

In-house communication directors' association launched for Africa

More than 80 communication directors from companies, associations, government institutions, NGOs and universities recently gathered at the Nelson Mandela Foundation in Johannesburg to found the African Association of Communication Directors (AACD). This new network of in-house communication professionals from across the African continent will promote a dialogue and allow for the sharing of knowledge across the field of communications, setting qualified standards for the industry.



Sunil Geness, corporate affairs executive at SAP, was elected as president of the newly formed association. Lulu Letlape, group corporate affairs executive at Mercedes-Benz, is the managing vice president. Ghada Hammouda, head of corporate communications at Citadel Capital S.A.E, and Yvonne Muthien, chief executive: Group Services of Sanlam, will take up the two vice president positions. Sello Hatang, information and communications manager at Nelson Mandela Foundation was elected treasurer.

The founding members also elected nine assessors to the board, which reflects the variety and scope of AACD's membership: Themba James Maseko, chief executive officer at the Government Communication and Information System; Anne Kabugi, corporate affairs manager at Standard Chartered Bank; Dr Barbara Jensen, spokesperson for Gautrain; Juliet Mphande, head of customer relations at Toyota; Jacqui O'Sullivan, Sasol; Nicole Johnston, regional media and communications coordinator for Oxfam; André F Oberholzer, group head corporate affairs at Sappi Limited; Javed Bolah, media and communications manager at British American Investment; and Mohamed Shaikh, senior director of Communication and Liaison at Stellenbosch University.

The meeting featured a welcome by the MD of the Nelson Mandela Foundation, as well as a presentation by Dr Herbert Heitmann, the president of the European Association of Communication Directors (EACD), who has provided support to the newly formed Association. The event was moderated by Siki Mgabadel, who is an anchor at SAfm.

The African Association of Communication Directors will work to advance the profession by organising conferences and meetings for communicators, and by providing informative media, services and analysis to its members, which works to strengthen the voice of pan-African communications on the global stage.

For more, go to www.aacd-online.com.