



## AFRICAN REFINERS BODY RENEWS PLEDGE TO SUPPLY CLEAN FUELS

The 12-year-old **African Refiners and Distributors Association (ARA)**, that held its annual conference in Cape Town this week, has reaffirmed its objective to produce and supply the continent with clean gasoline and diesel in line with the AFRI-4 low sulphur levels specifications proposed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The need for strong independent regulation to create investor confidence was emphasised by several speakers. The call was aimed at the many investors and financial institutions that attended among the more than 500 delegates. The ARA encouraged importing nations to act in 2017 and refiners by 2020.

The downstream oil body, which was previously called the African Refiners Association, has, since last year, extended its membership to include the complete downstream sector of the African oil industry.

Oil refiners, suppliers, transporters, marketers, regulators and technology companies attended the three-day meeting, themed *Achieving Clean Fuels in Africa*. Delegates heard a variety of high level speakers addressing the topic from all angles. Particularly notable was the businesslike approach in the presentations of the continent's highly skilled young executives.

Many participants mentioned the recent media criticism of poor air quality in African cities but also acknowledged that it had added momentum to the campaign started by ARA, in conjunction with UNEP, in 2007.

A speaker from the Californian NGO, ICCT, presented the 2016 Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) global study addressing the need for low sulphur fuels to tackle the air pollution problem, and many other speakers referred to the World Bank/ARA refinery and health study commissioned in 2009 that came to similar conclusions. The importance of regional harmonisation of specifications was discussed as well as Members' current work with regional organisations such as ECOWAS and SADC.

During the conference the ARA released its official "*Policy on Product Specifications*", of which copies are available in English and French on request.

The ARA president Ibrahim Talba Malla, Chief Executive of the Cameroon refinery, applauded the quality of the debate and the commitment from all sectors to supply clean fuels and help improve African air quality. He commented. *"I was very pleased to see that this meeting was all about action and results. We have pressed hard on the accelerator and we expect ARA members to come back to Cape Town next year with reports of real change in their home countries and regions"*

*The ARA was formed in 2006 to provide a pan-African voice for the African oil refining and distribution industry. The ARA annual conference is the premier meeting place for downstream oil in Africa. For further details see [www.afrra.org](http://www.afrra.org) or contact the ARA on [info@afrra.org](mailto:info@afrra.org)*