

# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**12 October 2009**

## **SECURING FUTURE INVESTMENT IN AFRICA'S ENERGY SECTOR**

Africa's developing energy sector is at risk of deterring prospective foreign investment if no decisive steps are taken to demonstrate the financial and long-term returns of doing business on the continent.

"Africa needs to work towards developing strong credit worthiness and a viable track record of completed and successful projects to continue attracting investment and new initiatives in this vital sector," explains Dr Mohammed Abdel-Rahman, newly appointed energy advisor of the NEPAD Secretariat and steering committee member of the ENERGY INDABA 2010. Lowering the investment risk in the country would involve the establishment of a set of legislative tools together with the wise choice of priority projects, and result in the improved competitiveness of the African Energy sector.

The ENERGY INDABA will focus on the highs and lows of Africa's energy projects with a discussion around the issues relating to energy infrastructure development projects that are happening and planned for the continent. This will include exploring the key factors that are making some successful and how obstacles were overcome and how this was achieved.

Coupled to unpacking the various energy projects, it is also important to assure the private sector that finance is available for developing and maintaining their energy projects and that they have the government's support.

"We need to also remember that even though energy investment in Africa is critical, there are other industries on the continent also fiercely competing for capital investment. Therefore to continue attracting investment in the continent – and to this sector, we need a strong regional framework reflecting governmental support to help catalyse private sector investment to fill in the finance gaps for these projects," explains Dr Abdel-Rahman.

He adds that the Chinese and Indian involvement in energy projects across Africa should be viewed as a positive experience as "we need to learn from them and use these as lessons so that other similar investments can bring in better deals."

However energy investors – whether local or foreign – have a duty to ensure that their projects are appropriate for a region at a given time. “It doesn’t make sense to start developing an energy project in a region that isn’t prepared for the technology, skills or resources that are required,” he explains.

Also under consideration is the need for regional integration among African countries as the sheer size and smaller economies of African countries may not always be able to receive the support to utilise the resources wisely. “Africa is under electrified – a hindrance for development but an opportunity for African people to work in these projects. It is an opportunity for the continent to gain exposure, to learn and to create able engineers,” ends Dr Abdel-Rahman.

**Note to Editors:**

**ENERGY INDABA 2010: A Time of Change**

ENERGY INDABA 2010 – A Time for Innovation, Solutions and Alternatives is the event theme chosen by the Steering Programme Advisory Committee for ENERGY INDABA 2010.

The flagship African energy event is an annual event on the Africa business calendar with a specific focus on exploring solutions for a new energy future for Africa. With the recent ever increasing world-wide attention to Energy, ENERGY INDABA 2010 provides an ideal platform to encourage debate as well as creating the stage for a networking climate conducive for companies and individuals to interact.

The event forms part of the African business calendar, which will promote sustainable development initiatives across the African continent.

DATES: 24 – 26 February 2010

WEBSITE: [www.energyafricaexpo.com](http://www.energyafricaexpo.com)

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