

SA Integrated Resource Plan nears completion

Pan-African progress updates as Africa's stakeholders convene in Sandton for key power sector summit

South Africa's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), expected to be finalised in the course of the next month, will give Eskom and other power stakeholders clarity and direction, says Eskom Chairman Jabu Mabuza. Opening Africa's premier power sector event, POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa 2018, at the Sandton Convention Centre this morning, Mabuza said South Africa was making strides in integrating renewables and increasing capacity to meet the power needs of its people.

However, he noted: "We need to continuously remember to balance our journey to the new with the old structures, and the consequences of that journey. So the whole issue of transition is one that we continuously grapple with.

It must be noted that while there is commitment to shift towards renewable energy, to meet South Africa's energy demands, coal remains a part of the energy mix, at least for the foreseeable future. I'm pleased that we will finalise South Africa's strategic energy blueprint, our integrated resource plan, by mid-August this year. The IRP will provide the necessary direction for Eskom, and others in the market in terms of the energy mix."

Mabuza added that all African countries needed to collaborate on power generation and distribution in their quest to deliver universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all.

Also addressing key African power sector stakeholders at the opening session of POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa 2018, James Gordon Rege, Chairman of the Board of Kenya's KETRACO, noted that utilities across the continent faced both challenges and opportunities as they sought to reduce the cost of power and make it accessible to all.

Collaboration has emerged as a recurring theme in pan-Africa's leading power summit and expo gets underway.

Dr Willie de Beer, power expert and chairperson of the POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa advisory board, yesterday told a welcome reception for 50 pan-African power sector VIPs in Johannesburg for POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa that the industry needed to adapt and collaborate to capitalise on a changing environment, we will have a problem remaining relevant into the future," de Beer says. "It's time for stakeholders across Africa to integrate and respond to challenges and opportunities as an African collective. We need to look for new opportunities and create an environment conducive to investor confidence."

Boost for Africa's next generation power leaders

To mark Nelson Mandela Day, the organisers of POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa today presented a cheque for R30,000 to Bertha Dlamini, co-ordinator of POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa's Gen-X programme, which offers promising power sector students and young industry professionals an opportunity to present their work to leaders in the field.

The Gen-X Theatre, pioneered by Dlamini three years ago, gives the next generation of power sector professionals a unique opportunity to present their ideas and engage with industry leaders and VIPs from across the continent and the world. Gen-X also creates a setting where aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators can be discovered by prospective funders and financiers.

This year, a partnership has also been secured with European Utility Week to be held from 6 - 8 November 2018 Vienna, Austria, to enroll the top three Gen-X presenters in their European Youth programme in Vienna. "This will be a lifetime experience for our young stars in energy," says Dlamini. She noted that for the first time, 60% of the 20 students participating in the Gen-X theatre were women professionals. "Gen-X is a small but highly impactful programme in terms of both empowerment and an opportunity for existing stakeholders to tap into Africa's young talent pool and its innovative ideas," she

said.

The POWER-GEN & DistribuTECH Africa Conference & Exhibition is now underway, running until 19 July 2018 at the Sandton Convention Centre. This annual event, Africa's premier powersector summit, attracts over 3,000 VIPs and decision-makers from the pan-African and international power sector. For more information, visit www.powergenafrika.com and view the conference programme here <http://events.pennwell.com/PGAfrica2018/Public/Sessions.aspx?ID=64671&View=Sessions&sortMenu=105003>

Ends