



Dr Salim Abdool Karim has received praise for his presentation on the country's Covid-19 response. | MOTSHWARI MOFOKENG African News Agency (ANA)

■ COVID-19

South Africans bow to a great mind at work

RUDOLPH NKGADIMA

PROUD, happy and reassured is how South Africans described themselves after Professor Salim Abdool Karim's presentation on the country's Covid-19 response.

Professor Abdool Karim is a Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and a clinical infectious diseases epidemiologist who is widely recognised for his research contributions in HIV prevention and treatment. He is the director of the Centre for the Aids Programme of Research in South Africa (Caprisa) and Caprisa Professor of Global Health at Columbia University.

He is also the chairperson of the UNAids Scientific Expert Panel as well as of the World Health Organisation's HIV Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee.

Some have compared him to one

of the world's leading experts on infectious diseases, Dr Anthony Fauci, who has served as adviser to every US president since Ronald Reagan.

On Monday, Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize and a panel of experts, including the world-renowned Abdool Karim, presented an update to the public on the fight against Covid-19 in South Africa.

"I have the utmost respect for Professor Abdool Karim. The lecture he's giving is well crafted with the intention to empower everyone who hears it with knowledge & understanding. I'm relieved to have minds like his at work for our nation," tweeted Robyn Peterson.

Abdool Karim said: "Thirty-two years ago, I told my wife that I wanted to become a fellow of the Royal Society. This was after I was blown away by a presentation made by my lecturer about the Royal Society while I

was studying at the London School of Economics."

The society is a fellowship of the world's most eminent scientists and is the oldest scientific academy, with a mission to recognise, promote, and support excellence in science.

Some of its late fellows include Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking.

Professor Abdool Karim's clinical research on TB-HIV treatment has shaped international guidelines on the clinical management of co-infected patients.

Some of his awards include: the World Academy of Sciences Prize in Medical Sciences, the African Academy of Science's Olusegun Obasanjo Prize for Scientific Discovery and Technological Innovation and the Kwame Nkrumah Continental Scientific Award, the most prestigious scientific award in Africa. | CORONAVIRUS MONITOR