



South African National  
Committee on Tunnelling

## Spotlight

### South African National Committee on Tunnelling Young Members Group – ‘SANCOT – YMG’

On 31 July 2015, the SAIMM Young Professionals Council (YPC) hosted the Career Development in the Minerals Industry. There are valuable contributions that young professionals and the youth at large can make in the civil and mining industries. SANCOT is no different from many other organizations within different industries, in that it has the responsibility to ensure that its younger members participate effectively in all professional activities within the industry. In this way, the youth are also able to make a meaningful contribution towards their professional and technical development.

At a meeting held on 14 January 2015 at AECOM offices in Centurion, the South African National Committee on Tunnelling approved the formation of a Young Members Group (SANCOT – YMG). Mr. Lucky Nene was nominated and accepted as the chairman of this Young Members Group.

SANCOT – YMG has adopted its mandate from SANCOT and SAIMM, and it is working very closely with ITA and the youth body of ITA, which is ITA – YM. This is to ensure alliance and compliance on various aspects that affect the young professionals. The mandate as adopted from the ITA – YM is structured as follows:

- a) To provide a technical networking platform within the ITA for young professionals and students
- b) To bridge the gap between generations and to network across all experience levels in the industry
- c) To create awareness of the tunnelling and underground space industry among new generations
- d) To provide young professionals and students with a voice in the ITA, including the Working Groups
- e) To look after the next generation of tunnelling professionals and to pass on the aims and ideals of the ITA.

Through general interactions via other professional platforms, young professionals have shown interest in this youth structure and expressed a desire to take part. It is therefore envisaged that all interested companies would encourage their young professionals, within both mining and civil engineering, to have representatives within SANCOT – YMG. This participation and involvement is encouraged to extend beyond the workplace, and will also include those young professionals that are at academic institutions.

The focus areas for SANCOT – YMG would be to mirror the mother body activities and objectives in a way that ensures fun, enthusiasm, and ongoing participation of young professionals in all aspects of SANCOT’s activities and industry at large. These focus areas are as adopted from the ITA – YM mandates and include the following:

- Arranging events for international networking, exchange of experience and technology between young professionals and students
- Inspiring the young generation to join and actively participate in ITA
- Encouraging the establishment of domestic YM groups for each individual ITA Member Nation.

To date, SANCOT – YMG has embarked on a number of activities, including researching other existing professional youth organizations and groups, both locally and internationally, in order to understand how they are structured, what their current involvement is, and where SANCOT – YMG can participate in the promotion of young professionals’ interests. To date these organizations include ITA – YM; SAIMM – YPC, and CESA – YPF.

As a way forward, SANCOT – YMG intends to embark on the following activities:

- a) Request assistance from the mother body in the formulation of the working committee/council
- b) Continue engaging with various young professional organizations and other related stakeholders in an attempt to strengthen relationships and pursue youth interests



- c) Start implementation of the ITA – YM mandates in association with the SAIMM mandates
- d) Continue to participate in ITA – YM, SAIMM – YPC, CESA – YPF, and other youth group activities, both locally and internationally.

Lucky Nene gave a presentation on the current and future activities of this young professional body at the SANCOT conference on Mechanized Underground Excavation in Mining

## Spotlight (continued)

and Civil Engineering, which took place between 23–25 April 2015 in Durban, South Africa. This conference was in response to the civil and mining industry being under immense pressure to deliver projects fast, efficiently, and as safely as possible. Mechanized underground excavation and support installation are proving to be invaluable and cost-effective tools in project execution. Technology exists whereby tunnels can be excavated by mechanized methods from as small as 300 mm to in excess of 18 m in order to access orebodies, build road or railway tunnels, facilitate the installation of utilities, construct storage caverns for gas and oil, *etc.*

The conference was attended by various stakeholders involved with underground excavation, both locally and internationally, including the following:

- > Shaft sinking companies
- > EPCM executives and management
- > Civil construction companies
- > Local municipalities and water authorities
- > Engineering design and consulting companies
- > Project management practitioners
- > Technology suppliers and consumers
- > University students.

After the presentations, delegates embarked on a technical site visit that gave them the opportunity to walk through the tunnel underlying Durban Harbour entrance, visit the adjoining pump station, and enjoy a 1-hour cruise around the harbour.

SANCOT is one of the 73 Member Nations subscribing to the ITA and is expected to participate in all the ITA's activities. What was of particular interest in this year's ITA's international events is that the young professional groups from each of the Member Nations were able to take part in the ITA's activities through working groups and also had the opportunity to report back to the audience at the General Assembly through Jurij Karlovsek, the current ITA – YM president. SANCOT – YMG was represented by Lucky Nene at this young professionals' session of the ITA's 41st General Assembly and Congress, which took place between 22–28 May 2015 in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

There were thirteen main topics under which technical articles and papers were presented during the ITA WTC sessions:

1. Planning and designing tunnels and underground structures
2. Fire safety of tunnels and underground structures
3. Mechanized tunnelling in development and use
4. Operation and maintenance of tunnels and underground structures,
5. Development in use of underground space: case studies (traffic, waste, energy, water, sewerage, flood protection, commercial and other uses)
6. Cost optimization and financing of underground structures
7. Immersed and floating tunnelling
8. Intelligent systems, mechatronics, and robotics in tunnelling
9. Conventional tunnelling methods in development and use
10. Urban planning and use of underground space
11. South East Europe (SEE) Session: soft ground urban tunnelling / rock tunnelling in karst
12. Risk analysis and techniques for underground structures,
13. Equipment of tunnels and underground structures.

Young professionals in the tunnelling space, including those who would like to participate in general and offer assistance in the sustenance of this young professional forum, are once again invited to contact the SANCOT–YMG chairman directly on [Lucky.Nene@aecom.com](mailto:Lucky.Nene@aecom.com) or via Raymond van der Berg on [raymond@saimm.co.za](mailto:raymond@saimm.co.za).

**L. Nene**  
*Chairman: SANCOT-YMG*

