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Dear Duke of Arenberg,
Dear General Assembly,

It is a tremendous honour to be here today as this year's Laureate of the Arenberg-Coimbra Group Prize.

I am the third person from the University of Turku to receive this prize. It must mean that we are doing something right in Turku, or in Finland in general. Thanks to the PISA results, the Finnish education system has enjoyed a great amount of international attention and admiration. And to quote the Finnish National Agency for Education, "The main objective of Finnish education policy is to offer all citizens equal opportunities to receive education". But with the present Finnish government making short-sighted educational politics on the grounds of productiveness, it is obvious that the freedom and equality of Finnish education is at risk.

Discordant to the efficiency, which is the word of the day, I must admit that it took me almost twice the ideal time of five years to complete my studies. I am not proud, but not ashamed either: I spent my time in the university well, enjoying the atmosphere of academia in Turku, and in Granada during my exchange period, studying subjects that I found interesting, absorbing knowledge like a sponge. And when I finally started writing my master's thesis, I wanted to give it time to evolve and take form, so it would not be just a necessary evil, or an obstacle between my student life and the "real world".

I am quite sure that if efficiency and productiveness – instead of curiosity and academic freedom – had been the mantra of my educational path, I would not have gone to Granada as an Erasmus student, and as a consequence would not have written my master's thesis on a graphic novel that deals with migration and multiculturalism, would not have discovered my calling on the field of comics studies, and most certainly would not be standing here today.

So, to conclude, I would like to thank the Duke of Arenberg, the Executive Board and the Coimbra Group for the honour of receiving this prize. My sincere thanks also to the University of Turku and the University of Granada for providing me with quality education.

Thank you, gracias, kiitos.