



Title: Symposium on German-South African cooperation including award ceremony at the international conference ACCTA 2013 (**A**dvances in **C**ement and **C**oncrete **T**echnology in **A**frica)

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Event: Conference, Johannesburg/South Africa, 28-30 January 2013

Brief description:

Cement and concrete play a key role when confronting the challenges of the African construction industry and catering for the high demands on road and house-building in terrain with difficult climate conditions and geography. This was the background to the international scientific conference entitled “Advances in Cement and Concrete Technology in Africa” - ACCTA 2013, which took place in Johannesburg from 28 to 30 January 2013. It was the first international conference staged by the cement and concrete industry in Africa and was organised by the SPIN Project (Spearhead Network for Innovative, Clean and Safe Cement and Concrete Technologies), a cooperation project between leading European and African research institutes in the field of materials science. More than 160 attendees from 39 countries seized the opportunity of an international exchange with others.

The majority of the papers for the ACCTA conference were contributed by South Africa and Germany, who reported about German-South African cooperation in the course of a special session as part of the Year of Science staged by these two countries. The intention here was to give German and South African scientists, both old and young, an opportunity to describe and discuss the progress of the research underway at their universities. The objective was not merely to strengthen existing cooperation between research institutes in South Africa and Germany but to also create incentives for key areas of joint research in future. Special topics of interest at the conference included 'green', sustainable and energy-efficient construction techniques, approaches for solving problems with infrastructure and house-building, as well as the use of local resources for innovative building methods.

One particular highlight of the event was the award of the prizes for the best German and the best South African conference paper. The prize for the best German contribution was an opportunity to spend six months as a researcher at the University of Witwatersrand, while the prize for the best South African paper was a six-month period at Germany's Federal Institute for Materials Research



and Testing (BAM). The plan here is to allow junior scientists to gather valuable experience working at a leading research institute.