



Institute of  
**African Studies**  
CARLETON UNIVERSITY

*Public Lecture*

# IS AFRICA MISUNDERSTOOD OR JUST UNKNOWNABLE?



By  
**Dr. Alex Awiti**

Director, East African Institute (EAI) of Aga Khan University

**Friday, November 23 | 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm**  
**Room 482 (Discovery Centre) MacOdrum Library**  
**Carleton University\***

## **Abstract**

In 2001 Africa was declared “a scar on the conscience of the world”. When The Economist declared Africa a “Hopeless Continent” the writer observed that African societies were “for reasons buried in their cultures especially susceptible to brutality, despotism and corruption”. A decade later, The Economist decided Africa was both Hopeful and Rising. Partly because shops were stacked with goods and China was on the continent. Now Africa Rising is being questioned. What do we really know about the continent? Is there a role for the Institute of African Studies at Carleton?

## **About the Speaker**

Alex O. Awiti is the Founding Director of the East African Institute (EAI) of Aga Khan University. The EAI is a regional platform for policy research, performance and public engagement, which focuses on the consequential drivers of socio-economic, environmental and institutional change. The EAI is currently focusing on youth, urbanization, economic growth, food systems and the extractive resources. Mr. Awiti holds a PhD in Ecosystems Ecology from University of Nairobi and is an alumnus of the prestigious Earth Institute post-doctoral fellowship at Columbia University in New York. He was a postdoctoral fellow at the Earth Institute at Columbia University in New York and was also an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs. He worked under the mentorship of Jeffery D. Sachs, world-renowned professor of Sustainable Development and Health Policy and Management.

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