

Southern Sudan - an untapped organic supermarket

By [Dries Badenhorst](#)

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Southern Sudan was described as the biggest organic supermarket on earth, by a delegate from the region who attended the Intra-Africa Business Breakfast at the Hilton Hotel on 26 February, 2009. This breakfast series is a joint initiative between Upbeat Marketing and the Department of Trade and Industry.



SA Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Sue van der Merwe

Attendees were provided with an overview of what the involvement of the South African Department of Trade and Industry entails in Sudan, the current political layout in Southern Sudan, as well as the investment climate, and the investment and trade opportunities that are available in the region.

The high-powered breakfast, was attended by South African Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Sue van der Merwe; South African Ambassador to Sudan, Dr Manelisi Genge; Dr Luka Biong Deng, Minister of Presidential Affairs: GOSS and chairperson of the Investment Authority of Southern Sudan; Dr B. M. Benjamin, Minister of Regional Co-operation: GOSS; and Anthony Lino Makana, Minister of Trade and Industry: GOSS.

Van der Merwe, stated that their presence symbolised their commitment to developing a mutually beneficial relationship between South Africa and Southern Sudan. She referred to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that was signed in January 2005 and said that this agreement did not only bring a new era of hope, peace and stability - but also an enormous task of reconstruction in developing a region that has suffered from underdevelopment in all walks of life, including infrastructure and human resources.

This task, although a heavy responsibility on the South Sudanese government, brings great opportunities of investment and trade for all African companies. Makana highlighted some of these opportunities in his presentation identifying Southern Sudan's strategic location in terms of its natural resources base being largely untapped.

Investment prospects presented by Makana:

1. Agricultural sector: Farming in

- Oil seeds
- Natural fibres e.g. cotton
- High-demand cash crops like tobacco, coffee, tea, and vanilla
- Medical plants
- Natural gum/resins e.g. Gum Africa
- Floriculture and Horticulture
- Fisheries (Capture and aquaculture and other forms of fish farming)

2. Energy sector

- Hydro-electric power generation, transmission and distribution
- Oil extraction and refinery
- Processing of carbon-rich oil-wastes
- Manufacture of plastics, bitumen, tyres from oil-wastes

3. Mining sector

- Metallic and non-metallic mining
- Quarrying for road construction murrum
- Quarrying for construction stone aggregate and alluvial sand

4. Health sector

- Private health centres
- Hospital waste management
- Private laboratories and diagnostic facilities
- Hospital feeding schemes
- Linen cleaning and sanitation
- Private ambulance services
- Hospital logistics support

5. Education sector

- Vocational training
- Teacher training colleges
- Private universities
- Early childhood training
- Provision of support materials e.g. books and stationery
- Printing works
- School furniture manufacturer
- Construction of school buildings
- Computer training facilities
- Private schools to provide education to the majority of the current 1.7 million students
- School canteens
- Sports and recreational activities
- Botanical and zoological gardens
- School buses/transport
- School feeding programmes

6. Animal resources

- Meat and meat packing industry
- Milk and milk processing industry
- Veterinary services
- Animal productivity research facilities
- Horns, hooves and skin processing industry
- Leather processing industry

7. Tourism and hospitality industry

- Hotel services and management
- Logistics and conveyance
- Travel agency and tour operation
- Traditional art and handicrafts
- Development of tourist sites and products

Said Van der Merwe: "As Africans, we are determined to tackle the challenges that confront our continent. In doing this, we are guided by a common vision of an African Continent which is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united and which contributes to a world that is just and equitable. A common vision of the need to forge partnerships between and among governments and all segments of civil society, including the business community. As Africans we share a common destiny and that none of us can prosper in peace if any African country is weighed down by poverty and underdevelopment. This means that we cannot be exclusively concerned with our own national interests, but we need to collectively tackle challenges facing us at regional and continental levels. South Africans today enjoy freedom and democracy as a result of the collective support offered by Africans in our continent and the international community to free South Africa from apartheid. The demise of apartheid has given rise to a non-racial, non-sexiest, democratic South Africa.

"It is in the context of co-operation in support of the CPA that the governments of our two countries and all sectors of the South African civil society that this trade and investment seminar on Southern Sudan is arranged. This seminar provides us with an opportunity to forge the necessary partnerships in working towards the consolidation of peace in Southern Sudan through economic development and by so doing advance the implementation of the CPA. While development is being witnessed in the Sudan in general, Southern Sudan in particular requires massive investment that would contribute to realising its potential. The stimulating of the economic potential of a peaceful Sudan would not only contribute to the development of the Horn of Africa region, but also to the regeneration of the African continent."

For more information on trade and investment opportunities with Southern Sudan please contact Lawrence Moshwane or Nathalie Chinje from Upbeat Marketing on 011 233 5330/5470 or via email or .

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dries Badenhorst is General Manager: Continental Sales and Marketing at Bizcommunity.com. He has been with the company for six years. His initial responsibility was to build a revenue model and sales team for the South African portal. Having successfully done this, he now has the task of doing more or less the same for the rest of the continent. Dries has a passion for connecting and enabling businesses and individuals with each other, with the purpose of stimulating more and better business. Dries can be mailed on bizafrica@bizcommunity.com