

The Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), through the Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC), publishes every year a National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers (NTE Report) setting out an inventory of the most significant foreign barriers affecting U.S. exports of goods and services in the main markets abroad. The NTE Report, which is prepared on the basis of input mainly provided by US companies engaged in international trade in response to a notice published in the Federal Register, gives an overview of the main trade barriers in key destination markets of US exports.

The [latest NTE report](#) includes trade profiles and a description of main barriers, trade bans and restrictions encountered by US companies in many African countries such as Algeria, Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa and Tunisia.

What emerges from the report is that transparency of regulation, long customs clearing procedures, as well as excessive formalities and complex import licensing regimes, with poor documentation of technical regulations, standards, testing, and certification procedures for imports, are a major concern and a significant barrier to access to African markets.

In Kenya, U.S. companies complain about the inconsistent application of classification and valuation decisions, as well as unnecessary transit inspections. A further complaint is that Kenya's single window does not operate as intended, and that pre-arrival processing of electronic documents is ineffective.

In Ethiopia, the finger is pointed against the strict foreign currency control regime administered by the Ethiopian Central Bank (National Bank of Ethiopia - NBE) and problems of convertibility of the local currency (the Ethiopian birr) that hamper the ability of all manufacturers - especially small-size enterprises - to pay foreign suppliers of imported goods, with the impossibility for foreign investors to repatriate profits.