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Ambassador to address conference

By Stephen Martin

The Multi-Event 99 features a number of public figures with a background in the anti-Apartheid struggle and theology. One of these is Carl Niehaus, currently South African ambassador to the Netherlands and to the international court. Prior to his appointment, he was chair of the parliamentary portfolio on correctional services. Niehaus studied theology though was not formally ordained. At the international court at the Hague he acts for South Africa on issues such as nuclear proliferation. Niehaus will be joined by Dr Chirevo Kwenda of UCT's Department of Religious Studies in addressing the opening theme of the conference, "Ethical challenges of the present". Kwenda, who did his doctoral work at Syracuse University, teaches African Religion and has worked on religion education issues for schools.

In the evening, a special leaders' workshop seminar will be led by Imam Rashid Omar of the Claremont Mosque and Prof William Johnson Everett of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary in Boston, Mass. This seminar has as its theme, "Does public policy need religion?". Everett, in a brief interview yesterday evening, noted his interest in exploring the image of a "feedback loop" in establishing an interaction between public policy and religion, particularly with reference to their interaction in relation to federalism and law.

Imam Omar is a prominent Muslim cleric, and is national secretary of the South African chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. He is also co-chair of the SA Board of the Parliament of the World's Religions.