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FEB. 26, 2013 | 022-13

## Acclaimed expert on Africa to lecture on the continent's critical challenges

WATERLOO – Africa has become one of the fastest growing economies in the world but there are still critical challenges to overcome if the continent hopes to sustain its expansion. Robert Rotberg, an internationally acclaimed expert on Africa, will discuss those key political, institutional, and demographic challenges March 8 in a lecture at Laurier's Waterloo campus.

Rotberg's lecture "Africa's Critical Challenges: 2013-2050" will also focus on potential solutions to the challenges facing Africa, which has been posting an average annual growth rate of 4.9% since 2000. Rotberg is currently a Fulbright Research Chair in Political Development at the Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA) and Visiting Fulbright Scholar at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI).

"Dr. Rotberg has a wealth of knowledge about Africa, and we are pleased he has agreed to share that knowledge with the Laurier community," said John Boye Ejobowah, chair and associate professor of the Department of Global Studies at Laurier. "Africa is at a pivotal moment in history, and it is important to understand the obstacles that still have to be scaled if its collection of big, medium, and small states are to emerge as prosperous and stable."

Rotberg – in addition to his roles at the BSIA and CIGI – is president emeritus of the World Peace Foundation and a U.S. professor in governance and foreign affairs. From 1999-2010, he served as founding director of the Program on Intrastate Conflict, Conflict Prevention, and Conflict Resolution at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

During that time, he oversaw the establishment of the Index for African Governance, to help evaluate leaders for the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, awarded annually by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation.

Prior to his directorship at Harvard, he was a member of the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Africa from 2003 to 2004, and a Presidential appointee to the Council of the National Endowment for the Humanities. He has served, also, in administrative roles both at Tufts University and Lafayette College.

"Africa's Critical Challenges: 2013-2050" will be held March 8, 2013 at 2:30 p.m. in the Peter's Building, Room 1025/1027 on Laurier's Waterloo campus. The Departments of Political Science and Global Studies at Laurier, along with the Tshepo Institute for the Study of Contemporary Africa, are hosting the event.