

PAN AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF RECYCLING AND SECONDHAND TEXTILES (PARST)



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3.0 IMPORT AND EXPORT REGULATION POLICY FOR SECONDHAND TEXTILES

3.1 Introduction

The Pan African Association of Recycling and Secondhand Textiles (PARST) is dedicated to fostering a sustainable and ethical secondhand textile industry across Africa. This policy outlines regulations governing the cross-border trade of used textiles, aiming to prevent the influx of low- quality clothing and ensure that such imports contribute positively to local economies.

3.2 Objectives

- **Quality Control:** Establish stringent standards to prevent the importation of substandard and non-reusable textiles.
- **Economic Enhancement:** Promote the secondhand textile trade as a means to bolster local economies without undermining domestic textile industries.
- **Environmental Protection:** Reduce the environmental impact associated with textile waste by ensuring responsible import and export practices.

3.3 Quality Standards for Importation

To maintain the integrity of the secondhand textile market, the following quality standards are mandated:

- **Wearable Condition:** All imported textiles must be free from significant damage, stains, or excessive wear, ensuring they are suitable for immediate use or resale.
- **Hygiene Compliance:** Textiles should be thoroughly cleaned and treated to meet health and safety regulations, accompanied by appropriate fumigation or sanitation certificates.
- **Material Integrity:** Items must retain their original functionality, with all components such as zippers, buttons, and fastenings intact and operational.

3.4 Importation Regulations

To regulate the import of secondhand textiles effectively:

- **Licensing Requirements:** Importers must obtain licenses demonstrating their capability to adhere to established quality and safety standards.
- **Documentation:** Each shipment should include detailed manifests and certificates verifying the quality and hygiene of the textiles.
- **Inspection Protocols:** Regular inspections at entry points will be conducted to ensure compliance with importation standards.
- **Prohibited Imports:** Ban the importation of textiles that do not meet quality standards or are deemed hazardous, aligning with practices in regions like the European Union, which considers applying the Basel Convention to used clothes to ban exports of hazardous textile waste.

3.5 Exportation Guidelines

For the export of secondhand textiles:

- **Quality Assurance:** Ensure that exported textiles meet the receiving country's quality and safety standards to maintain international trade relations.
- **Environmental Responsibility:** Avoid exporting textiles that are unsuitable for use, preventing the transfer of waste to other nations.
- **Trade Compliance:** Adhere to international agreements and regulations governing the export of secondhand goods.

3.6 Measures Against Dumping

To combat the dumping of low-quality textiles:

- **Tariffs and Taxes:** Implement duties on imported secondhand textiles to discourage the influx of low-quality goods, similar to Kenya's imposition of a 35% tax or \$0.40/kg on worn textiles and used shoes.

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- **Import Quotas:** Establish limits on the volume of secondhand textiles imported to control market saturation and protect local industries.
- **Strict Penalties:** Enforce fines and sanctions against entities found guilty of importing substandard or prohibited textiles.

3.7 Support for Local Industries

To ensure that the secondhand textile trade benefits local economies:

- **Capacity Building:** Invest in local textile manufacturing and upcycling initiatives to create jobs and reduce dependency on imports.
- **Market Development:** Encourage the sale of high-quality secondhand textiles that complement, rather than compete with, locally produced garments.
- **Public Awareness:** Educate consumers on the value of supporting local textile industries and the importance of purchasing quality secondhand goods.

3.8 Environmental Considerations

To minimize environmental impact:

- **Waste Management:** Develop systems for the proper disposal or recycling of textiles that are unsuitable for use, preventing environmental degradation.
- **Sustainable Practices:** Promote the import and export of textiles made from eco-friendly materials and those processed using environmentally responsible methods.

3.9 Monitoring and Enforcement

To ensure compliance with this policy:

- **Regular Audits:** Conduct periodic reviews of importers and exporters to verify adherence to established regulations.
- **Collaboration with Authorities:** Work closely with customs officials and other relevant agencies to monitor and control the flow of secondhand textiles across borders.
- **Reporting Mechanisms:** Establish channels for reporting violations of import and export regulations, ensuring timely investigation and action.

3.10 Conclusion

The Import and Export Regulation Policy for Secondhand Textiles by PARST aims to create a balanced and ethical framework for cross-border textile trade. By enforcing quality standards, supporting local industries, and implementing environmental safeguards, this policy seeks to ensure that the secondhand textile market contributes positively to Africa's economic and social development.