

Honorary Doctorates Ceremony Acceptance Speech
Ali Fakhro
June 8, 2018

Mr. President
Distinguished professors and students
Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you very much for your words, Mr. President, for which I take great pride, and thanks to our cherished and distinguished university. The honorary doctorate that I receive today is a lustrous call to action for me, and a tribute to my country, the Kingdom of Bahrain.

I state with all sincerity that all I believe in and what I struggled to achieve sprang from values and humane moral obligations nurtured in us by the curricula of this university, a liberal university open to all cultures and all masterpieces of thought. These values and obligations were taught to us by a brilliant rational generation of distinguished professors who believe in dialogue.

Here we learned responsible commitment to issues of our Arab world. Here we learned the virtue of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Here we acquired the thirst for knowledge, truth and the defense of justice.

It was truly a period of great hopes, dreams, spiritual joy, self-confidence and belief in the future.

However, the time, Mr. President, has changed. The breezes have become storms, and the Arab world has entered into a hell of religious, sectarian and ethnic conflicts. The world is living in the platitudes and flattening of a culture of sensationalist consumerist globalization. It is witnessing as well the death of the middle class, the spread of the plague of financial, political and moral corruption, the marginalization of the nation state, the deterioration of its social commitments and the weakening and fragmentation of civil societies, along with the systematic destruction of the environment.

Nationalism is dying, patriotism is dying, and humanity is dying and all will be replaced by the stunning rise of the power and domination of global financial institutions, transcontinental corporations and the babbling of social media. In the foreseeable future, artificial intelligence will replace humans, starting a dark phase full of ghosts and dangers threatening humanity's long historical journey.

I humbly ask, Mr. President: Will our creative university always be able to graduate young men and women who are capable of dealing fairly, wisely and ethically with the horrors of the complex times that we live in?

Knowing my university, the answer is yes, the determination and creativity of this historically inveterate university can do it.

May God preserve our university and bless all those who work and study in it.

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.