

SPYRIDON VRELLIS

Magnifice Rector, Distinguished members of the Senate of Eötvös Loránd University,

Your decision does me a great honour. I would like to express my gratitude for this prestigious distinction, coming from an old and most famous Institution. I accept it with great pleasure, also on behalf of my Greek colleagues at the Faculty of Law of the University of Athens, who share the same academic and human values with you: Love for justice and love for freedom, a significant characteristic of Hungarian soul, already stressed by a Byzantine Emperor (*Leon Sophos*) in the beginning of the 10th century and ascertained by the whole world in the relatively recent past.

The honour you bestow upon me this morning, is somewhat of a sort of intellectual and scientific *adoption*, where the adopted person, maintaining his relations with his family and Institution of origin, enters into a new family and scientific community and develops strong links with its members; with all its members, including the illustrious figures of the past, the eminent personalities of today, the promising future generations, with whom we are meeting in a constant and eternal present.

These links, Magnifice Rector, Distinguished Members of the Ceremonial Meeting, Professors, Ladies and Gentlemen, these links entail a great deal of responsibility, in particular during this extremely interesting period we are experiencing, concerning the construction of the European Union, to which both of our countries belong. In its effort to move further from a mere economic field to a higher level of political unification, Europe is in need of the University, as a source of inspiration and of creative and independent thinking, and as an area for discovering and exercising justice, as a compass indicating the right way to move correctly, as a factor opening up new horizons and simultaneously pointing out the usefulness of our intangible cultural tradition, rooted in the Christian truth and justice, and recalling that this tradition is not a simple issue of scientific research but a matter that touches the core of our human being.

So we have not the comfort to spend our time like inert “development watchers”, but we ought to work together steadily and very hard, in educating young generations, and in moulding free and good citizens, in preparing them for the current and future challenges, and in showing them that freedom and justice are countless productive powers which are valid beyond any space, beyond any time and towards all human beings, and which cannot be confined to a specific area, like Europe, without ceasing to be real freedom and real justice, and without being transformed into wrong idols, into distorted patterns of freedom and justice.

Thank you very much!