

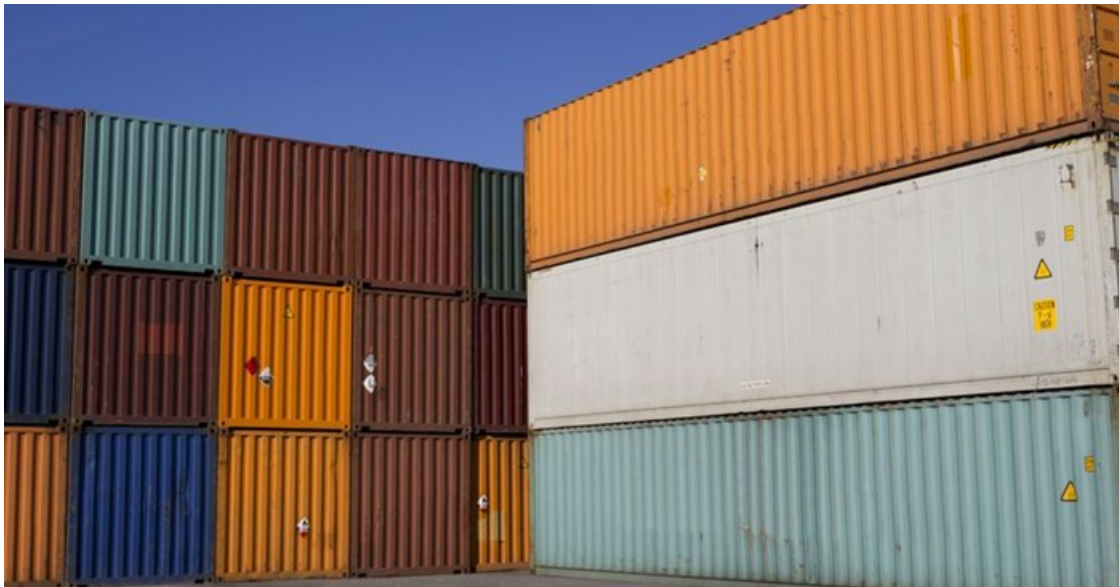
Nigeria begins enforcement of 'palletisation of cargoes' January 2018

By [Kingsley Adeniyi](#)

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Days after the Comptroller-General of the Nigerian Customs Service, Hameed Ali, accused shipping companies of aiding importation of arms into the country, the federal government has directed all containerised cargoes coming into Nigeria to be on a pallet.

The advocacy for palletisation of cargoes, according to the government, would aid manual examination of consignment while it awaits the installation of functional scanners in both seaports and land border stations.



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Also, according to the federal government, it would help in forestalling further importation of illicit goods.

At a sensitisation workshop on revised import and export guidelines organised by the Ministry of Finance in Lagos, the Minister of Finance, Kemi Adeosun, directed all stakeholders directly involved in the export and import trade value chains to be acquainted with export and import guidelines to avoid sanction.

In her speech, Adeosun pointed out government's stance on compliance. She posited that any stakeholder found culpable violating the guidelines would be sanctioned.



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"Furthermore, in order to ensure quick clearance of import at the Nigerian ports and borders, the additional responsibilities assigned to the relevant government agencies would be carried out in a well-coordinated and collaborated manner, while the sanctions specified for non-compliance with the provisions of the guidelines would be strictly and impartially applied across the board."

The minister, who was represented by the Director of Home Finance, Olubunmi Siyanbola, reiterated government's resolve on cargo scanning machines. She added that "government is working relentlessly to quickly put in order the scanning system so as to eliminate manual examination of goods and the associated delays."

At least, 2,671 firearms illegally imported into the country were intercepted by the Nigerian Customs between January and September 2017; all the arms originated from Turkey.

Last week, Ali had lambasted shipping companies for aiding the importation of the firearms, accusing them of altering the cargo manifest for the arms and changing them, most times, to steel doors.



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The customs boss, in his visit to Lagos last week, hinted stakeholders that federal government was planning to enshrine pallet system into the shipment of all containerised cargoes. This, according to Ali, would ease examination and detection of illicit items.

Harping on Ali's position, the Minister of Finance reiterated that government is taking the implementation of palletisation of containerised goods very seriously.

"The plan was for this workshop to take place earlier than today to enable us allow a three-month grace period before full implementation of the guidelines, especially in recognition of the time lag that might be required for the commencement of full implementation of the government policy on mandatory palletisation of all containerised cargo imported into Nigeria."

The minister stated that full implementation of all import and export guidelines, particularly, pallet system would take effect in 2018.

"I wish to announce that the export and import guidelines will be fully implemented with effect from 1/1/2018.

However, goods already loaded for shipment to Nigeria prior to this date will not be affected by the palletisation policy.

"Let me also say that we have examined all concerns expressed by the trading public regarding the palletisation policy of the government. The list of cargoes of goods that may be exempted from palletisation, where it is absolutely necessary will be placed on the website of the Federal Ministry of Finance and Nigeria Customs service shortly."

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