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HLSCC REVIVES HUMANITIES TALK SERIES INVITING CRITICAL DIALOGUE TO THE COMMUNITY

Thursday, 22 January – The H. Lavity Stoutt Community College (HLSCC) will welcome students and the wider community back into a space of critical inquiry and dialogue with the return of its Humanities Talk Series on Wednesday, 4 February 2026, from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. at the College's Green Room, Learning Resource Centre/Library.

The featured lecture, *The Neverending Stories of Empire*, will be delivered by Dr Dominic Alessio, Professor of History at Richmond American University in London. The talk forms part of HLSCC's ongoing commitment to enriching the student experience through meaningful co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that support academic engagement, critical thinking, and student success.

Through activities such as the Humanities Talk Series, the College continues to expand access to transformative learning experiences, deepen student engagement, and strengthen the connection between academic study and global realities.

Dr Alessio's lecture will centre on the 12-mile island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, whose sovereignty was recently transferred from the United Kingdom to Mauritius without consultation with the native Chagossian population, who were exiled during the Cold War. Using this case study, the talk explores how modern forms of empire challenge traditional understandings of post-colonialism, raising questions that resonate globally and within island societies.

MORE

"I'm looking forward to sharing my research as well as learning more about the region," said Dr Alessio. "The forced exile of the Chagossians from Diego Garcia touches on issues of island studies, slavery, migration, the environment, Africa, and colonialism."

Traci O'Dea, Head of Humanities and Social Sciences at HLSCC, welcomed the return of the series and relevance of this year's topic. "I was thrilled when Dr Alessio offered to speak at the College. His topic is deeply relevant to our islands and echoes contemporary examples of colonialism unfolding around the world today."

While the Humanities Talk Series is designed to stimulate reflection and discussion among students, members of the public are invited to attend, reinforcing HLSCC's role as a hub for community learning and open dialogue.

Dr Alessio is an internationally recognised scholar who has lectured across the globe on the political, cultural, and postcolonial history of imperialism, with additional research interests in the history of the extreme right. He is the author of several published works and is currently undertaking a major political history project examining definitions of empire and alternative methods of imperial expansion, including the purchase and leasing of territory.

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PHOTO CAPTION:

1. Official image of Dr Dominic Alessio. **(Photo credit: Provided)**

2. Official poster. **(Design credit: Junior Daniel/HLSCC)**