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AIIM's 86 MW Droogfontein 2 Solar Park begins full operation



Kimberley, 31 August 2020: The Droogfontein 2 Solar Park situated near Kimberley in the Northern Cape, has reached full grid code compliance and Commercial Operation reports Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractor juwi Renewable Energies ("juwi"). The 179 hectare solar area (comprising over 260,000 solar panels on a single axis tracker system) is supplying 75 MW (86 MW DC) into the ESKOM grid. The site was handed over to the Operations & Maintenance team in February 2020.

"Droogfontein 2 is the first of the three projects totalling 250 MW juwi was

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awarded in 2018 to reach completion. The project team, together with our various partners, the sponsors and shareholders have done an excellent job," says Greg Austin, MD of juwi. The project sponsors and equity investors are African Infrastructure Investment Managers (AIIM) through its IDEAS Fund, Phakwe Group, Reatile Group and AREP.

Senior construction manager and site manager, Nkosikhona Yeko, attributes the smooth progression to the detailed planning and scheduling of the project prior to commencement: "Our baseline approach to scheduling is to ensure that everything is done not only in accordance with our project deliverables schedule but also of course within budget while meeting juwi's stringent attention to quality."

"Our planning has ensured that we have managed the challenges of coordinating several different contractors – with a combined workforce of many hundreds of people – on site at the same time. We have succeeded in getting all the different subcontractors to work together as one team, with shared objectives."

Community involvement and benefit

Local community involvement is key to the success of the project, as indicated by Austin: "We have worked very closely with all the key stakeholders including the sponsor's Community Operations team and the Droogfontein Communal Property Association (CPA), who are the land owners and represent the local community interests."

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535 local community members were directly employed, and an additional 738 people employed, and additional employment out of various services. "In effect, 2,000 in the community," said Austin.

"The Droogfontein CPA community consists of beneficiaries of the CPA have been employed in the greater Kimberley area.

"The project is leasing 200 hectares of land. A park has been constructed; the revenue from the CPA business plan."

Global players, local impact

Stephan Hansen, the Chief Operating Officer of the project is an important milestone in South Africa: "This is one of our core market project development and also build project

"This portfolio is a very important bridge, in the African market, and we've been awarded a Programme. We're one of the largest players. Importantly, we are now submitting our own

"Once these three projects are concluded in the South African market share in both the EPC

"We are very eagerly looking forward to R very good and it's creating a sustainable energy market.

Solar is one big pillar, we are also active in This makes South Africa a unique market for where we do solar and wind development success we have. Given the circumstances going to be continued success and that we future energy mix of South Africa and to the our projects."

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