Official opening of the Rare Earth Elements (REE) plant

For immediate release, Tuesday, 09 June 2015

The Rare Earths Elements (REE) pilot plant, which will aid in the process development for the REE refining and separation from various Southern African and international organisations will be unveiled at Mintek on Friday, 12 June 2015.

Rare earth elements (REE) are important to emerging green technologies such as, wind power turbines and energy efficient compact fluorescent lighting.

South Africa possess large resources of REE and has the required expertise to beneficiate them. The country is very well placed to establish a sophisticated domestic REE industry to exploit the supply concerns of the developed world.

Although designed specifically for REE processing, the versatility of the pilot plant also makes it suitable for any other solvent extraction based recovery or purification application. However, many of the REE deposits in South Africa are not of the size to warrant the establishment of independent processing facilities.

In order to provide a viable processing option with acceptable economies of scale, Mintek has developed the South African Centralized Refinery (SACREF) which is a concept of a centralised processing facility for potential producers in Southern Africa.

This would provide South Africa with an opportunity to lead in the production of downstream value-added manufactured REE products and clean environmental technologies.

Such a manufacturing capacity could create a large number of skilled “green” jobs and is one of the best opportunities in the minerals sector to support the vision of transforming South Africa from a resource to a knowledge based economy.

It is believed that this facility may be unique in the world and is certain to help position Mintek as one of the leaders in the development of REE separation technology worldwide.

Media are invited as follows:

Event: Official opening of the REE Pilot Plant

Venue: Mintek G4 conference room, 200 Malibongwe Drive, Randburg, 2125

Time: 9h00-13h30
Media Contact:

Dr Jessie Pillay

011 709 4178

Jessiep@mintek.co.za