

Press Advisory

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WHAT DO CALIFORNIA, THE MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA HAVE IN COMMON? UCLA conference looks at overlapping water challenges during Drinking Water Week

WHAT: A cross-campus conference organized by UCLA will examine the impacts of the Middle East and Africa's water quality and supply challenges – many of which California shares – on public health, food security, the environment, and state-to-state relations. UCLA's forum will provide an opportunity for international experts to discuss innovative technology and policy solutions to these problems and examine the applicability of regional solutions to other water-scarce parts of the world, including California.

WHEN: 9 AM - 3:30 pm, Monday, May 7, 2018

WHERE: UCLA Faculty Center | 480 Charles E Young Drive East, Los Angeles, CA 90095

WHO: Leading international experts in diverse fields - public health, agriculture, the environment and water politics - will speak about the regions' water challenges. The conference keynote speaker will be former National Science Foundation director and a global pioneer in the investigation of the link between climate change and global health problems, Dr. Rita Colwell.

UCLA is a recognized leader in research on water resource challenges. For the [Water in the Middle East & Africa: A Nexus of Cooperation & Conflict conference](#), the university is partnering with a number of prominent private companies and organizations to demonstrate its commitment – as well as those of its partners – to addressing water scarcity at the global level.

"Being part of one of the world's leading water research institutions, we set a goal to organize a conference that will examine some of the areas of the world that are experiencing severe problems with relation to this fundamental resource," says Yoram Cohen, Director of the Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies, a Distinguished Professor in the School of Engineering, and one of the organizers of the conference.

"But we'll also be examining some of the solutions being developed and utilized in those regions to address the severe impacts associated with the current water quality and supply crises."

Cohen underscored why he feels it's important for UCLA to be tackling these global problems. "As a leading institution in the area of water technology research, it is most appropriate for UCLA to tackle water issues wherever they may be," he explains. "However, many of the water problems facing California and issues we address here at UCLA are also present in the Middle East and Africa."

The conference promises to be an important event, particularly during Drinking Water Week, in which organizations and communities around the country recognize the vital role of water.

"We all know — especially in California — water is the most critical element of life for food production, industrial development and for humans and all living things to be able to exist," Cohen says.

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