MEDIA STATEMENT

27 January 2023

ECSA CONTINUES TO SOLIDIFY ITS FOOTPRINT ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

The Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) continues to solidify its footprint on the African continent today, 27 January 2023, with the investiture of the 6th President of the Federation of African Engineering Organisations (FAEO), Eng. Papias Kazawadi, alongside the ECSA Sixth Term President, Refilwe Buthelezi Pr. Eng, as President-Elect of the 2023 FAEO Conference.

Eng. Buthelezi will serve as FAEO President-Elect until December 31, 2024, after which she will succeed Eng. Kazawadi.

The conference, titled "Unleashing Opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Implementation," was held at Rwanda's renowned Kigali Convention Centre, and drew over 120 delegates, including Africa's current and former leaders of professional engineering institutions, experts in various engineering fields, development partners, policymakers, and politicians.

Speaking at the conference, Rwanda's Minister of State in charge of Infrastructure, Eng. Patricie Uwase, emphasised the importance of the conference by addressing some of the challenges faced in the sector, such as a shortage of engineers, under investment into research and development as well as a lack of proper linkages between academia and industry practises. She added that, while the Rwandan government is working to build capacity, cross-border collaboration would yield better results for the continent.

Eng. Buthelezi facilitated a panel discussion on topics covered in the sessions, including the opportunities in AfCFTA implementation, engineering being central to AfCFTA implementation through the mobility of engineering services across the continent. Furthermore, the importance of standardisation of practises and sharing of engineering solutions being critical to capitalising on the opportunities presented by AfCFTA.

To conclude the session, ECSA Chief Executive Officer, Dr Bridget Ssamula delivered a summary of the proceedings and key issues to be pursued beyond the conference interactions.

ECSA believes that during this term, Eng. Kazawadi, Eng. Buthelezi, and the entire FAEO Executive Board will work together to ensure that more actionable initiatives at the continental level are implemented in the effort to create the Africa We Want.

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Issued by the Engineering Council of South Africa

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