

# “Rebuilding with Purpose”

## CESA 2021 theme highlights importance of quality, integrity and accountability in South Africa’s road to recovery

Consulting Engineers South Africa’s (CESA) President, Sugan Pillay, presented his presidential message and theme for the year at a virtual event this morning attended by media, CESA members, and infrastructure stakeholders from around South Africa. Pillay revealed his 2021 theme as ‘Rebuilding with Purpose’.

**BY I BONOLO NKGODI**

“When I delivered my presidential address this time last year, I had little idea of what was to come in 2020 – the unprecedented trials and tribulations that would face our industry, our country, and our global society,” began Pillay. “However, the words I said then, 12 months ago, were more apt than I could have imagined. You might remember, I said: ‘We are certainly in a period of great change. In times such as these, there is always uncertainty as to how events may unfold, and a certain amount of trepidation as to what the change may entail, and what the future may hold.’ This was before COVID-19 reached our shores.”

However, Pillay said that despite the uncertainty and trepidation, South Africa is facing these economic and social challenges with resilience and determination. He cited the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, which has created some much-needed optimism for the consulting engineering industry.

“Despite the hardships facing our country – hardships we cannot expect to dissipate soon – CESA remains committed to improving the business landscape and playing our part in creating a conducive procurement

environment as well as shaping the requisite talent to see that our country’s developmental goals are met. We aim to mould our industry of consulting engineers to ensure we continue to protect lives through quality and safe infrastructure, and protect livelihoods through the creation of economic opportunities for the wider construction value chain,” he said.

Reflecting on the past year, Pillay said CESA had made progress in strengthening the relationship between government and the private sector, showcased by the association’s involvement in the Sustainable Infrastructure Development Symposium South Africa in June last year.

“However, it has become clear that South Africa still faces many of the same challenges as in prior years, with an ongoing demise of public decision-making processes, a lack of checks and balances within procurement systems, and a loss of accountability of those tasked with leading change.”

He mentioned President Ramaphosa’s slow and laborious efforts to curb corruption, and the poor results from the 2020 Auditor-General’s report as