

German group focuses on Southern African expansion

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Germany-based SMS Group sees great potential to explore further markets in Southern Africa through both its South African subsidiaries, SMS Siemag South Africa (SA) and Metix.

“Through Metix’s focus on new projects and SMS Siemag SA’s focus on supporting our existing clients, we see a successful strategy to further expand our already successful business in the African copper belt,” the group states, adding that it is extending its involvement in the African economy.

SMS Siemag SA and Metix are undertaking a number of projects, studies and modernisations in Southern Africa.

“We are working on big projects in Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa.

“These projects, studies and modernisations are related to smelting plants for ferroalloy and copper production, sinter plants for ferrochrome production, as well as steel plants,” says SMS Siemag SA MD **Pieter Bezuidenhout**.

He adds that, since SMS Group’s acquisition of the majority stake in Metix in 2011, Metix’s product portfolio has been expanded to also include solutions for silicon metals, non-ferrous metals, precious metals,

calcium carbide and titanium dioxide slag applications.

Metix has also gained access to new technology, as well as equipment processes related to direct current furnaces, rectangular furnaces, energy recovery systems and gas cleaning solutions.

“The SMS Siemag submerged-arc furnaces centre of technology, in Germany, is transferring its know-how of large-scale rectangular furnaces and direct current technology for ferrochrome smelters to Metix.

“This technology is applied in the platinum and copper industries, in particular,” the group notes.

Metix MD **Reinier Meyjes** points out that the subsidiary is planning to expand its market

share in the platinum industry and in the energy recovery systems sector.

“The association between the two subsidiaries enables Metix to also offer technology to produce electric power from the gases generated by smelters, thereby reducing the constraints currently facing the electric power generation sector in South Africa,” states SMS Group.

“Our competence and solutions in energy recovery systems has attracted a lot of attention, owing to the energy shortage and rising electricity costs in South Africa,” says Meyjes.

He adds that power saving solutions, developed by SMS Group, are also suitable and profitable for the local market and are used in the iron and steel production lines.

Meanwhile, Bezuidenhout states that the German industry has a significant interest in further developing and exceeding its market presence in South Africa.

Inflation: the system whereby, if you save long enough to buy something, you can't afford it.