

In reviewing 2010, one cannot but observe that the renewed growth following the recession of the past two years has been accompanied by an encouraging freshness in thinking. Increasingly it is realized that the resurgence in demand for the world's mineral resources, as stimulated by population growth and urbanisation and concomitant economic growth, in China and India and other emerging economies.

This resurgence in commodity demand comes within a new economic world order at the centre of focus of which is, of course, the minerals and extractive industries. There are new players on both the demand and supply side of the equation and a fundamentally changed global geopolitical and geo-economics landscape faces the industry. Juxtaposed with this is an ever increasing pressure on the industry from civil society for it to become more accountable and to place greater focus on the effective and efficient use of the natural resources it exploits and those that it uses in the course of their production such as energy, water and land. A prominent factor in this debate is also the legacy that mines, on depletion, leave on the communities that have become economically and socially dependent on them.

This provides the Southern African minerals sector with significant opportunity to embark on a new phase in the region's economic development. Mining is an excellent industry to create infrastructure, expand human capacity and in so doing catalyse the development of secondary and tertiary industries that later will seed establishment of sustainable, stable and prosperous societies in the countries in which mining companies operate.

For over 100 years the Institute's members have stewarded the Southern African mining industry through phenomenal technical and political challenges, and as we face the significant challenges of this new global order, again it will be our members who come to the fore to deal with these issues as they have in the past. Most of the industry's leaders are in the ranks of our membership and therefore at the core of all levels of technical and business management of the industry. It is consequently contingent on our members to take leadership in what will be the industry's most difficult transition.

Apart from the changing face of ownership and influence in the industry, with Climate Change being the single greatest threat to the planet, the mining and metals sectors are again at the core of the issues as the greatest users of energy and generators of carbons of any other industry sector. The responses required of the industry are not only technological, but strategic and managerial. However it is the role of technology in bringing about radical change that is being increasingly emphasized, and it is the technical fraternity working and managing the

mineral wealth of Southern Africa that provides the creative force to address these issues.

To deliver this radical change, requires a high level of cooperation within the industry and clear communication between governments, mining companies, labour and communities. In order to achieve this, the industry requires a system where government establishes the clear rules of the game and administers those well. Companies in turn need to establish and operate mines efficiently, professionally and responsibly and organized labour should fully utilize the human growth opportunity that the industry offers. Communities too, need to recognise not only the long-term benefits but to understand the risks and difficulties that underpin these benefits and ensure that local government competently establishes structures that sustain investment in the community, even after mining activity terminates.

The SAIMM, is an integral part of this process in Southern Africa and with a most successful year behind it, looks forward to 2011 with a new determination to be at the forefront of facilitating the development of appropriate responses to the change required of the industry. Next year we will, with increased vigour, contribute to the development of the capacity in the professional and technical fraternity. For ultimately it is the quality and skills of current human capacity, that will ensure that the opportunity that this new order presents for Southern Africa does not pass without a long-term sustained benefit creating a prosperous African society that is capable of re-generating itself.

In 2010 the Institute provided forums for the discussion of the legal frameworks required, the future of electric power, water problems, mine safety and development of mining and beneficiation sciences. Schools were run to update practitioners of blasting and rock mechanics on the latest techniques and technologies. Material was developed and distributed to schools informing learners about career possibilities in mining. Universities were supported through the SAIMM scholarship trust fund and the mentorship program has been sustained. Successful branch events were conducted in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Richards Bay, Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

As President I would like to thank all Members, Fellows, the Secretariat and Corporate Members for their relentless support of the institute's activities and the great willingness to work hard to make things happen. I would also like to thank the authors and presenters that generated the material that was presented and ultimately disseminated through our journal and proceedings. Sponsors and advertisers are thanked for their continued engagement in the activities of the SAIMM. I hope you enjoy a great festive period and that 2011 will be a year of immense forward momentum in our collective mission of establishing Southern Africa as the leading provider of mineral resources to a growing world!