

US revokes economic sanctions against Sudan: What it means for hospitality businesses

By  Josephine Wawira

18 Oct 2017

News of the revocation of economic sanctions against Sudan by the United States government is music to the ears of businesses and investors interested in Africa's third largest country after two decades of severe restrictions.



Image by Eviled

The sanctions relief comes as a go-ahead to tapping key trade and investment opportunities in Sudan, across industries such as finance, agriculture, mining and tourism. Companies such as Jumia Travel are now planning to revive business with hotel partners in the country.

“Like any other business, the sanctions had largely affected our business in the Sudan, perhaps even feeling the pinch more as we are in the travel industry. With an already promising growth in tourism, we are happy to explore the massive business potential that lies in the sector,” says Cyrus Onyiego, Jumia Travel’s country manager Kenya.

Sudan on the road to recovery

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council’s (WTTC) report on [Travel and Tourism Global Economic Impact and Issues 2017](#), Sudan’s tourism sector has registered impressive growth in the past six years, with an annual average growth of 49.8% in visitor exports. This besides directly supporting 1.8% of total employment (193,000 jobs) in 2016, and an expected increase of the same by 5.7% in 2017.

Onyiego further notes that reviving Sudan-bound bookings on the online platform will provide increased visibility of the properties, resulting in added growth in revenues. “We believe by so doing it will go a long way in contributing to the employment rate in Sudan, as well as to the growth of the country’s economy which is on its road to recovery.”

Sudan’s sanctions date back to the 1990’s after the country was accused of hosting Osama Bin Laden, sympathising with terrorists as well as supporting terrorist activities. The issuing of an executive order by Obama to lift the bans on a probational case during his last days in office paved the path to restoration which has finally culminated in the clearance.

With a naturally endowed ecosystem, defined culture and heritage, and presently spotting a list of five tentative World Heritage Sites, Sudan has an abundance of tourist attractions and unadulterated experiences which if tapped will be an invaluable source of revenue to the country.

ABOUT JOSEPHINE WAWIRA

Josephine Wawira is a consultant in communication and public relations with over six years of progressive writing and broadcast experience. She is currently a writer for Africa’s online hotel booking portal, Jumia Travel, focusing in the areas of travel, tourism, and hospitality as it relates to Africa.

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