



MINING SEMINARS

Mining stakeholders to hold follow-up Mining for Change seminars from next week

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By: **Creamer Media Reporter**

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The bedrock of wealth and resources in South Africa will come under scrutiny this month when experts from across the mining sector attempt to seek some sort of common ground in the interests of the country.

A number of seminars will be held at Summer Place, in Hyde Park, with the aim of seeking a path for the mining industry to follow that will ultimately be to the benefit of all South Africans.

Last year saw the birth of the Mining For Change series of seminars. These seminars, a joint undertaking by the makers of the historical documentary, *Mining for Change – a Story of South African Mining*, and mining houses Motjoli Resources and AngloGold Ashanti, were designed to create a platform to open dialogue between South Africa's mining stakeholders.

The organisers believe that, for South Africa to find ways to exploit its mineral resources in a way that benefits the country, there must be open spaces where natural resource stakeholders can gather accurate and useful information on the subject and share ideas.

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Last year's six-seminar series, themed 'South African mining in tomorrow's world', generated enough interest for the organisers to host the series again this year. This proves that South Africans in the mining sector are hungry for dialogue and this series of seminars is designed to provide a robust but safe space for this dialogue to take place.

The early shanty towns that sprung up at the end of the 1800s around the abundant gold and diamond deposits in places like Johannesburg and Kimberley were only part of South Africa's tumultuous history. Indeed, South Africa has been almost entirely shaped by the mining industry – its politics emerged from an attempt to control mineral wealth.

And now again in a relatively new democracy, with the aberrations of an apartheid past and a legacy of a massive underprivileged class to deal with, the debate is as lively as ever around how best to benefit all South Africans, especially the poor. The contentious issue of nationalisation will be thoroughly examined by the experts during the seminars, and they will apply their minds to the inherent advantages and disadvantages of all the options available to the mining industry, given the unique situation in which South Africa finds itself.

This year will see the African National Congress host a policy conference to try to resolve, once and for all, the issue of how South Africa should regulate the mining industry to create maximum benefit for all South Africans. It is hoped that these Mining For Change seminars will help to positively influence the outcome of that conference.

The theme this year is Understanding South Africa's Mining Future, and this year's seminars (to be held on June 12, 19 and 25 and on July 3) will cover the following topics:

Sustainability (June 12)

All over the world, 'sustainability' issues are key to mining and to relationships between mining companies and their stakeholders. Long-term and extensive investor commitment is needed, while host societies, communities and workforces expect socially and environmentally responsible operational methods. In South Africa, we have the additional factor of the need to deal with mining's apartheid legacy. How do we meet this challenge?

Minerals-Based Industrialisation (June 19)

If a country is as richly endowed as South Africa is with natural resources, does it not follow that it should derive at least part of its economic growth through downstream and upstream industrialisation based on these natural resources? What are the opportunities and how can they be met? What are the obstacles and how can they be overcome?

State Participation in the Mining Industry (June 25)

How do the governments of resource-rich nations ensure that their citizens enjoy a fair share of the benefits of the exploitation of their nonrenewable resources? The world has seen nationalisation, indigenisation, compulsory State minority shareholdings in mining operations and State mining companies operating in competition with the private sector. What works, in what circumstances and what does not? And what constitutes a fair, appropriate and sustainable tax regime?

The Future (July 3)

What is the future of South Africa's natural resources sector? How is it best administered and regulated? What does South Africa need to secure this future and make it beneficial

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for the majority of the citizens without making the industries unprofitable or South Africa an unattractive investment destination?

The hard-hitting speakers at the 2012 seminars include adjunct professor and director of the Centre for Sustainability in Mining and Industry at the University of the Witwatersrand May Hermanus; Chamber of Mines CEO Bheki Sibiyi, who will speak on sustainability; economic consultant and researcher Dr Iraj Abedian, who will speak on minerals-based industrialisation; political risk analyst and strategic adviser on government policy and regulation Dr Mzukisi Qobo and former Mintek CEO and former Department of Minerals and Energy official Paul Jourdan, who will address the issue of State participation in the mining industry; AngloGold Ashanti CEO Mark Cutifani; and Mintek CEO and president Abiel Mngomezulu, who will talk about the future.

To attend the seminars, please email rsvp@miningforchange.co.za or call 011 482 3467 for your free entry to the events.

Edited by: [Martin Zhuwakinyu](#)

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