

Conference with Professor Dr. Denis Mukwege and Inauguration of a New Research and Action Chair



As part of our ongoing collaboration with Professor Denis Mukwege, a new Rennes 2 International Chair is being inaugurated this month which will host international teachers and researchers working in the field of gendered, sexist and sexual violence against women and girls. The [Research and Action Chair Doctor Denis Mukwege](#) builds on Dr. Mukwege's groundbreaking work in the Democratic Republic of Congo but also represents an interdisciplinary collaboration between university researchers and practitioners from around the globe.

Below are highlights of what is planned for this inaugural day. To see the full program, [please go here](#).

A Day of Study and Insight

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 / Building T / Villejean Campus

Opening

The day will open with an introduction to the Mukwege Chair by Catherine Sablonnière (Director, Faculty of Languages, R2), Franck Barbin (Associate Director of Research, Faculty of Languages, R2), Renée Dickason (President of the Dr. Denis Mukwege Chair, R2), who will outline the Chair's mission to increase awareness of gender-based violence through research and action. Throughout the day, workshops will delve into the various dimensions of survivor experience, ethics, and psychological resilience. For example, "Survivor Pathways: Gamification and Virtual World" will present innovative approaches to survivor testimonies, while "Ethical Questions and Human Rights" will discuss the ethical considerations around violence-related research and victim representation. Experts including Oibrillant Damus (Professor, Université Quisqueya and Université d'État d'Haïti, UNESCO Chair in Education and Health, Visiting Professor of Rennes 2) and Stéphanie Bélanger (Professor and Clinician, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario) will bring insights on proxy victimization and the impact of war on women, respectively.

Key Speaker: Dr. Mukwege

At 2 p.m., Vincent Gouëset, President of Rennes 2 University, and Renée Dickason will introduce Dr. Mukwege's lecture focusing on: Memorialization and Transitional Justice. This presentation will explore how memorialization—preserving memories and stories of survivors—serves as a crucial component of justice and healing for communities affected by violence. Dr. Mukwege, who has treated over 80,000 survivors of sexual violence, will draw on his experience to discuss how acknowledgment and collective memory can strengthen a culture of peace.

Concluding Workshops and Reflections

The day will close with a session which examines the complexities of survivor memory in the context of humanitarian and social justice. Researchers will address topics such as exhumation policies in Spain and Peru and the resilience of indigenous communities in Colombia.

Additionally, a short training course for survivors of rape and violence, as well as their supporters and caregivers, will be launched in November 2024 through the collaboration of various research centers associated with the Chair.



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