

## INFRASTRUCTURE AFRICA Summit to tackle issues that will awaken sleeping African giant

**31<sup>st</sup> May, Johannesburg** – Last week's Africa Day was commemorated across the continent, marking the birth of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. The celebrations were met with renewed calls for Africa to make its own way, to work on the low rate of inter-regional trade and to build the infrastructure that will support economic development on the continent.

In his Africa Day address to the African Union last week, South African President Jacob Zuma reflected the views of other African leaders when he said, *"We want an Africa with modern infrastructure, where one can fly from one country to another within the continent, without having to go via Europe. We want an Africa where people are able to drive or ride by rail from one country to another with greater ease. It is for this reason that we are working, under the auspices of the African Union, to build infrastructure that will boost economic development in our continent."*

Although there has been a relative slowdown in growth in Sub-Saharan Africa, the reasons therefore are not unique to Africa and are also weighing down the global economy such as the general slowdown in emerging market economies, the rebalancing of China's economy, lower commodity prices and Europe's economic slump.

Recent EY research has shown a year-on-year increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) project numbers in Africa in 2015 against a backdrop of a 5% decrease in FDI projects globally. Africa was actually one of only two regions in the world in which there was growth in the number of FDI projects over the past year.

Africa's current growth potential in the infrastructure space will be on the agenda for the prominent government officials, infrastructure experts and business professionals gearing up to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> annual **Infrastructure Africa Business Forum (IABF)** at the Sandton Convention Centre on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> June.

**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 bottlenecks in the African infrastructure space. The event is the biggest regional event dedicated to the topic of infrastructure and focused on regional integration of infrastructure projects and opportunities.



The agenda, as decided by regional infrastructure experts, includes the following topics:

#### **THE MINISTERS DEBATE: REGIONAL INTEGRATION & GENDER**

During this session, African ministers will discuss regional integration and how to build infrastructure that includes and considers the women and children that have often not benefitted from Africa's infrastructure projects. Less than 12% of continental trade is intra-African. Improving regional integration would improve Africa's economic performance.

#### **FINANCING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**

Closing Africa's infrastructure financing gap will not only involve raising additional funds, but also improving the efficiency with which existing resources are used. Bridging Africa's infrastructure funding gap is as much about improving the performance of the relevant institutions as it is about raising additional finance.

#### **AFRICAN LEADERSHIP & TALENT DEVELOPMENT**

If Africa can fix its leadership problems, it can tackle its huge social and economic development deficit. The turnaround requires bold and authentic leadership at both government and private sector level to find ways of working together for the future of all Africans.

#### **ASSESSING RISKS VS OPPORTUNITIES OF INVESTING IN AFRICA**

There are plenty of African countries offering opportunities in what is called the 'frontier markets'. The clear opportunities seen in Africa are: faster growth, low debt, growing infrastructure, favourable demographics, people are now generally healthier and have more money in their pocket than in the past. However, political instability, cultural conflicts and high levels of poverty are major concerns for any business thinking of entering into a new territory.

#### **INVEST IN THE ENERGY CONTINENT**

With the launch of South Africa's Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer's Procurement Programme, an IPP boom has been launched in the region. There are also exciting energy projects being developed in other regions on the continent as Africa's growth in the energy sector looks set to continue for years to come.

Other topics to be debated include **agriculture and transboundary water projects in Africa, the development of transport infrastructure, investment trends in African infrastructure, skills development for more inclusive infrastructure, maximising opportunities, meeting**





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needs; private sector and delivering the gender dividend in infrastructure and ICT & telecommunications.

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#### **More information about the 2016 Infrastructure Africa Business Forum**

The fifth Infrastructure Africa Business Forum on the 9th and 10th June 2016 will bring together prominent African infrastructure experts, government officials and business leaders to accelerate the business of infrastructure development. The 2-day conference and exhibition provides an opportunity for companies to focus on the continent's growth hotspots, discuss infrastructure trends, meet project developers and relevant government authorities, whilst exploring infrastructure business opportunities.

The event has the highest level of African and South African endorsement for an infrastructure event on the continent, and provides the business platform for private and public sector players seeking to meet the sector's national and regional who's who.

The event partners are the NEPAD Planning & Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). There are many corporate sponsors on board.

Infrastructure Africa has partnered with the African Development Bank (AfDB) to host the Africa **Inclusive Infrastructure Forum (AIIF)** from the 9 – 10 June 2016 at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

**The Africa Inclusive Infrastructure Forum**, a side event of the main conference, will have a key focus towards issues of gender in infrastructure development across the continent. The event will discuss financing for women-owned businesses in the energy, transport, ICT & telecomms and water sectors across Africa.

**To register your attendance, please visit:**

[www.infrastructure-africa.com](http://www.infrastructure-africa.com)

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