



UNESCO 9th Africa Engineering Week and 7th Africa Engineering Conference

Celebrating & Growing Engineering excellence in the African region

25 - 28 September 2023

CSIR International Convention Centre Meiring Naude Road, Pretoria, South Africa

PRESS RELEASE

UNESCO 9th Africa Engineering Week: As long as we (Africa) are Disjointed, we are going to be Super-Exploited...we must Define our own Standards

27 September 2023: Celebrating and growing engineering excellence continued to be the theme of discussions and insights at the third day of the 9th UNESCO Africa Engineering Week (AEW) and the 7th Africa Engineering Conference, taking place at the CSIR International Convention Centre, in Pretoria, South Africa. Delegates including Ministers, government officials, academia and the private sector, from across the African continent attending the conference, agreed that engineers need to be at the policy-making table as the role of the engineer is to ensure the betterment of society through the development of infrastructure across the region.

‘We need to get engineers at the policymaking table, we need to have more engagement with government’, was a common thread at this important conference. In order to inform policy and decision making, reliable and quality data on engineering education in Africa is needed. In addition the enablement of skills mobility, retention and inter-regional recognition of qualifications and certification / harmonization of engineering policies and standards is required.

As stated the previous day by **Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister in the Presidency for Electricity**: “As long as we are disjointed (as Africans), we are going to be super-exploited...we must define our own standards.”

In agreement with this **Eng Amos Marawa, Deputy Chief Secretary of the Office of the Presidency Zimbabwe** stated: “To address the mobility of engineers and ensure the African Free Trade Area is a success we are recommending that we establish an ‘African Engineering Education Think Tank’ to facilitate the intellectual discourse and coordinate the ongoing initiatives as well as new ones and also to promote homegrown solutions and linkages to global bodies and alliances in engineering education.”

Ntshengedzeni Maphula, Acting CEO, Export Credit Insurance Corporation of South Africa Representative (ECIC) stated: “The African continent has an infrastructure deficit with climate change the biggest risk but we see the opportunity in this for technological advancement. ECIC’s role is to promote the export of goods and services aimed at growing the economy thus creating jobs in support of government’s policy of industrialization through localisation. We encourage local companies to take up the challenge to increase local production especially for renewables and the green economy.”

Shem Bodo, Senior Programs Officer at the Association of the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) in his presentation warned: “We are not prepared for disasters in the education system- there is a need for hybrid learning and in response to this in collaboration with key organisations across the



UNESCO 9th Africa Engineering Week and 7th Africa Engineering Conference

Celebrating & Growing Engineering excellence in the African region

25 - 28 September 2023

CSIR International Convention Centre Meiring Naude Road, Pretoria, South Africa

African continent we have developed remote education benchmarking toolkits that are currently being refined aimed at improving education resilience.” ADEA’s focus is supporting transformation of Africa’s educational and training systems for sustainable development.

Sophia Ashipala, representative of the African Union noted that quality education is fundamental to Africa’s sustainable socio-economic development in support of the African Union’s Agenda 2063 Sustainable Development Goals, and that a focus on STEM is crucial: “The education and skills revolution underpinned by Science, Technology and Innovation is crucial to developing Africa’s human and social capital to promote well educated citizens aimed at driving economic growth in Africa.”

Carlien Bou-Chedid, Immediate Past President, Federation of African Engineering Organisations presented on how FAEO can assist Africa in achieving these Sustainable Development Goals – and the impact that female engineers can make, saying, “In relation to the SDGs, it is important that female engineers recognize the critical role they play in reflecting the priorities and needs of females in any engineering design solution,” Emphasizing the role women can have in making more inclusive and female friendly design.

ENDS

About Africa Engineering Week

Themed “Celebrating Engineering Excellence in the African Region,” - the 9th UNESCO Africa Engineering Week (AEW) 2023 and the 7th Africa Engineering Conference from the 25- 28 September 2023, is an extraordinary gathering that celebrates and fosters engineering excellence in the African region. This groundbreaking event is more than just a conference; it seeks to inspire and educate the youth and the public about the awe-inspiring world of engineering and will showcase how engineers are the ultimate problem solvers and crucial players in addressing our continent’s most pressing challenges. This annual event, proudly hosted by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) in 2023, gains its strength from the collaborative efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO); and the Federation of African Engineering Organisations (FAEO).

Media Contact:

Charles Poulter

Media Manager

SWM Communications

Cell: +27 76 812 8429

Email: charles@swmcommunications.co.za

ECSA Contact:

Mbali Dlamini



UNESCO 9th Africa Engineering Week and 7th Africa Engineering Conference

Celebrating & Growing Engineering excellence in the African region

25 - 28 September 2023

CSIR International Convention Centre Meiring Naude Road, Pretoria, South Africa

Public Relations Officer | Engineering Council of South Africa

Email: sybil@ecsa.co.za