



energy

Department:
Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**MINISTER OF ENERGY – MR JEFF RADEBE, MP
AT THE AFRICA UTILITY WEEK AWARDS DINNER CEREMONY
HELD ON 16 MAY 2018, AT THE CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
CENTRE
CAPE TOWN, WESTERN CAPE**

- Programme Director
- Honourable Minister of State for Commerce and Industry in India, Mr Shri Chaudhary
- His Excellency the European Union Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, Ambassador Dr Marcus Cornaro
- Various Country representatives present
- CEO of Spintelligent, Mr David Ashdown
- BRICS Energy Working Group delegates present
- Captains of industry
- All contenders for the 2018 Awards
- Senior Government Officials
- All Media houses present
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to join you this evening as you prepare to honour your peers, whom you deem to have excelled in implementing the work recognised in the various categories of the fifth (5th) Africa Utility Week Industry Awards to be bestowed shortly.

I note that the Awards were first bestowed in 2014, when the industry took the decision to recognise and reward the achievements of the various role players. Among these are individuals and organisations responsible for the provision of electricity and water services across the continent.

I learn from the organisers, that this conference and these Awards have recorded a steady growth over the years. The conference currently attracts about 7 500 people

from more than 90 countries, including 35 countries from the African continent. Noting this level of success, I wish to congratulate you all and assure you of my departments support for your efforts to promote development, innovation, good practice, and recognition for excellence in the sector. All these activities promote greater access to power and water for the people of our continent. They also alleviate centuries and decades of 'want' that have disadvantaged us in the race for economic development. It is our responsibility to overcome our challenges and ensure that Africa is not the 'dark continent' where our peoples development is bogged down by the cumbersome daily search for energy sources and water for our households and enterprises.

Programme Director, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen – allow me to congratulate Spintelligent for the work that has gone into the continuous development of the ethos of the conference. These not only recognise individual and organisational efforts, talent, and commitment but, provide a global platform for the recognition of African self-development and achievement.

The 2018 Awards include new categories which show the need for ongoing innovation and appreciation of the different roles played by all stakeholders within the sector. The two new categories are the "Energy Journalist" and "Digital Solutions" Awards.

I am sure that we all recognise the important role that the media and digital solutions play in our high tech world. No country can afford to be left behind by the rapid global technological developments that allow for the innovative solutions that in some cases may not have been dreamt of as recently as 10 years ago.

Nor can any of us afford not to have an active media sector that is kept abreast of developments, and can share information accurately with local and international audiences, using the varied and rapidly growing multiple platforms of communication that criss-cross the globe at mind boggling speeds.

Given the highly youthful profile of the population of our continent, I am pleased to see that the wide spectrum of Awards includes a category for YOUTH. The development and growth of our young people has to be recognised as one of the most important strategies for the sustainable economic growth of our continent.

Thus, they must be brought in and encouraged to participate meaningfully in all areas of development at a local and continental level.

Programme Director, I am equally pleased to see the inclusion of the Small Scale Renewables Projects among the categories. The African continent needs the opportunity to source energy and water from large, medium and small scale projects. Our geographical spread and the needs of our dispersed rural communities shouldn't be constrained to one form of distribution but, have the ability to leverage on all potential platforms. In this way our rural communities will be able to develop and grow apace with the rest of the world in terms of access to water and energy that promotes local entrepreneurship with the potential to grow beyond the original scale and reach.

How appropriate it is that this conference known as "AFRICA UTILITY WEEK" is held during May. The month when, since 1963, we celebrate Africa Day as pronounced by the Organisation for African Unity, which is now known as the African Union. This year the continental organisation celebrates 55 years, and it is in our interests that we continue to work towards the unity, and socio-economic freedom of our peoples from foreign domination and exploitation.

May is also the month when seasons change from summer to winter in our region. And it is the time when my department celebrates Energy Month which we use to promote messages of Energy Efficiency in households, business and industry. So allow me to take this opportunity to make a call for all of us to use energy efficiently. And in recognition of Cape Town's current water challenges, for us all to be even more conscious in how we use water. Let's minimise water usage and avoid wastage wherever we can.

Ladies and gentlemen, May is also the month when government departments present our Budgets to the nation through our Parliament.

Yesterday my department presented its Budget Vote, and I'm sure that like the rest of energy industry you are all anxious to know where we stand with regards the way forward. With South Africa's economy on a steady upward trajectory, the demand for energy continues to be an area of focus for local and international investors, as well as consumers across the spectrum. As the department primarily responsible for energy policy and regulation, my department plays a major role in promoting the

development of the sector which drives economic development. In this respect the departments mandate is totally in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030. The NDP envisages an energy sector that promotes economic growth and development, social equity through expanded access to energy services, and environmental sustainability through efforts to reduce pollution and mitigate the effects of climate change. To realise this vision South Africa's, energy initiatives are supported by effective policies, institutions, governance systems, regulation and competitive markets.

Let me also personally reiterate statements and commitments that I have recently made to Parliament with regards the completion and finalisation of outstanding matters that of high interest to the sector and South African society in general. Firstly, I wish to assure you that our current policy of a non-exclusionary energy mix remains in place. In this respect we are also working very hard to conclude work towards finalisation of the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP), which is the overall energy mix framework that ensures a coordinated and integrated development of the various plans for electricity, liquid fuels, gas, and renewables.

The much talked about Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) on the other hand is the 20-year road map for the electricity industry.

In my commitments to Parliament I have stated that the documents will reach Cabinet by mid-August 2018, following a consultation process on 31 July 2018.

Government recognises and regrets the recent uncertainty in the energy policy environment. However, the recent signing of the 27 Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Power Purchase Agreements should go some way towards assuring the sector that the time for action is now, and we will work hard to promote decisive action across the board.

This decisiveness of action will also apply in the instance of bringing stability in the governance of all the energy sector State Owned Entities (SOEs). It is only when our SOE's perform at optimal levels that we will be able to deliver optimally on our multiple strategic programmes. There is no room for delays and non-delivery because, South Africans need jobs now which can only be created when the economy is growing due to accelerated investment opportunities.

As I conclude allow me to recognise that 2018 is the year of the centenary of two stalwarts of the liberation of our country. Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela, our national icon, is a true son of the soil whose centenary we celebrate under the theme "Be the

legacy.” His contributions to the development of our nation will never be forgotten. Nor I am sure will his contributions to global peace and the practice of democratic principles be forgotten by the international world.

In the same breath that we celebrate the father of our nation Tata Mandela, we recognise and celebrate uMama Albertina Sisulu. Mma Sisulu lived her adult life as a servant of the people, and dedicated her life to the achievement of the freedom of our nation. She is one of the women who faced the might of the apartheid regime when they marched against the Pass Laws in 1956, and continued to fight to conscientise the people of South Africa when most of the leadership of the struggle were imprisoned. She herself was also imprisoned and banned from public life for long periods of time.

Programme Director, distinguished guests – let me conclude my address on this note, and wish you all a happy stay in Cape Town, and productive engagements at the conference.

We look forward to welcoming you back to South Africa, and encourage you to take a “short left” and visit other areas of our beautiful country where you will experience the variety of the wonders of “Mzansi.”

I thank you – Ngiya bonga, Ke a leboga!