

## Profile for Professor Salim S. Abdool Karim

**Salim S. Abdool Karim, FRS**, is a South African clinical infectious diseases epidemiologist widely recognized for scientific and leadership contributions in AIDS and COVID-19.

While doing his medical degree at the University of Natal, he simultaneously studied computer science and statistics at the University of South Africa. After completing his MBChB in 1983, he did a Masters degree focusing on Epidemiology at Columbia University in New York. He returned to the University of Natal to complete his Masters degree in Public Health Medicine and his PhD.

Professor Abdool Karim's primary academic appointments are the Director of the Centre for the AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA) and CAPRISA Professor for Global Health in the Department of Epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University. His additional academic appointments are Adjunct Professor of Immunology and Infectious Diseases at Harvard University, Boston, Adjunct Professor of Medicine at Cornell University, New York, and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban. He previously served as President of the South African Medical Research Council.

He co-led the research that provided the first evidence for antiretroviral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) against HIV infection, a finding that was heralded by UNAIDS and WHO as one of the most significant scientific breakthroughs in the fight against AIDS and has been ranked among "The Top 10 Scientific Breakthroughs of 2010" by the journal *Science*. His clinical research on TB-HIV treatment has shaped international guidelines on the clinical management of co-infected patients. He is co-inventor on patents which have been used in several HIV vaccine candidates.

Professor Abdool Karim is a member of the Science Council of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the WHO TB-HIV Task Force. He is the Chair of the WHO's Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee on HIV and Hepatitis. He is a Member of the Africa Task Force for Coronavirus, the African Union Commission on Covid-19 and the Lancet Commission on COVID-19.

Professor Abdool Karim has, over the past two years, led the South African response to COVID-19, providing the public and the government with scientific advice on the Coronavirus, how it causes COVID-19 and the measures of preventing infection. Terms such as "flattening the curve" have been explained clearly to the South African public by Professor Karim. He can easily explain complex science to members of the general public in such a way that they are able to understand their involvement in containing or spreading the epidemic, without him being patronising. For this critically important role in the COVID-19 pandemic, he received, jointly with Dr Anthony Fauci, the 2020 John Maddox Prize for "Standing up for Science".

Professor Abdool Karim is ranked among the world's most highly cited scientists by *Web of Science*. He serves on the Boards of several prestigious journals, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Lancet* Global Health and *Lancet* HIV. His many awards include the African Union's "Kwame Nkrumah Award", Africa's most prestigious scientific award. He is an elected Fellow of The World Academy of Sciences, the African Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Science in South Africa, the Royal Society of South Africa and the American Academy of Microbiology. He is a Member of the US National Academy of Medicine. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

For all of his outstanding scholarly achievements and his commitment to science communication and advocacy, Rhodes University will confer on Professor Salim S. Abdool Karim the degree of Doctor of Science (D Sc) (honoris causa) at its 2021 Graduation ceremonies in October.