

The Honorable Minister of Energy, Ms E D Peters
The Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Honorable Cllr
Nondumiso Maphazi in her absence
Portfolio Councillor for infrastructure, Engineering & Electricity, Cllr Mtutuzeli
Tokota
Mayors from other municipalities
Mayoral committee members
Councillors
The Acting Municipal Manager of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Mr Elias
Ntoba
Executive Directors and Directors
Past president of the AMEU, Mr Sandile Maphumulo from eThekweni
President Elect of the AMEU, Mr Michael Rhode from Stellenbosch
Past Presidents and Honorary members of the AMEU
Stakeholders in the Industry and affiliates
AMEU Executive Council members
AMEU members
Officials from various national, provincial and regional spheres of government
and agencies,
Members of the Media
Distinguished guests
International guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
All protocol duly observed

A very good morning to you all.

It is indeed an honor, privilege and blessing for me as the President of the Association and on behalf of the members of the Executive Committee to extend a warm welcome to you all to this 22nd Technical Convention of the Association of Municipal Electricity Undertakings of Southern Africa, (AMEU)

It is a pleasure to see so many delegates in this warm and friendly city of Port Elizabeth.

Ladies and gentlemen, this conference themed, “Improving the Management of Our Electricity Resources” comes at a time when we have numerous challenges in our Industry.

Some of the major issues we are addressing revolve around the power constraints in the country with the associated need to reduce energy consumption via the power conservation programme or PCP, the implementation of energy efficiency and DSM initiatives, as well as IPP’s, Co-generation and Renewable Energy Feed In Tariffs. The supply side requires the planning,

funding and construction of new generation capacity with the resultant pressure to increase tariffs which is not popular amongst our customers.

This is facing us as our country tries to deal with the impact of the Global economic decline, associated job losses, safety issues and the threat of Climate Change to complicate our lives.

And this is not all. The financial viability of many municipalities is an increasingly worrying trend as we deal with the possible impact of the 17th Constitution Amendment Bill that is designed, among other things to speed up the restructuring of our industry to create the 6 REDs. The major capacity problems be they energy, financial or human resources, make managing our resources as well as attracting, retaining and training our scarce skills a huge challenge.

Arising from the national debates on these issues, it is quite clear that there is an immense amount of effort on the part of the stakeholders involved in these debates and we at the AMEU are proud to say that we are actively participating in many of them with a representative or more on each of these formal committees.

Partnerships amongst the stakeholders are of utmost and crucial importance for the sustainability and transformation of the industry, especially in light of the current energy and skills shortage and with the daunting task and challenges that lay ahead.

I trust that the papers and discussion at this Convention will assist us in forging these partnerships and the management of our resources.

This Convention is not all about serious discussion and the AMEU has also provided some fun and enjoyment as we get to know each other better. Yesterday with the sports events, the most enjoyable 'pirates beach party' hosted by our wonderful affiliates last night, tonight the Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality will be hosting the civic reception followed by our 'Broadway' gala evening tomorrow. Our spouses have a wonderful two days of enjoyment ahead as we tackle the industry issues.

I look forward to the Keynote presentation from our new Minister, Her excellence Ms Peters who is passionate about restructuring, renewable energy, electrification and maintenance backlogs.

I would like to thank her for accepting our invitation. Also Her Excellence, The Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality for hosting this national event in this beautiful city, the excellent team from the Electricity and Energy Directorate who have worked with such dedication to make this event a success, the Affiliates,

the Executive council, secretariat, sponsors, stakeholders in the Industry, speakers, delegates and colleagues.

I welcome you again to this conference and I hope that it will prove to be informative, interactive and a useful platform to exchange ideas.

Once again a warm welcome to Nelson Mandela Bay and I hope you have a memorable stay and an excellent conference.

“We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future.”

George Bernard Shaw

I thank you.