

# City's convention centre beats stiff competition to coveted award



**HONOURED:** Julie-May Ellingson, chief executive of the Cape Town International Convention Centre. *Picture: IAN LANDSBERG*

## Staff Writer

THE Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) has scooped first place in the coveted Top500 ratings, under the Companies, Exhibition and Conference Facilities category.

The CTICC beat competitors including the Sandton ICC, Durban ICC and Thebe Rheed in Sandton.

The Top500 ratings have been developed in conjunction with UCT's policy development research unit.

To merit a Top500 rating, companies must excel in three disciplines: policy and accreditation, financial performance, and empowerment.

CTICC chief executive Julie-May Ellingson said the centre was honoured to have received the accolade in recognition of its efforts during the 2014/15 financial year, which yielded the best financial, economic and social sustainability results in its 12-year history.

She said despite the recent straightened economic outlook,

the CTICC created and sustained more than 91 000 direct and indirect jobs since its inception.

In the past financial year the centre contributed R3.4 billion to the GDP and R3.1bn to regional GGP, as well as R1.72bn to indirect household income.

About R263 million, or 86 percent, of the CTICC's total procurement was from BEE companies, 28 percent from women-owned companies, 67 percent with SMMEs

and 90 percent of all procurement from locally based firms, said Ellingson.

"The CTICC's financial performance over the past 12 years, combined with its proven economic and social sustainability achievements, ongoing empowerment initiatives and internationally recognised management certification, are criteria used by the University of Cape Town uses to select and measure performance in their awarding of the Top500 company status.

"The criteria are in line with the CTICC's triple bottom-line reporting and we are absolutely honoured to be awarded the top position for the Exhibition and Conference Facilities category."

The CTICC's existing facility's east section will also be significantly expanded in an R832 million project.

Ellingson said the expansion will be the catalyst for its continuous contribution to skills development in the city, province and country, making

it an African trade and investment destination of choice.

This is especially important in the light of the increased investment into the African continent, positioning it as "next big thing" in business, she said.

Ellingson said the CTICC recognised that economic sustainability was only possible through a willingness to continually invest back into a product offering and infrastructure, and this is the reason for the large expansion project.