



U.S. group cheers Dallaire, Little Mosque

by: Sean Davidson

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Roméo Dallaire and *Little Mosque on the Prairie* will be in rare company next month, when both the retired lieutenant-general and the CBC sitcom will be honored at the Common Ground Awards.

The annual honors go to "outstanding achievements in conflict resolution" and are presented by the international peace organization Search for Common Ground, based in Brussels and Washington, DC. Dallaire and *Little Mosque* will be honored along with PBS newsmen Charlie Rose, Ishmael Beah, author of the bestseller *A Long Way Gone: Memoir of a Child Soldier*, the Israeli/Palestinian group Combatants for Peace and the U.S. group Health Care Coverage for the Uninsured.

Dallaire -- a fixture on the human rights circuit since the publication of his Rwanda memoir-turned-movie *Shake Hands with the Devil* -- will take home the lifetime achievement award. Creator Zarqa Nawaz and exec producer Mary Darling will be there for *Little Mosque*, which SFCG cheers for its "exemplary job of defusing hate by promoting understanding -- through humor."

"This is very humbling award to receive and it feels like a confirmation of our vision," said Darling in a release. "We wanted to create a show that would allow people to laugh while hopefully breaking down stereotypes." As if to underline that point, the show was recently picked up for broadcast in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank.

The Common Ground Awards will be presented in New York on Nov. 6. Previous recipients include Muhammad Ali, Jimmy Carter and Bishop Desmond Tutu.

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