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## **UCT warns against apparent conference scam**

The University of Cape Town has been alerted of an apparent scam advertising a 'Food Security & Hunger' conference that was initially said to be scheduled to take place on campus from 20-22 February 2020.

The event is advertised online and initially mentioned UCT as the conference venue. After the conference organisers were contacted by UCT, they changed the venue to another location in Cape Town. However, UCT contacted this "new" venue too and they were not aware of this conference.

This conference has nothing to do with the university, whether as the hosts, the conference venue providers or having any UCT speakers on the programme.

The university urges all speakers and participants who might have been in any way been affected by this apparent scam to report the matter to both Campus Protection Services (CPS) on 021 650 2222 and the SAPS for an investigation.

UCT further urges members of both the public and the university community to conduct a verification check before accepting invitations for any conference or even making payments.

Some of the common things to be on the lookout for are:

- Have you heard of the organisers of the conference before?
- Does the conference have well-known speakers, sponsors and other partners/stakeholders?
- Is the website clear? It should be easy to find dates, venue, attendance fees, other speakers, programme details, and contact details.
- Are the organisers easily reachable via the contact details provided?
- Is there high registration fees and fishy money requests?
- Is payment done through a recognised and traceable mode?

Any suspicious conference invitations should be reported to CPS on 021 650 2222. Members of the public can also check with UCT's Conference Management Centre (CMC) via [cmc@uct.ac.za](mailto:cmc@uct.ac.za) for verification of any conferences on campus.

All organisers for conferences to take place on the UCT premises are required to complete a form (CMD01) as part of an application to host an academic event on campus. This document is forwarded to CMC, who monitor events taking place on campus.

***ENDS***

***Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department***

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