

Geoscience meeting greets global leaders

NADINE FORD-KRITZINGER

THE Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) yesterday welcomed one of the largest gatherings of leaders in the world of geoscience that will converge on their premises for the 35th International Geological Congress (IGC).

The congress is taking place from August 27 to September 2 and is dubbed the World Cup of Geosciences, returning to Africa after 64 years.

The event will see over 4000 delegates from 121 member countries in attendance. The congress will see an astounding 2930 oral presentations, 1708 research poster presentations and 44 keynote addresses being delivered.

It will be the second time the congress will be held in South Africa and the third time it will be hosted on the African continent. South Africa hosted the congress in Pretoria in 1929 while Algeria played host in 1952.

It takes place every four years and this year's programme will focus on three core topics, Geoscience for society, fundamental geoscience and geoscience in the economy but with the growing debate around climate change and the extensive depletion of the earth's natural resources.

Delegates will also focus on themes including mining geology and earth resource engineering, gold mineralisa-

tion systems and resourcing future generations. CEO of the CTICC, Julie-May Ellingson, said: "Geoscience is such a broad scientific field and directly and indirectly touches so many aspects of life – conservation, the climate, oceans, the economy and even medicine.

"Not only is there an exchange of knowledge by some of the best minds in this field, but international congresses such as this enhances the city's business tourism, which directly affects the local and national economies."

The prestigious congress in Cape Town will also place a spotlight on the exchange of knowledge.

Greg Botha, secretary general of the IGC, said: "The IGC has only been hosted on African soil twice before. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to have it in South Africa and to showcase the African continent's geological wonders to the world. Geologists and experts from the Americas, Australia, Europe and, of course, Africa, will be sharing knowledge and expertise in all geosciences across the board."

When South Africa bid to host the IGC, factors such as an attractive setting, adequate congress facilities to host the 4000-plus presentations and nearby accommodation were taken into account, Botha said.

"Cape Town, and specifically the CTICC, offered all of these."

nadinef@thenewage.co.za



GLOBAL MEETING: The 35th International Geological Congress will be held next week in Cape Town. PICTURE: TUMBLR