



The Eric Williams Memorial Collection

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Twelfth Annual FIU Eric Williams Lecture Focuses on Haiti Reconstruction

MIAMI, Fla. (October 6, 2010)— The 12th Annual Eric E. Williams Memorial Lecture at Florida International University will take place on Friday, October 15, 2010 at 6:30 p.m., as part of FIU’s African & African Diaspora Studies Program. Due to the catastrophic devastation wrought by the January 2010 Haiti earthquake, this year’s Distinguished Africana Scholars Lecture, “*The Renaissance of Haiti: A Template for Caribbean Integration,*” promises to address critical issues pertaining to Haiti’s rebirth and the special responsibility of metropolitan countries to ensure it.

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Former Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson, the Caribbean Community’s (CARICOM) Special Representative on Haiti’s Reconstruction and authorized by its government to represent it in appropriate fora, will be the featured speaker at the College of Law, Room RDB 1100, Modesto A. Maidique campus, 11200 Southwest Eighth Street, Miami, Florida. Admission is free and open to the public.

Head of Government from 1992-2006, P. J. Patterson is Jamaica’s longest serving Prime Minister. He has played a leading role in the United Nations, the Commonwealth, and the Non-Aligned Movement and has contributed to numerous Conventions and official Statements. He was instrumental in expanding the original Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) into CARICOM, and presided over the latter’s inclusion of Haiti. In 2005 and 2006 respectively, he steered CARICOM toward the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice and a Single Market Economy.

Established in 1999, the Lecture honors the distinguished Caribbean statesman Eric E. Williams, first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Head of Government for a quarter of

a century until his death in 1981. He led the country to Independence from Britain in 1962 and onto Republicanism in 1976. A consummate academic and historian, and author of several books, Dr. Williams is best known for his groundbreaking work, the 66-year-old Capitalism and Slavery, which has been translated into seven languages, including Russian, Chinese, Japanese and soon-to-be, Korean. Urdu and Hindi editions are also planned. Popularly referred to as *The Williams Thesis*, this landmark text continues to inform today's ongoing debate and remains “years ahead of its time...this profound critique is still the foundation for studies of imperialism and economic development,” according to the *New York Times*.

Among prior Eric Williams Memorial Lecture speakers have been: the late John Hope Franklin, one of America's premier historians of the African-American experience; Kenneth Kaunda, former President of the Republic of Zambia; Cynthia Pratt, Deputy Prime Minister of the Bahamas; Mia Mottley, Attorney General of Barbados; Beverly Anderson-Manley, former First Lady of Jamaica; Portia Simpson Miller, former Prime Minister of Jamaica; the celebrated civil rights activist Angela Davis; and prize-winning Haitian author Edwige Danticat.

The Lecture, which seeks to provide an intellectual forum for the examination of pertinent issues in Caribbean and African Diaspora history and politics, is co-sponsored by: the Caribbean Consular Corps (Miami); Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs; FIU: College of Arts and Sciences, School of International and Public Affairs, College of Law, AADS Graduate Students Association, Caribbean Students Association, Council of Student Organizations, Haitian Students Organization, Latin American and Caribbean Center, National Society of Black Engineers, Ruth K. and Shepard Broad International Lecture Series, Student Programming Council; Angostura, Ltd.; Air Jamaica/Caribbean Airlines, Ltd.; Miami Dade College – Professor Leroy Lashley; Mike Simmons of Mike Golf, Inc.; Emile Sabga; Aryian and Gieowar Singh; Professor Linda Spears-Bunton; Victoria Mutual Florida Representative Office.

The Lecture is also supported by The Eric Williams Memorial Collection at the University of the West Indies (Trinidad and Tobago campus), which was inaugurated by former **U.S. Secretary of State, Colin L. Powell** in 1998. It was named to **UNESCO's** prestigious *Memory of the World Register* in 1999.

Books by and about Eric Williams and P.J. Patterson will be available for purchase and signing at the Lecture.

For more information, please contact 305-348-6860/271-7246 or africana@fiu.edu.

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