

African Ports & Rail Evolution Forum to spotlight collaboration benefits for economic growth

The eighth annual African Ports and Rail Evolution Forum, a two-day trade exhibition and conference taking place on Tuesday, 15 and Wednesday, 16 October 2019 at the Durban International Convention Centre in Durban, South Africa will see attendees gain access to more than 80 exhibitors displaying the latest products, services and technologies across seven product zones, namely ports infrastructure and expansion; port operations; security and information technology; rolling stock and locomotives; rail infrastructure maintenance; maritime; and logistics.



Image via Transnet Port Terminals - Durban Container Terminal

Visiting ports and rail professionals can also get to grips with up-to-date industry developments and upskill themselves via 15 free-to-attend workshops.

This year's event will be opened by Nozipho Mdawe, Acting CEO of Transnet National Ports Authority. In addition, there will be in excess of 30 speakers from around the globe including Aadil Cajee, executive head of infrastructure, corporate and investment banking at Standard Bank; Benjamin Acolatse the deputy CEO of Ghana Railway Development Authority; and Ousman Jobarteh, managing director of the Port Authority of Gambia.

Event theme features

Under this year's theme of *Accelerating Economic Growth in Africa through Cross-border Collaboration and Investment*, delegates will discover Africa's trade potential and the wealth of new investment and partnership opportunities arising from the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement, as well as other open border initiatives.

They will also be privy to forecasts for Africa's transport infrastructure and find out which infrastructure projects are currently open around the continent, where assistance is needed and how to become a leading partner in the development of Africa's multibillion-dollar transport industry. Plus, they will hear from Africa's global counterparts on best practice.

The African Ports and Rail Evolution Forum offers attendees access to four co-located events. Among these is Drone Con, where they can learn more about the technology that is disrupting business across all industries, including mining, agriculture, security, telecommunications, emergency response, wildlife protection, search and rescue and more.

Drone Con is one of Africa's largest drone conferences, with a keen focus on African solutions for commercial drone industries and offers delegates a diversity of relevant exhibitions.

Another collocated event is KZN Export Week, from 14 to 18 October. KZN Export Week is an annual programme of Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal (TIKZN) developed to recognise, promote and assist with growing KwaZulu-Natal's export businesses along with industries throughout Africa and globally.

Excellence will be awarded at the Women in Transport Awards on the 15 October and at the Exporter of the Year Awards on 17 October. The Women in Transport Awards provides a much-needed platform to recognise, reward and celebrate the successful women who are transforming the transport sector. The Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry will host the KZN Exporter of the Year Awards where small, medium and large exporters from a variety of sectors will be acknowledged for their contribution to the industry.

Over and above these, select delegates will have the opportunity to explore and experience the bustling tourism hub that is Durban during site visits to the Port of Durban, Dube TradePort Special Economic Zone and several tourism hotspots.

Encouraging mobility, transport connectivity

Hosted by the eThekweni Municipality and Ministry of Transport, in partnership with Transnet National Ports Authority and Transnet Freight Rail, the African Ports and Rail Evolution Forum forms part of the Transport Evolution Event Series which will see similar events taking place in Qatar, Mozambique and Nigeria in the coming months.

"This event is key as mobility and transport connectivity systems are the backbone for regional and global trade as well as for economic regeneration and employment creation in South Africa," says Nomalanga Sokhela, eThekweni Municipality Programme Manager: Maritime Industry Development.

For more information, visit [African Ports and Rail Evolution](#).