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PRESS RELEASE

PARTNERING FOR GROWTH

Consulting Engineers South Africa's (CESA) President Zulch Lötter presented his presidential message and theme for the year at a function recently held in Johannesburg. Lötter addressed the state of our country's infrastructure, detailing CESA's strategic goals for the coming year and what the organisation has achieved over the past year. Lötter stated that during 2011 CESA aims to be recognised as the **Centre of Excellence** and **Trusted Advisor** to Government to collectively address the numerous challenges our country faces. The recent successes of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup demonstrated that the engineering fraternity in South Africa can meet these challenges successfully. Lötter states that, "Awareness needs to be created of CESA's role in improving the state of South Africa's infrastructure, so necessary to enhance economic growth and development; the creation of employment; and in order to alleviate poverty in our country". CESA and its members are at the forefront of infrastructure development in South Africa, able and keen to assist Government.

During 2010 there was a strong focus by CESA on Service Delivery and in order to ensure accuracy, they commissioned a survey focusing on two of our country's 'Burning Bridges' being Water and Sanitation; and Roads and Transportation to ensure factual accuracy when dealing with these crises. CESA had previously commented on the Energy crisis, but this he believes has received adequate attention. In 2011 CESA is ready and able to partner with government in order for the collective capacity of its member firms to assist with service delivery. An example of such a partnership is with the South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), the results of which can be seen in the form of a world class national road system.

One of the greatest issues is Government Procurement Practices. He states that we have some of the best practice guidelines in the world but they are useless in the hands of an un-informed consultant or client. To this end CESA, in conjunction with the Construction Industry Development Board (cidb), have developed a Guideline for the Best Practice Procurement of Consulting Services and conducted a Nationwide Road Show during 2010 presenting to clients in the public sector as well as to Consultants. The road show was so successful that it is being repeated during 2011.

As far as Skills Development is concerned CESA's School of Consulting Engineering (SCE) presented 124 training courses to over 2000 delegates during 2010. The SCE is currently in the process of compiling a Certificate of Consulting Engineering in Business Administration. This modular course is due to be launched during 2011 and is aimed at strengthening the business administration capabilities of the industry.

Lötter firmly contends that the strongest 'pulling' power to increase the number of engineers is investment in infrastructure from both government as well as the private sector. While CESA supports the Government's New Growth Plan, Lötter has some reservations. He commented on the ambitious target of delivering 30 000 engineers by 2014, stating that at present the rate of engineers graduating annually from university, including BTech graduates, is 6000 per annum. Currently 60% of first year entrants graduate and he believes by just addressing this issue and reducing this to 30% will increase the graduation rate to 12 000 per annum. He believes that if the economy grows and a sustainable programme of infrastructure is maintained, it is most importantly that qualified and experienced engineers are employed in technical positions

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in government. The private sector will respond by sponsoring and training engineering students. He warns that if the infrastructure spend by public and private sector does not increase adequately, South Africa will be producing a surplus of engineers.

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