

Pieter Pretorius Grand Awards Speech 2018

TITLE: Eskom Expo ISF Grand Awards Speech by Pieter Pretorius, Chairperson – Expo Board of Directors

EVENT: 38th Eskom Expo for Young Scientists International Science Fair

DURATION: +/- 4 Minutes

VENUE: Birchwood Hotel and Conference Centre, Boksburg

DATE: Friday, 5 October 2018

Representative from the Department of Science Technology XXX, Chairman of the of the Eskom Board, Mr Jabu Mabuza, Eskom's Group Executive for Sustainability, Transmission and Risk Mr Thava Govender, members of the board of Expo, students, teachers, judges, volunteers, students from other countries in our midst, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning and welcome to the 38th Grand Awards ceremony of the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists International Science Fair.

It being the very last day of this year's Expo and it's a very bittersweet moment for us all, I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect, and here I want to address especially the learners who have been our most distinguished guests over the past few days.

Understandably you all are very tired at this point – it's been a jam-packed week and I hope that you all have had fun and enjoyed every part of it.

Learners, it takes a very special type of person to go through this process with Eskom Expo for Young Scientists. You are the cream of South Africa's next generation that is going to change the lives of many and for that I do believe you should pat yourselves on the back for a job very well done and also give yourselves a big round of applause.

You all have travelled from places far and near from all over the world to take part in Africa's largest science fair and I wish to thank you. Thank you for your excellent behaviour, for putting your best foot forward, for your dedication, diligence and perseverance. Thank you for inspiring us and opening up our minds. Thank you for showing us that nothing is impossible and that in all of you, the future of the world is indeed in good hands.

You have been through, what is at times, a very gruelling and intimidating judging process but you all took it in your stride and did your very best. I took time over the past week to talk with some of you about your projects, and just like every year, I am walking away rejuvenated and even more inspired to make sure that the Expo continues forever.

Ladies and gentlemen in the audience, it is our job to make sure that young people know that their dreams are valid and to make sure that we create conducive environments to make them come true. This is our mandate and we can never run away from it.

Learners, congratulations to you all, irrespective of whether or not you won a prize or an award this week. You are all winners and like I said to you the other day, it takes very special types of individuals to embark on such a journey with such great heart and enthusiasm.

You have done your parents, family, teachers, mentors, delegation leaders and the Eskom Expo incredibly proud. I'd like to urge you to not stop here. If you plan on taking part in the Expo again next year - as you should - start working on refining your projects now. Don't wait until next year and you will see how this elevated your projects.

I bid you farewell for now, for I am sure we all will see each other again in the near future and for the last time this week, please help me welcome on stage Eskom's Group Executive: Transmission/ Acting Group Executive: Risk and Sustainability, and the Eskom Exco champion for EXPO, Mr Thava Govender.