

Chamber looks to strengthen partnerships in local green economy

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The Italian–South African Chamber of Trade and Industries’ chief aim at the 2017 Africa Energy Indaba is to raise awareness among Italian corporations regarding investment opportunities in South Africa’s green economy.

Chamber secretary-general **Mariagrazia Biancospino** says the chamber mediated a partnership with the Africa Energy Indaba to promote the event while facilitating and supporting the establishment of an Italian–South African business group that will exhibit at the event.

“The mandate of the chamber is to inform Italian corporations that are active in the global energy market about the growth potential and investment opportunities available in the South African energy market. We endeavour to support Italian business companies in finding new strategic partnerships in the development of South Africa’s green economy,” Biancospino explains.

She adds that the chamber – an endorsing partner of the 2017 event – will offer its expertise before, during and after the Indaba to all Italian and South African participating entrepreneurs. It will also offer assistance in terms of accommodation, transport services, organisation of

business groups and business-to-business meetings, including interpreting services, if necessary.

Biancospino says the chamber will be publicising the growth and flow of Italian investments into the renewable-energy sector at the Indaba. She notes that Italy’s existing economic framework and technical capability have enabled the Italian corporations involved in South Africa’s green-energy development to establish an unquestionable reputation for high-level technology and innovative products and services.

Further, she notes that the Italian–South African organisation is taking advantage of the opportunity offered by the Department of Energy regarding the internationalisation of the renewable-energy market.

“The Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) represents the keystone for investments and development of Italian corporations in the South African energy market.”

Biancospino explains that, during the various rounds of the REIPPPP, Italian energy companies, such as Building Energy, Enel Green Power, Moncada, Terni Energia and Enertronica, have excelled in securing a growing number of tenders with numerous achievements. Other companies, such as ILB Helios and Santerno, have set up manufacturing plants to supply components to the industry, she adds.

She says Terni Energia and Santerno are active

members of the Italian–South African Chamber of Trade and Industries that have been involved in the South African energy sector since 2013. Further, during the FNB Business Excellence Awards evening in 2015, hosted by the chamber, one of its other members, Enel Green Power, was honoured with the award for Business Enterprise of the Year.

Biancospino states that the indaba is known as the biggest event pertaining to the energy sector in Southern Africa. The chamber believes that promoting the event to the Italian and Italian–South African communities will open the door to a wide range of opportunities and ideas aimed at new investments and the development of new technologies to the benefit of the local energy sector.

“The Africa Energy Indaba is the perfect opportunity for Italian and Italian–South African companies to showcase new solutions for developing the local energy market. It is a platform in this sector that triggers meetings and discussions with potential African partners, investors and energy stakeholders regarding interregional energy and economic integration,” she comments.

Further, Biancospino says that, in the long term, the increasing awareness of and increasing international interest in the rising opportunities of the green economy in South Africa will introduce smart solutions for international and local companies, as well as consumers concerned with the shift from unsustainable resources to renewable energy. “This long-term goal is the primary focus that led us to establish a long-term agreement with Africa Energy Indaba organiser Siyenza in September last year.”

The chamber has pursued its core aim since its foundation in 1983, which is to play an active role in foreseeing, planning and realising projects that strengthen and develop the Italian productive and commercial enterprises in South Africa, she adds.

Focusing on the chamber’s ability to foster mutually beneficial outcomes, Biancospino says that, for South African companies, partnering or collaborating with Italian companies represents a major step in fostering cooperation with Europe in general, and Italy in particular.

“For Italian corporations, collaboration with the chamber means receiving services in terms of market analysis, market entry viability and networking to realise business activities, which includes the emerging South African energy market.”

The Italian–South African Chamber of Commerce and Industries currently has more than 200 member companies and a database of more than 5 000 collaborators.

The 2017 Africa Energy Indaba will be held at the Sandton Convention Centre from February 21 to 22. 

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Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas.

– Albert Einstein



LONG-STANDING RELATIONSHIP

Members of the Italian–South African Chamber of Trade and Industries have been involved in the South African energy sector since 2013