elie Wiesel Award.

The Lodhi Lecture was named for Dr. Abdul Q. Lodhi, a champion of human rights and social justice and co-founder of the Atlantic Human Rights Centre. He was a respected professor and scholar, and was recipient of the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission Human Rights Award.

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