

# CSIR's 60th anniversary: renewed focus on research and innovation

by Dr. Sibusiso Sibisi, CSIR President and CEO

**We celebrate the 60th anniversary of South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) on 5 October 2005, and are proud to announce that we are launching a reshaped and revitalised CSIR to respond with agility and resilience to changing environments, unpredictable expectations and emerging opportunities. Building on the solid foundation of the past 60 years, the CSIR is entering an era of regeneration in science and technology (S&T) to create a national research and innovation icon that will make a visible difference in our country. Key factors for socio-economic success in a country are a strong national S&T base, notably highly skilled people, and an edge in research and innovation.**

The CSIR started with a major repositioning process in 2004 to ensure that the organisation delivers on its dual-focused mandate - to foster industrial and scientific development and to contribute to the improved quality of life of the people of South Africa.

The aim of the reconfiguration has been to strengthen our S&T base; build and

internationally and need to be established for local competitiveness.

The R&D core: operating units that draw together skills from research fields and scientific disciplines to address national S&T needs. The new CSIR operating units are:

- Biosciences;
  - The built environment;
  - Defence, peace, safety and security;
  - Materials science and manufacturing; and
  - Natural resources and the environment.
- National research centres: facilities of strategic importance for African science over at least the next two decades. These currently include the:

- Meraka Institute (African Advanced Institute for Information and Communications Technology);
- National Laser Centre;
- National Metrology Laboratory; and
- Satellite Applications Centre.

The CSIR Knowledge Services group will manage routine specialised and differentiated services. Since a different operating culture is required to sustain these commercially-driven operations, the Knowledge Services group will be managed separately within the CSIR.

Contact Hilda van Rooyen, CSIR Communications, Tel (012) 841-3638, [hvrooyen@csir.co.za](mailto:hvrooyen@csir.co.za) ❖



Exec Sibusiso Sibisi.

transform our human capital; and ensure that we address national challenges and development objectives. The renewed CSIR will perform relevant, directed research and transfer the knowledge that is generated through technology and skilled people.

Research and development (R&D), as well as R&D outcomes as integral parts of the research and innovation value chain, remain the focus of the CSIR. Knowledge generation and application reside at the core of the CSIR, with three groupings dedicated to this:

Emerging research areas: new areas of science that the CSIR wishes to pursue. Such areas could be unique to local circumstances or be successful