

## **Infrastructure Africa Business Forum to provide solutions for Africa's socio-economic challenges**

**Johannesburg: 30 July 2018** - The impact of Africa's current economic status and future growth potential on infrastructure development will be deliberated during the 7th annual Infrastructure Africa Business Forum (IABF) at the Sandton Convention Centre on the 9th and 10th of October. This event will be attended by prominent government officials, infrastructure experts and business professionals from across the continent. These participants will collaborate and discuss ways to advance infrastructure in the face of current socio-economic and political challenges – not only in the South Africa but within the whole of Africa.

**Infrastructure Africa** will address a myriad of issues raised by national governments, regional businesses and infrastructure players as they seek new opportunities of growth and address obstacles in the African infrastructure space. The event is the biggest regional infrastructure event dedicated to the topic of infrastructure and focused on regional integration of infrastructure projects and opportunities.

The Forum will address:

- **Developments, challenges & opportunities for infrastructure development in Africa**

Every productive economy has strong infrastructure networks. Infrastructure connects cities and countries together, is the backbone of transport systems, healthcare systems, technology and schools. In Sub-Saharan Africa, poor infrastructure cuts national economic growth by two percentage points every year and reduces productivity by as much as 40 per cent. The continent has made strides, but there are always new opportunities for seizing when it comes to developing infrastructure to set the stage for economic expansion of Africa's countries.

- **Mobilising financial resources & revenue sustainability**

In an increasingly volatile global political context, mobilising financial resources for infrastructure projects has become more complex and challenging. Africans are innovative and entrepreneurial and with the political will and accountability from its governments, and with sound public-private-partnerships that are in the interests of the people, Africa can look inward to finance its own growth to find African solutions to Africa's problems. These solutions need to ensure revenue sustainability and long-term income generation plans.

- **Transport regulations should promote the use of railway infrastructure to enhance the growth of local business**

The development and maintenance of efficient and competitive transport systems ensures an integrated infrastructure network that can then serve as a catalyst for social and economic development; will promote safe and secure transport sectors; improve rural access, infrastructure and mobility; improve public transport systems, and increase the contribution of the transport sector to job creation in Africa. Transport regulations in Africa should look at promoting the use of railway infrastructure to support local and regional businesses, rather than using the road network, which slows down the continent's productivity and keeps the costs of doing business and moving goods very high.

- **Project bankability - Proper project preparation and due diligence**

Many an infrastructure project has failed for lack of proper planning and preparation in the early stages of a project. Structuring a project as a bankable project requires detailed consideration on the technical, legal and economic aspects of the project. Every bank and financial institution has its own set of criteria through which it assesses the bankability of a project. However, the basic requirement is that a project should have a stable and visible cash flow throughout the entire financing period of the project.

- **Transformational technology & innovation in Africa**

African governments are increasingly seeing infrastructure development as a job creation opportunity and the last 10 years has seen a marked change in the number of infrastructure projects in Africa reaching financial close, and several of these have been in transformational technologies. However, Africa still has much to do to leapfrog its innovation and development into a world where technological advancements and innovation are becoming increasingly important for being a global business player. Africa has the potential to leap frog by utilising the technological advances of other advances of other countries investing in Africa's infrastructure.