

STELLENBOSCH FORUM, 2011.10.20

**Verwelkoming en inleiding deur prof H Russel Botman,
rektor en visekanselier van die US**

By 'n lesing deur Prof Pieter Coertzen, Fakulteit Teologie, Universiteit Stellenbosch

Onderwerp: "Godsdienstvryheid en 'n Suid Afrikaanse

Handves vir Godsdienstrege en -vryhede"

Plek: Ouditorium van die JS Gericke-biblioteek, US

Dankie, voorsitter. *Good afternoon, everyone. Molweni. Goeiemiddag, dames en here. Welkom by die sesde Stellenbosch Forum van die jaar. Hierdie lesingsreeks het sy ontstaan gehad in 1990. Dit bied aan ons personeellede en studente, sowel as lede van die publiek, die geleentheid om meer uit te vind oor die relevante, wêreldklas-navorsing aan die US.*

Here to share his expertise with us today is Professor Pieter Coertzen, a retired professor of Ecclesiology (Church Law and Church History) in our Faculty of Theology. He will be addressing us on "Religious freedom and a South African Charter for Religious Rights and Freedom".

Godsdienstvryheid is een van die hoekstene van die demokrasie. Tesame met ander menseregte soos vryheid van spraak, vryheid van oortuiging en persvryheid is dit onontbeerlik vir 'n gesonde, oop samelewing.

This is especially true in a multicultural society such as ours, where people from diverse backgrounds have to coexist in harmony with each other. Plurality in South Africa is one of the issues that Professor Coertzen will be touching on today.

Pieter is baie goed geplaas om vir ons die debat oor godsdienstvryheid in Suid-Afrika te ontsluit. Hy het intensief navorsing hieroor gedoen toe hy van 1994-2004 Aktuaris van die Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk was. En so het hy betrokke geraak by die opstel van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse Handves van Godsdienstrege en -vryhede.

He was the Chairperson of a conference in Johannesburg last year where the South African Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms was endorsed by the major religions in South Africa – Christian churches, the Jewish community, the Muslim community, the Hindu Community, the Baha'is Spiritual Assembly, African Traditional Religions and the Tamil Federation of South Africa, as well as a host of civil society structures.

He was also appointed Convenor of the newly established SA Council for the Promotion and Protection of Religious Rights and Freedoms, and was elected chairperson of the Council in September this year.

Pieter help tans om 'n Eenheid vir die Studie van die Reg en Godsdienste aan die Beyers Naudé Sentrum vir Publieke Teologie tot stand te bring.

He is also a member of the Steering Committee of the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ICLARS), and has published extensively in the field of Church Law. He was recently asked to join a research group of the European Union on religion in the public sphere.

En dan het hy ook verskeie artikels die lig laat sien oor daardie groep mense wat eeue gelede weens vervolging op grond van hul godsdienstige oortuiginge vanuit Europa na Suid-Afrika gevlug het, die Hugenote.

Pieter, ons luister graag na jou ...