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CSIR and Siemens partners to boost the South Africa's 4IR competitiveness

South Africa's pursuit of being a key player in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) received a massive boost as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Siemens South Africa entered into a partnership to empower the country's economy and citizens with digital skills.

On 3 February 2021, the two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to foster technical vocational education and training (TVET) regarding critical technical and digital skills to contribute to the employability of the local workforce and enhancement of the quality of job profiles.

Through this partnership, Siemens will also be part of the South Africa Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR-SA) and will assist in positioning the C4IR-SA as a thought leader in innovative digital technologies. The C4IR-SA, hosted at the CSIR, aims to mobilise public-private partnerships to co-create enabling governance frameworks to optimally harness the potential of 4IR technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain and big data for societal advancement.

The cooperation will also focus on piloting digital industry solutions in key sectors such as food and beverage, water, cyber security and manufacturing. Piloting solutions for smart and sustainable cities that are geared toward better and more equitable livelihoods for all South Africans.

Speaking at the signing event, CSIR CEO Dr Thulani Dlamini said the partnership with Siemens forms part of the CSIR strategy which aims to foster partnerships with the private and public sectors to respond to the needs of industry in order to improve the lives of South Africans.

"We are very pleased to join hands with Siemens in this huge and compelling task of ensuring that our country does not miss out on the gains of the 4IR. The CSIR strategy requires us to work very closely with the private sector to address the needs of industry and society, and to use science and technology to fast track digital skills of the future. To achieve this, the organisation is leveraging emerging technologies, especially those rooted in the 4IR, as well as its current capabilities and those of its partners," said Dr Dlamini.

As South Africa strives to rebound from the devastating impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the 4IR provides an unparalleled opportunity for re-igniting economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability.

Siemens Southern and Eastern Africa CEO, Sabine Dall’Omo said the accelerated digitalisation caused by the coronavirus pandemic requires companies and society to respond faster and more efficiently to changing market demands and in times of crises. “Siemens is proud to partner with the CSIR with this initiative and is ready to deliver on the fourth industrial revolution roadmap. Our goal as a company is to make sure that while we focus on continuously adapting, we’re also contributing to uplifting and building a sustainable economy,” said Dall’Omo.

To align with the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) network of centers, Siemens has therefore developed a comprehensive South Africa 4IR roadmap, which will empower the country to seize the opportunities of digitalisation and especially Industry 4.0 solutions while upskilling the South African workforce and creating new high-quality jobs.

Dr Dlamini said the 4IR has the potential to create high-quality employment opportunities across South African industries if South Africans are strategically skilled in future-oriented jobs. “Our partnership with Siemens will foster vocational education and training on critical technical and digital skills.”

“The business environment is getting more entrenched in the constant technological evolution and the industrial sector has been gradually integrating the use of automation and connectivity in its everyday business practices. This involves the digital transformation of industry to ensure that industrial processes become more adaptable, flexible and efficient and allows businesses to meet customer’s needs in the most reliable way,” ends Dall’Omo.

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Enquiries:

Jennifer Naidoo
Communications Lead - Digital Industries
Siemens Proprietary Limited
Mobile: 083 638-6344
Email: jennifer.naidoo@siemens.com

AND

David Mandaha, CSIR Media Relations Manager
Tel: 012 841 3654
Mobile: 072 126 8910
E-mail: dmandaha@csir.co.za



About Siemens:

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability, and internationality for more than 170 years. Active around the world, the company focuses on intelligent infrastructure for buildings and distributed energy systems and on automation and digitalization in the process and manufacturing industries. Siemens brings together the digital and physical worlds to benefit customers and society. Through Mobility, a leading supplier of intelligent mobility solutions for rail and road transport, Siemens is helping to shape the world market for passenger and freight services. Via its majority stake in the publicly listed company Siemens Healthineers, Siemens is also a world-leading supplier of medical technology and digital health services. In addition, Siemens holds a minority stake in Siemens Energy, a global leader in the transmission and generation of electrical power that has been listed on the stock exchange since September 28, 2020.

In fiscal 2020, which ended on September 30, 2020, the Siemens Group generated revenue of €57.1 billion and net income of €4.2 billion. As of September 30, 2020, the company had around 293,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.

About the CSIR:

The CSIR is one of the leading scientific and technology research, development and implementation organisations in Africa. Constituted by an Act of Parliament in 1945 as a science council, the CSIR undertakes directed and multidisciplinary research, technological innovation, as well as industrial and scientific development to improve the quality of life of all South Africans. For more information, visit www.csir.co.za

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