

More than an awards, this was an accord

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Business South Africa comes together to say South Africa means business.



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On Thursday, 10 May, the Best Managed Companies in a host of sectors were announced at the second annual Top 500 Awards, hosted at Inanda Club's Polo Room in the heart of Sandton.

The road to these awards is a challenging one. Over the course of the last year, thousands of companies were critically researched by Topco Media's Senior Researcher Sandra Bock, and measured against 100 data points originally developed in partnership with UCT's Development Policy Research Unit. About 20% qualified to list in the 9th annual Top 500 publication (published in January). Out of those, less than 60 made the awards' shortlist and, finally, 12 were lauded as the country's reigning Best Managed Companies in their sectors. A 13th trophy, sponsored by Bestmed Medical Scheme, went to Nestle South Africa - adjudicated winner of the new Workplace Wellness Award (the only Top 500 Award won through entry and motivation, rather than qualification).

Among the qualification-based winners were Truworths (*Retail* - CEO of 30 years, Michael Mark, was there to accept the award); Mercedes-Benz South Africa (Pty) Ltd (*Consumer Goods*); Naspers Limited (*Media*), and - taking the trophy both in *Financial Services* (sponsored by Tagit Solutions) and the "King Trophy" for Best Managed Company of the Year - Old Mutual Investment Group.

Commenting on the triumph, Dave Macready, Managing Director of the Old Mutual Wealth and Investment Cluster, said that the timing of the award could not have been better given that Old Mutual Limited, the holding company of Old Mutual Investment Group, is listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange on 26 June 2018.

"Winning these awards is testament to the fact that not only is Old Mutual Investment Group a great place to work, but it is a home for world class talent and intellectual property," said Macready. "We are also a leader when it comes to Responsible Investing in South Africa. Our business is an active steward of capital through the driving of low-carbon, resource-efficient and financially inclusive outcomes and ensures that good governance is an absolute necessity for long-term performance.

Ultimately our people make this happen, and it is our talent, performance and passion for client investment outcomes that are key factors in ensuring Old Mutual Investment Group is a leading investment manager in South Africa."

The speakers at this year's awards drew national attention because their addresses resonated so closely with the *zeitgeist* of South Africa's new momentum under President Cyril Ramaphosa's leadership (whose senior economic advisor, Trudi

Makhaya, attended the awards as a VIP).

VIP Speaker was Goldman Sachs MD & Partner Colin Coleman and the Keynote Speaker was Dr. Jabu Mabuza - Chairman of Eskom and Telkom, and President of Business Unity SA. While Coleman reconfirmed his firm's widely-noted assertion that 2018 could herald a golden era for the local economy - based on strong local and international data, rather than conjecture - Dr. Mabuza balanced his own optimism and enthusiasm with a clear message to business South Africa, that the road to prosperity would be a long one and that, before business South Africa can expect to attract the targeted \$100bn in foreign investment, it should itself be confidently investing into the local economy.

With its imminent listing Old Mutual, for one, is already answering that call and making a bold statement of intent that has been enthusiastically noted by the international community. Many other finalists and winners at the awards have also been stepping up, like Netcare and Sasol - participants in the new Youth Employment Service (YES) initiative - and Anglo American South Africa, which has invested millions into education. In his address, Dr. Mabuza also touched on the weight that ethical, upstanding corporate management carries at a time when the fallout from several corruption scandals still jars. View Dr. Mabuza's speech [here](#) and Mr. Coleman's speech [here](#).

Fittingly for an evening of reignited optimism - and, yes, *patriotism* - the awards began with all attendees standing for the national anthem, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*.

This year marks a decade since [the awards' ancillary publication](#) first began researching and ranking the famous "Top 500" companies. The next edition, out at the end of the year, will feature a comprehensive awards retrospective and quiz some of the economy's biggest icons on the past, the present - and the promise of the future.

Topco Media congratulates all finalists and winners and would like to sincerely thank Top500 Awards Sponsors [Bestmed](#), [Public Sector Manager Magazine](#) and [Tagit Solutions](#).

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