

Welcome Address

By

Danie Badenhorst

Chairperson of SANCOLD and Chairperson of the Local Organising Committee of ICOLD 2016 at the Symposium Opening Ceremony

Master of Ceremonies, Honourable VIP Guests, ICOLD President, ICOLD Honorary Presidents, ICOLD Vice-presidents and dear Delegates, Accompanying Persons and all members of the ICOLD Family.

On behalf of the South African National Committee of Large Dams, it is my great pleasure to welcome you, to this Symposium as part of the 84th ICOLD Annual Meeting here in Johannesburg. I am happy to announce that **76 countries of the world** are represented here of which **21 countries** represented are from **Africa!**

SANCOLD proposed the hosting of this event back in 2010 by motivating that the increasing opportunities and challenges for dam and hydropower development in **Africa** merited that **Africa** holds such an event. We are extremely happy that this event can now be staged in **South Africa** with its diverse cultural heritage, scenic beauty with many tourist attractions. You will surely experience our friendly “rainbow” nation and the spirit of our late icon, Nelson Mandela.

For this **Symposium** the Local Organising Committee has received:

- 333 papers from authors all over the world of which,
- 245 papers from 42 countries were chosen for **publication**,
- 96 from 34 countries were selected for **oral presentations** and an additional
- 68 papers from an additional 26 countries were selected for **poster presentations**.

We thank our ICOLD member countries for this excellent contribution towards sharing experiences gained and best practices developed. Judging by the quality of papers, we are convinced that you will benefit greatly from your participation in this symposium.

In addition to the Symposium and the eight workshops presented by ICOLD Technical Committees, we have enriched the event by adding an additional record **eight Workshops**

on technical issues appropriate to the 2016 theme where participants can add value by sharing their knowledge and experiences.

Included in delegates' registration packs to this ICOLD event are three South African Books prepared under the leadership of SANCOLD:

Today I want to read a quote from one of them - the publication called In the Footsteps of Giants:

“South Africa is home to some of the leading dam builders in the world, and many engineering innovations were developed here.”

Master of Ceremonies, we welcome you all to South Africa and challenge you to truly experience Africa during your brief stay with us. We say welcome, bienvenue, siyakwamukela, amohelehile, amogelegile, mi amukeriwile, tanganedzwa, wamkelekile – all of it meaning welcome!

I thank you.