

SFU Press Releases Collection

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African leader to speak on AIDS crisis

Contact:

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Media are welcome to attend the President's Forum (Wosk Centre, 580 West Hastings). Seating is limited. Call [Phone removed] to reserve a seat.

September 23, 2009

The last time Lesotho Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili was in Vancouver was 1982 when he received his master's degree in education from Simon Fraser University.

But when he returns to the university for a President's Forum on Tuesday, Sept. 29 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Mosisili will deliver a troubling message about an HIV/AIDS crisis that threatens the very survival of his land-locked southern African country.

Lesotho, with a population of around two million people, has one of the highest HIV/AIDS rates in the world. An estimated 23.2 per cent of its people are infected with virus, including almost 30 per cent of those between the ages of 15 and 49.

At the forum Mosisili will be asking all foreign aid donor countries - including Canada - to step up their response to the AIDS pandemic. He will stress the need for donor nations to focus on sustainable development, build human capacity and direct their aid to research, education, exchange programs and public awareness.

Forum respondents will include several SFU researchers:

Sherri Brown is a doctoral candidate in political science who is investigating HIV/AIDS treatment access.

Robert Hogg is a professor in the faculty of health sciences, and drug treatment project director for the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS.

Martin Laba is a professor in the School of Communication, and academic director for Reducing HIV stigma through education (Ghana).

The event moderator will be SFU President Michael Stevenson.