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**For Immediate Release**

**The Grab for Gaza**

*The UWI Vice-Chancellor’s Forum focuses on the*

*causes, concerns and consequences of the Israel-Palestine Conflict.*

**The UWI Regional Headquarters, Jamaica. Monday, November 13, 2023**—On Wednesday, November 15, 2023, The University of the West Indies (The UWI) will host a Vice-Chancellor’s Forum themed, *“The Grab for Gaza: The Israel-Palestine Conflict – Causes, Concerns and Consequences”*.

The virtual event, accessible on UWI*tv*’s website <https://uwitv.global/>, starts at 10:00 a.m. (AST/Eastern Caribbean) | 9:00 a.m. (EST/Jamaica). Presented by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor in collaboration with the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, The UWI St. Augustine Campus, it features perspectives from a distinguished panel of International Relations experts and diplomats from major geo-strategic jurisdictions:

* **Professor Andy Knight** – Distinguished Professor, Faculty of Arts, Department of Political Science, University of Alberta.
* **Ambassador Alon Pinkas** – Former Israeli Ambassador to the United States and Adviser and Negotiator in the Israel-Palestine Conflict.
* **Dr Dahlia Scheindlin –** Public Opinion expert, international political and strategic consultant and specialist on the Israel-Palestine Conflict.
* **Ambassador Curtis A. Ward –** Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations and Attorney-at-law.
* **Dr Linda Sobeh –** Palestinian Ambassador to the Caribbean and former Palestinian Ambassador to Venezuela.

Vice-Chancellor of The UWI, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, will deliver opening remarks at the event and Dr Indira Rampersad, Head, Department of Political Science, The UWI, St Augustine will serve as Chair of the proceedings and moderator of the panel discussion.

“The Israel-Palestine crisis is a protracted war which is now centuries old,” Dr Rampersad said. “The conflict was escalated on October 7, 2023 and continues unabated. The geo-strategic significance of the crisis and the continuing role of major global powers such as the Unites States, Western Europe, Iran, Russia and China, have elevated the conflict to the centre of the international stage. The war has resulted in the loss of more than 10,000 civilian lives.”

UN Secretary General, António Guterres, has stated that “The nightmare in the Gaza is more than a humanitarian crisis, it is a crisis of humanity,” and has strengthened his calls for a ceasefire. Closer home, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) supports the two-state solution and has joined “the responsible members of the international community in calling for an immediate ceasefire and end of hostilities by all parties.”

Dr Rampersad continued, “This UWI Vice-Chancellor’s academic forum seeks to bring together a range of eminent speakers including diplomats, academics and strategists in one room to offer diverse perspectives on the ongoing conflict, engaging respectful, inclusive, and tolerant interactions. It delves into its root causes, the concerns raised by states and non-states actors alike, the consequences for the regional and international community and a possible roadmap for peace in the Middle East.”

***The views and opinions expressed in this forum are not necessarily those of UWItv Global, The University of the West Indies or its affiliates.***

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**NOTES TO THE EDITOR:**

**About The UWI Vice-Chancellor's Forums**

In 2016, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Hilary Beckles initiated a series of public discussions, titled “Vice-Chancellor's Forums". The ongoing series seeks to bring together regional academics and experts to discuss and offer informed analysis, perspective and context to important political, social and economic developments in the region.

**About The University of the West Indies**

The UWI has been and continues to be a pivotal force in every aspect of Caribbean development; residing at the centre of all efforts to improve the well-being of people across the region for the past 75 years.

From a university college of London in Jamaica with 33 medical students in 1948, The UWI is today an internationally respected, global university with near **50,000** students and **five campuses:** [**Mona**](https://www.mona.uwi.edu/)in **Jamaica,** [**St. Augustine**](https://sta.uwi.edu/) in **Trinidad and Tobago,** [**Cave Hill**](https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/)in **Barbados,** [**Five Islands**](https://www.uwi.edu/fiveislands/)in**Antigua and Barbuda** and its[**Global Campus**](http://www.open.uwi.edu/)**,** and **global centres** in partnership with universities **in North America, Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe**.

The UWI offers over **800** certificate, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate degree options in **Culture, Creative and Performing Arts, Food and Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities and Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science and Technology, Social Sciences,** and **Sport**. As the Caribbean’s leading university, it possesses the largest pool of Caribbean intellect and expertise committed to confronting the critical issues of our region and wider world.

The UWI has been consistently ranked among the top universities globally by the most reputable ranking agency, ***Times Higher Education (THE).*** The UWI is the only Caribbean-based university to make the prestigious lists since its debut in the rankings in 2018. In addition to its leading position in the Caribbean in the ***World University Rankings***, it is also in the top 25 for ***Latin America and the Caribbean*** and the top 100 global ***Golden Age*** universities (between 50 and 80 years old). The UWI is also featured among the leading universities on THE’s ***Impact Rankings*** for its response to the world’s biggest concerns, outlined in the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Good Health and Wellbeing; Gender Equality and Climate Action.

**2023 marks** [**The UWI’s 75th anniversary**](http://www.uwi.edu/75)**. The Diamond jubilee milestone themed “UWI at 75. Rooted. Ready. Rising.” features initiatives purposely designed and aligned to reflect on the past, confront the present, and articulate plans for the future of the regional University.**

**Learn more at** [**www.uwi.edu**](http://www.uwi.edu/)