



SOMP Regional Conference



This edition of the *Journal* is dedicated to the Society of Mining Professors 6th Regional Conference 2018, which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 12 to 14 March. This Conference was hosted by Mining Engineering Education South Africa (MEESA) and the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy (SAIMM). MEESA is comprised of the School of Mining Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand, the Department of Mining Engineering at the University of Pretoria, the Department of Mining Engineering at the University of Johannesburg, and the Department of Mining Engineering at the University of South Africa.

The theme of this regional conference was 'Overcoming Challenges in the Mining Industry through Sustainable Mining Practices', and the proceedings included papers on topics from research and development, sustainable development, and innovations in learning and teaching.

We hosted 46 delegates from 12 countries from the continents of Asia, Africa, Australia, and Europe. A total of 32 papers were presented, all of which were independently peer-reviewed by experts in the respective specialist fields in order to ensure the highest relevance and quality.

The conference had three keynote speakers – Mr Lucky Kgatle (Senior Vice President, Sasol Mining Pty Ltd), Ms Deshnee Naidoo (CEO, Vedanta Zinc International), and Professor Cuthbert Musingwini (Head of the School of Mining Engineering, University of the Witwatersrand), who between them covered the various aspects of the conference theme.

The conference also held a panel discussion on 'Mining Education of the Future'. The panelists were Professor Bruce Hebblewhite, Professor of Mining Engineering, School of Mining Engineering, UNSW Sydney and Secretary General for SOMP, Mr Gary Lane, Director, Vuuma Collaborations, and Dr Gordon Smith, Executive Head, Technical, Anglo American Platinum Ltd. This discussion was very well received by the delegates and formed the foundation for a similar discussion at the 29th SOMP Annual Meeting in Beijing, that was held from 3–6 July 2018.

The conference was concluded with a technical visit to the South Deep mine operated by Gold Fields.

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