Mahmood Mamdani is Professor and Director of the Makerere Institute of Social Research at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, and Herbert Lehman Professor of Government at Columbia University, New York. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1974 and specializes in the study of African and international politics, colonialism and post-colonialism, and the politics of knowledge production. His works explore the intersection between politics and culture, a comparative study of colonialism since 1452, the history of civil war and genocide in Africa, the Cold War and the War on Terror, and the history and theory of human rights. Prior to taking the directorship of MISR in 2010 and joining the Columbia faculty in 1999, Mamdani was a professor at the University of Dar-es-Salaam (1973-79), Makerere University (1980-1993), and the University of Cape Town (1996-1999). He has received numerous awards and recognitions, including being listed as one of the “Top 20 Public Intellectuals” globally by Foreign Policy (US) and Prospect (UK) magazine in 2008. He received honorary doctorate from Addis Ababa University and the University of Johannesburg, both in 2010. From 1998 to 2002 he served as President of CODESRIA (Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa). His essays have appeared in London Review of Books, among other journals.

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