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Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada to Speak at Illinois Wesleyan

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—The President of Bolivia, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, will be the keynote speaker at Illinois Wesleyan University's President's Convocation, Sept. 10 in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall, 1210 Park St., Bloomington. The event, which is open to the public, will begin at 11 a.m.

During his visit to the university, President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada will also be a participant in two faculty colloquiums on Sept. 9, which are open to the public as well and will feature presentations by members of the Illinois Wesleyan faculty with responses from Sanchez de Lozada.

The first colloquium, "Integrating Indigenous Cultures into National Development Programs," will address Bolivian and Indian cultural and self-governance issues and will be held at 1:30 p.m., in the Davidson Room of Memorial Center, 104 University Ave. The second colloquium, "Economic Reform in Latin America: A Reflection on the Washington Consensus" will be at 4 p.m., in the Beckman Auditorium of The Ames Library, 1 Ames Plaza.

Sanchez de Lozada, now 72 years old, was born in La Paz, Bolivia, in 1930. However, he was raised and educated as an economist-businessman in the United States. His family moved to the U.S. when he was a child, and his father taught political science at Harvard University. Sanchez de Lozada graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy and English literature from the University of Chicago in 1952.

The following year, he founded a documentary and commercial film production company, and, in 1957, he started a petroleum services company for which he served as general manager until 1962 when he founded Compania Minera del Sur (COMSUR), now the largest mining company in Bolivia.

Known in Bolivia simply as "Goni," Sanchez de Lozada first entered public life as a member of Congress in 1979. He served in several leadership positions, and played a key role in stopping hyperinflation as Bolivia's president of the senate and minister of planning. In 1985, he co-authored the economic "shock therapy" program, which opened Bolivia to international trade, made radical reforms that brought about economic stabilization, and created the foundation for future economic growth.

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Sanchez de Lozada served as the 61st president of Bolivia from 1993 to 1997. A right-wing pro-market reformer, he implemented the "Plan de Todos" (A Plan for Everyone), which was based on tough economic, social and political reforms. Term limits prevented him from running for a consecutive term, but he was re-elected for a five-year term in his second bid for the presidency in August 2002. Congress named him president after he received 22.5 percent of the popular vote.

A 2002 *Washington Post* article reported that Sanchez de Lozada described his current presidency as "a second marriage, with the victor of hope over experience." According to various reports, his primary challenges are defeating corruption and social exclusion and resolving the economic issues of the country, which has been in a four-year recession. He has announced plans to develop major public works projects, including construction of public housing and a cross-country highway that will create jobs in Bolivia, one of Latin America's poorest countries where 70 percent of the people live in poverty. He is also working to stop the production of coca crops in Bolivia, which supply the raw material used for cocaine.

Sanchez de Lozada was a member of the Americas Society/Council of the Americas of New York for many years and currently is a member of the Leadership Council for Inter-American Summitry of the North-South Center of the University of Miami. He is Chairman of the Board of the Foundation of the Americas and the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington D.C. and a member of the Advisory Board of the Carnegie Economic Reform Network (CERN) of the Carnegie Endowment for World Peace.

Sanchez de Lozada holds honorary degrees from the University of Boston, the universities of Senshu and Kyoto in Japan and the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador. He will receive a doctor of laws degree from Illinois Wesleyan.

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