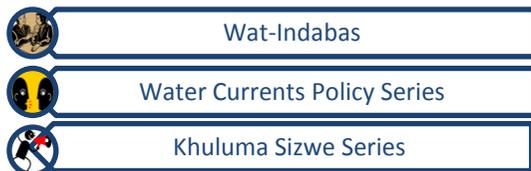


# About the WRC Dialogues

The WRC Dialogues are discussion-based events on topical water issues affecting the South African public, the aim of which is to serve as a platform to exchange ideas and opinions related to water. In this regard, the WRC Dialogues are guided by the principles of transparency, openness and honesty; plurality of perspectives and inclusivity, mutual respect; a commitment to problem-solving and mutual accountability; and in the broader interest of knowledge sharing. The value of the WRC's role as convener of these events lies in its ability to be a neutral knowledge broker as South Africa's premier water knowledge resource.

There are three types of dialogues that are organised in this series:



## WAT-INDABAS

Wat-Indabas are typically closed facilitated sessions held under the Chatham House Rule. This rule refers primarily to the confidentiality of the source of information received at a meeting. The aim is to facilitate free knowledge sharing in an unthreatening environment. It intends to deepen mutual understandings of the different perspectives of stakeholders when there may be significant conceptual gaps, reference points, and perhaps even a degree of mistrust. Wat-Indabas will often span several sessions and involve the progressive unpacking of key issues related to the subject matter, with the outcome decided at the onset. Under Chatham House rule, participants commit to protecting the identity of other participants and only using the information received strategically to inform actions, research or policy decisions. Attendance is by invitation only.

## WATER CURRENTS POLICY SERIES

The Water Currents Policy Series is a range of convened seminars, often held in partnership with a host of collaborating institutions, and comprising of a panel of experts invited to present different authoritative views on a discussion topic. The aim of the Water Currents Policy Series is to create a forum where panellists express multiple and sometimes divergent perspectives on key issues affecting the water sector in South Africa. A key component of this series is that it is outcome-driven with opinion pieces, policy briefs, and other publications generated after each dialogue.

## KHULUMA SIZWE SERIES (The nation speaks)

The Khuluma Sizwe Series is an open lecture platform where high-profile speakers are invited to give talks on very impactful water issues affecting the South African public. These events will be widely broadcast and are open to the public.

For more information about the WRC Dialogues and the calendar of events visit the WRC website:  
[www.wrc.org.za](http://www.wrc.org.za)



WATER GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS: PERSPECTIVES FROM AFRICA



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Institute for International and Comparative  
Law in Africa and the Institute for Food,  
Nutrition and Well-being



HSRC  
Human Sciences  
Research Council

## Rationale

In 1997, the then-UN-Secretary-General initiated a process to mainstream human rights in the UN's development programming. This process resulted in the adoption of human rights-based approaches by many UN agencies. On 26 July 2010 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the human right to water and sanitation declaring 'the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation is a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights' which further underscores the need of understanding the linkages between human-rights approaches and water management.

Despite the global policy and legal trend, some people are put off by the language of human rights. Human rights regimes identify "rights-holders" – those who can legitimately claim a right – and "duty-bearers," almost always government bodies, who are responsible for not getting in the way of the realization of the right (respecting the right), not allowing others to interfere with the realization of the right (protecting the right), and facilitating the realization of the right (fulfilling the right).

Some critics also find it problematic that human rights language is silent on the responsibilities of the rights holder. The idea that one party has rights but no responsibilities, whereas another has responsibilities, but no rights, strikes them as unfair. They ask questions such as: What if a subsistence farmer freely chose to move from a verdant part of the country to a desolate, barren desert; would he or she be able to claim a right to water or a right to food, and would the state be obliged to respect, protect and fulfil this right? Where does the question of that farmer's responsibility for making prudent choices fit in? In the case of the right to water, what are the responsibilities of rights-holders to avoid wasting water or polluting the water source?

## Goal

This dialogue will provide a platform for a world-renowned, distinguished academic and prolific writer to speak on the issue of water-related governance within the broader human rights context. It will provide students, academics, researchers and the broader South African public to engage with Professor Mazrui and other scholars on a topic that is both necessary and contentious.

## Target Audience

The Dialogue will bring together stakeholders from government, academia, research council, and local communities. The event is open to the public and confirmation of attendance is required in advance.

## Programme

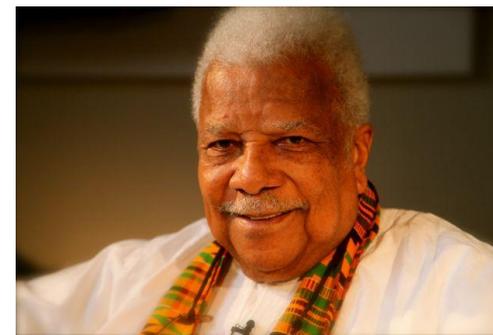
Chair: Professor Sheryl Hendriks (Director: Institute for Food, Nutrition and Well-being, and WRC Board member)

9:30 – 10:00	<b>Registration and Refreshments</b>	
10:00 – 10:10	<b>Introductions and Background</b>	<b>Mr. Dhesigen Naidoo</b> , CEO, WRC
10:10 – 10:20	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Prof Robin Crewe</b> , Acting Snr Vice Principal, University of Pretoria
10:20 – 11:15	<b>Keynote: Evaluating the Obama Presidency: African and Muslim Perspectives</b>	<b>Professor Ali Mazrui</b> , Director, Institute of Global Cultural Studies and Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities, Binghamton University State University of New York
11:15 – 11:45	<b>Q&amp;A and Discussion</b>	
11:45 – 12:00	<b>Closing</b>	Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria
12:00	<b>Tea</b>	

## About the Keynote Speaker

Ali Al'amin Mazrui is an academic and political writer on African and Islamic studies and North-South relations. He was born in Mombasa, Kenya, and now holds the following positions:

- Albert Schweitzer professor in the Humanities, and Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, NY.
- Senior Scholar in Africana Studies and Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large Emeritus, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.
- Albert Luthuli Professor-at-Large, University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria.
- Chancellor Emeritus, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Senior Fellow, Georgetown University, Washington DC.
- Member of the Board of Trustees, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford, England.



Ali Mazrui was previously Professor of Political Science and Dean of Social Sciences, Makerere University in Uganda. He has published more than thirty books and hundreds of articles. He is best known internationally for his television and video series, *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (PBS/BBC/NTA, 1986). A book by the same title was published in the same year. The TV series has been translated into several languages. Ali Mazrui is married and has five sons, one daughter, and three grandchildren.