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Minister Naledi Pandor: Global Cleantech Innovation Programme

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Minister Pandor's speech to the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme for SMEs in South Africa awards gala dinner

Mr Barlow Manilal, the Chief Executive Officer of the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). Mr Gerswynn Mckuur, the National Project Manager Global Cleantech Innovation Programme for SMEs in South Africa

This is the third year of a renewed initiative that was first showcased at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 17) held in Durban in 2011. At that time the National Cleaner Production Centre of South Africa, hosted at the CSIR on behalf of the DTI for the last fifteen years, were custodians of this programme, and they remain vital partners in the implementation of the initiative.

Through its various activities and continual engagements with stakeholders, the Global Cleantech Innovation Programme contributes to the development, promotion and deployment of clean technology innovations.

It also creates a platform for linking South African entrepreneurs with investors, business and commercial partners, potentially resulting in the commercialisation of new products and services and ultimately job creation.

The Programme aims to spur South African innovations in energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste beneficiation and water efficiency.

And it has. Three of the programme's alumni made it through to the top 30 of the DEMO Africa Awards for 2016. The Programme's and Cleantech Global winner Dave Lello of Ekasi Energy, 2014 finalist Roy Patterson of SolarCap, and semi-

finalist Hollo Matlala of 4th Element Group were amongst the finalists who presented their innovations to potential investors at the event in Sandton on 26 August 2016.

This year there has been an increase in the number of registrations from 45 to 88. There are five categories with energy efficiency dominating the semifinalists making up 35% of the total. Water efficiency is the next highest, comprising 23% of the total semifinalists – this is very encouraging given the current water crisis the country. Of the finalists, 19% are women, 27% are young and 19% are black.

We have not done enough to tackle climate change or to meet our energy-efficiency challenge. But we have started. To meet our country's energy demands in a sustainable way, our government has programmes for solar energy, electric vehicles and energy storage.

For solar energy, the 2010 Integrated Resource Plan sets a target of 9 400 Megawatts from solar energy by year 2030. This target led to the establishment of the hugely successful Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Programme.

In support of the government's solar energy programme, The DST is driving a number of initiatives such as the Renewable Energy Hub and Spokes programme (with universities), the development of a solar energy atlas (with the weather service), and the solar energy technology roadmap (with the Department of Energy). These initiatives are all aimed at developing a domestic solar industry.

For electric vehicles, the DTI is preparing an electric vehicles roadmap for South Africa. The roadmap will create an enabling environment for electric vehicles to be operated as well as to develop and produce electric vehicle systems.

While these plans are being developed and finalised there are already programmes that are being implemented. The Technology Innovation Agency is managing the Uyilo e-Mobility Programme that aims to support local development and commercialisation of electro mobility technologies. Special emphasis is placed on the development of scarce skills and diversification of product offerings by enterprises that will contribute towards the creation of new jobs. The focus is on electric motors, lightweight materials, information communication and charging infrastructure.

On energy storage, the objective is to develop energy storage technologies that meet the requirements of Eskom for on grid storage, renewable energy integration and electric vehicle applications. Since 2011, the DST has been supporting the lithium ion battery key programme aimed at local production of the batteries at highly competitive cost based on South African raw materials and intellectual property. The DST is busy finalising the broader energy storage roadmap, which will address both on and off grid applications and other battery technologies that use South African raw material.

South Africa's endowment with world-class solar and wind resources, combined with recent strong cost decreases for solar and wind technologies, makes renewable power generation now a cost-competitive new-build option in the country, and will be one building block in South Africa's move towards a more diversified energy mix. Last week the publication of a new CSIR study revealed that new power from solar PV and wind today is at least 40% cheaper than that from new baseload coal today. The implication is that the bulk of our future energy requirements can be met from wind and solar.

However, for the successful deployment of renewable and clean energy technologies on a large scale, significant research is still required on technology level, and from an energy-system integration perspective. New cross-cutting technologies, such as energy storage, demand-side management and grid-related information technologies to manage bi-directional power flows are required to enable the stable operations of an energy system with a large share of renewables.

The CSIR has started to streamline its energy-research offerings around these research questions and is currently establishing an integrated energy-research centre. The centre's research will be demonstrated on the CSIR's campuses across the country, which shall stand as a real-world research platform for designing and operating a primarily renewables-based energy system, combined with electricity, heat and hydrogen storage, the integration of electric vehicles, demand-side management and energy-efficiency measures, at the lowest possible cost in R/kW.

In closing, this clean tech Programme has showcased an innovative nation. Innovation adds momentum to the structural economic change that is needed for economic growth, job creation and an improved quality of life for us all.

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