

Financial heavyweights to attend solar conference

Solarplaza has managed to gather an impressive group of financial expert heavyweights who will attend the 3rd annual The Solar Future South Africa conference. Combined, these veterans represent decades of experience within the financial side of the renewable energy world. The conference will be held at the Hilton Sandton Hotel in Johannesburg on 11 and 12 February.



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Flying in from New York, managing director of the Deutsche Bank, Vishal Shah will be joining 'The Solar Future: South Africa' to give a keynote on the 'Second Solar Gold Rush'. The second rush will be driven by three elements: ongoing low system prices, more robust financing, and the looming absence of subsidies.

Deep understanding of industry

Shah is widely known to be one of today's most experienced and insightful solar analysts, boasting a deep understanding of the technology and industry. With a history at Lehman Brothers and a long career at Barclays behind him, he has built up an incomparable understanding of the financial workings of the solar industry.

He will be joined by Jonathan Berman, managing director of Fieldstone Africa, the region's leading investment banking advisor. Berman shares a similar background with Shah, having climbed the ranks at Barclays, eventually leading its Merchant Banking division before moving on to become managing director of Deutsche Bank's South African branch.

Standard Bank will also be represented at the event by Bhavik Vallabhjee. As investment banking senior, Vallabhjee focuses on energy, both traditional and renewable sources. With extensive experience in emerging markets in Africa and the Middle East, Vallabhjee has extensive knowledge of growing renewable energy markets such as South Africa.

Attracting foreign capital

Furthermore, experienced project developer Francois Viljoen from Cresco Project Finance, will cover the equity side of the agenda, and OPIC's Peter Ballinger will address the topic of opportunities for attracting foreign capital and finance.

The Solar Future South Africa provides the perfect opportunity to meet with and learn from an unparalleled panel of experts about the biggest challenge facing South Africa's current solar developments, namely financing. Their insights will be complemented by perspectives from leading project developers, tax and law experts and other solar visionaries, providing participants with a wide-ranging and comprehensive overview of the current status and future potential of the South African solar market.

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