

80th IMESA Conference held

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Siyaphambili | Engineering the Future

Over 700 Engineers from all over South Africa, Africa and the world attended the 80th annual Institute of Municipal Engineers of South Africa (IMESA) Conference.

The three-day-long conference was held from the 26 to 28 October at the East London International Convention Centre.

The purpose of the conference was for the Engineering professionals to deliver key messages on various topics pertaining to engineering challenges and opportunities. The theme for this year's IMESA Conference is *Siyaphambili – Engineering the future*.

Speaking at the conference BCM Executive Mayor Xola Pakati said, "The IMESA conference will assist the metro to share best practices that have been successful in other municipalities but mostly to derive new solutions through active engagements with all stakeholders in the engineering sector."

"The conference should have outcomes that will assist us as the city to change lives of our communities," said Pakati.

"Our engagement here today should provide an enabling socio-economic environment in which our ultimate goal of a competitive city is based on our five pillars of the Growth and Development," he said.

Various Municipal Engineering delegates from all over the world attended the conference. Panellists represented a wide range of engineering interests and the specific panellists were all senior people within their respective organisations. At

the conference there were also stalls for engineering exhibitions.

Doctor Allison Lawless also presented her research in training and development of municipal-engineers and updated findings following her book which was published titled "Numbers and Needs".

"There is an urgent need to implement a system to develop young municipal engineering practitioners which includes training courses and workshops associated with activities in the municipal calendar," said Dr Lawless.

She further added that research carried out both locally and internationally showed that civil engineering capacity in South African municipalities was too low to deliver, operate and maintain local

government infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

Doctor Stephan Jooste, a specialist in the advisory field proposed increase involvement from the private sector through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to respond to the significant challenges in service delivery in municipalities.

Darren Keep from Mabey Bridge spoke on sustainable growth through rural connectivity. "Bridges connect communities, provide children with safe access to education and facilitate direct access to social health-care and amenities," he said.

Debate and dialogue from the public was encouraged by the event speakers on all projects and proposals.



Engineering Portfolio Head, Ncendo Kumbaca with the Executive Mayor Xola Pakati



Engineers from different municipalities in attendance



Head of engineering Luyanda Mbula at the IMESA Conference