

# WATCH: Khalid Abdulla is business leader of the year at the AABLA

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African Equity Empowerment Investments Limited's (AEEI) group chief executive officer Khalid Abdulla, was named the Business Leader of the Year – Southern Africa 2017. Image supplied.

JOHANNESBURG - African Equity Empowerment Investments Limited's (AEEI) group chief executive officer Khalid Abdulla, was named the Business Leader of the Year – Southern Africa 2017 at the 7th All Africa Business Leaders Awards (AABLA) in partnership with CNBC Africa ceremony held in Johannesburg earlier this evening.

The AABLA, in Partnership with CNBC Africa, distinguishes leaders who have contributed and shaped the economies in Africa and are visionaries behind today's outstanding businesses, honouring business excellence across the African continent.

The AABLA also recognises bold leaders and change-makers of the East, West and Southern Africa and hosts three regional events in South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria, before moving on to the AABLA Finale, which is hosted in South Africa.

After a rigorous judging process and scrutinising several applications, the panel and awards secretariat selected Khalid Abdulla, Group chief executive officer of AEEI as the finalist in the category of Business Leader of the Year Award in the Southern Africa region. This comes in recognition of Abdulla's on-going commitment and accomplishments.



Abdulla said, “I am truly humbled, yet delighted to have been recognised for my efforts which is a testament to my (and my team’s) commitment to broad-based economic empowerment, enterprise development and delivering strong financial performance with a holistic and sustainable business model. Being named a finalist is an achievement of high honour and indicates my willingness to serve and contribute to the community, making me one of the leaders in changing social and business landscape. However, it would be a disservice of me not to mention and congratulate my fellow finalists, Gerrie Fourie, CEO of

Capitec Bank Holdings and Jabulane Mabuza, Chairman of Telkom SA. We are all winners, driving change in Africa for Africa.”

The spokesperson for the AABLA said, “We received a high volume of qualifying entries, making the final selection extremely challenging.” The secret to the AABLA success is its stringent judging process. The Judges select finalists from a qualified short-list who will go on to the prestigious awards ceremonies hosted in East, West and Southern Africa, where they will have an opportunity to take the coveted title in their respective category.

When asked what a good business leader is Abdulla replied, “The sports field is where I learned the power of a people-centric approach and the benefits of strong leadership. A hands-on, project management approach leading by example is the manner in which I approach leadership. Teamwork in business is what will define a good or great company and determine the long-term economic sustainability of our country too.”

**Watch the moment Khalid Abdulla was named the business leader of the year at the 7th All Africa Business Leaders Awards:**

Winners of these awards exemplify the best in African Leadership. They epitomize the core values of a successful leader – strength, innovation, ingenuity, knowledge, and foresight – values that are imperative to carving out powerful businesses in a Pan-African and Global economy. Abdulla is the recent recipient of the SA’s Future Maker of the Year 2017: Driver for Change; the Top most empowered business leader of the year 2017 by the Oliver Empowerment Awards; and also one of the best CEO’s in the country and ranked amongst the 10 best executives in 2015 by the Financial Mail. Abdulla was also the honoured as a recipient of the prestigious Black Business Executive Circle (BBEC) / Absa Bank Kaelo Award in 2010.

**[Also read: Khalid Abdulla: AEEI CEO awarded the Driver For Change Award](#)**

Abdulla continued, “Despite all the negative news in the country at the moment, including the recent ratings downgrade, there is still much to be positive about in Southern Africa. As business and governmental leaders, we need to keep hope alive for our African citizens to build the nation on a sustainable basis towards 2030 and beyond.”

Abdulla has over the years, set his sights on achieving more for the good of the Group, the communities in which AEEI operates as well as in Africa. Previous winners in this category include Adrian Gore, CEO of South Africa’s Discovery, Dr. Johan van Zyl, Group chief executive of Sanlam and Edward Kieswetter, CEO of Alexander Forbes and Sisa Ngebulana, CEO of Billion Group.



**Under the leadership of Khalid Abdulla, AEEI received the following awards:**

- First overall in the Empowerdex Top 100 Empowered Companies Award of 2016
- First overall in the Empowerdex Top 100 Empowered Management Award of 2016;
- A top 10 listed Company in the Financial Mail's Top 100 JSE Companies for financial performance in 2015 and 2016;
- Integrating Reporting Assurance Services (IRAS) rated AEEI as 1st in its Sector: 'Financial Services – Other' for the Highest Sustainability Data Transparency Index (SDTI) for reporting and governance; and
- AEEI was also awarded 3rd place overall by IRAS, out of a total 311 JSE Listed companies.

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