

Professor James Gita Hakim

The world renowned South Sudanese academician, cardiologist and HIV researcher Professor James Gita Hakim died on January 26th, 2021 in Harare, Zimbabwe, from COVID-19 related complications.

Professor Hakim was a member of the South Sudan Medical Journal's Editorial Board and a long-standing supporter of the journal.

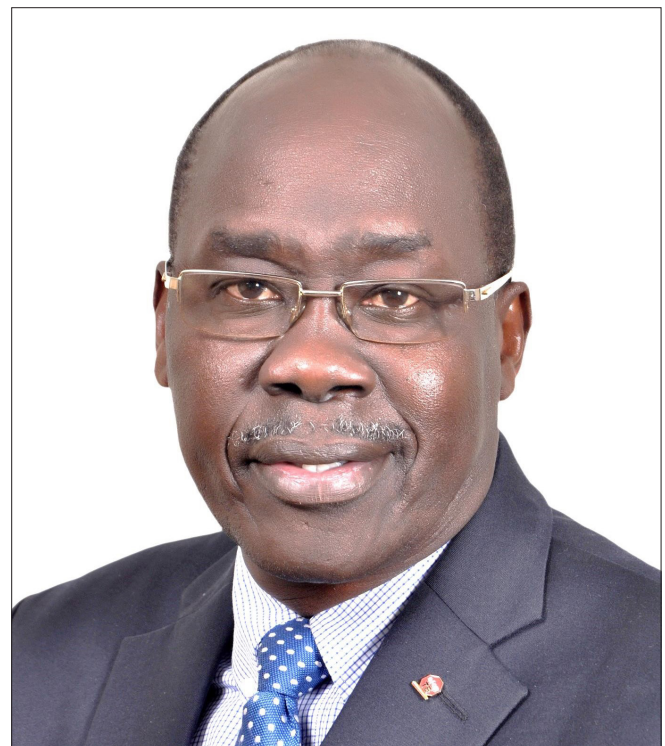
He studied at Makerere University, the University of Nairobi; University of Newcastle, Australia; the University of Cape Town and did a post-doctorate in Cardiology in Germany. He was a fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of London and Edinburgh. In 2016 he was awarded a Doctor of Science Degree in Medicine by University College London. In 2019, he received the Ward Cates Spirit award in the US for his outstanding commitment and leadership in health, scientific excellence and generosity in mentorship and support.

Professor Hakim was actively involved in clinical work, biomedical research and national and international programmes. He had diverse research interests including HIV/AIDS, Opportunistic Infections and Cardiovascular Diseases. He authored/co-authored more than 150 articles, book chapters and scientific communications. He was a member of several national and international organizations encompassing regulatory, advisory, programmatic and scientific portfolios.

He was the foremost heart specialist and Professor of Medicine at the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) College of Health Sciences. He was Chair of Medicine (2000-2006) and Principal Investigator of the PEPFAR/NIH supported UZCHS Medical Education Partnership Initiative (2010-2016).

Mr. Samkange, veteran surgeon and director of the UZ Institute of Continuing Health Education described Professor Hakim's death as a huge blow to the country. "He has left a void that will be so difficult to fill. Our heartfelt gratitude to his family for sharing him with us; we pray that they are comforted in this very arduous time."

Dr. Eluzai Hakim, Founder of the South Sudan Medical Journal says, "Professor James Hakim made an enormous contribution to the development of the College of Physicians of East, Central and Southern African in collaboration with the International Department of the Royal College of Physicians in London. The College is now undertaking the training of high quality future African physicians in the region and remains one of his legacies in postgraduate medical training."



Dr. Hakim adds, "James was a generous man who put the interests of his family and extended family above his own. As a go-getter he worked in his own time in addition to his contracted job at the University of Zimbabwe to raise funds to support the education of his siblings in universities in India and South Africa. In addition, he continued paying school fees for his nieces and nephews in South Sudan until he fell ill. He supported the South Sudan virtual physicians' fora by attending all their meetings through zoom which our younger colleagues appreciated very much. He contributed enormously to shaping a paper I wrote in November 2020 proposing the establishment of a South Sudanese Master of Medicine programme in various specialties and had agreed to sit on the proposed oversight committee to oversee the development and implementation of the programme. Despite his workload he always found time to advise and collaborate on projects that benefitted our society."

Professor Hakim leaves a wife, Phoebe and four sons, Eric, Neil, Frank and Colin, to whom all those at the South Sudan Medical Journal send condolences.

Dr. Edward Eremugo Kenyi

Editor-in-Chief

South Sudan Medical Journal