

## ■ DEVELOPMENT

# Indaba to focus on meeting Africa's demand for energy

AFRICA'S rising demand for energy and how to meet it will be the focus of discussions at a regional conference in Johannesburg next month, organisers of the conference said yesterday.

Projections published by the United Nations Population Division have shown that Africa's population has grown by 30 million people in the past year and annual increases are expected to exceed 42 million by 2050.

"The vast increase in the number of people in Africa, along with increased standards of living, puts significant pressure on the demand for affordable energy," organisers of the Africa Energy Indaba said.

The Indaba organisers said there had been significant growth in the African economy over the past few decades, with per capita energy consumption growing faster than that of any other continent, largely due to increased infrastructure, investment and political stability.

The continent's population was characterised by young people and a growing labour force and was expected to have the world's largest working-age population by 2034.

"A progressive economy requires substantial energy for increased scale of manufacturing, provision of services and transport," the Indaba organisers said.

"Energy remains an essential input to stimulate and ensure uninhibited economic development, driving economic productivity and industrial growth. In fact, energy remains fundamental to the functioning of any modern-day economy," they said.

The organisers said African economies were set to profit from rapidly advancing technological devices, and the use of these electronic gadgets placed further demand on the energy equation.

"African energy ministers and large energy company chief executives will be discussing and unpacking what the future game-changers for the Africa energy sector will be and how to meet the escalating demand for energy," they said of next month's meeting. | African News Agency (ANA)