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Africa

Africa Seeks Bigger US Trade Slice for AGOA to Make Sense
African countries may need more trade privileges with the US even as Washington reviews the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) meant to expand what the continent will export. At the end of the US-Africa summit in December, Washington pledged to renew AGOA, bringing clarity to uncertainties that had befallen exporters from countries such as Kenya. But now experts say the narrow view of AGOA should be expanded to allow them to export more goods and hence benefit more countries that can make a diversified list of goods. “AGOA has to be expanded in two ways; expanded in its product coverage and in terms of country coverage,” said Melaku Desta, Coordinator of the African Trade Policy Centre, UN Economic Commission for Africa. “AGOA also excludes processed products as Africa is allowed to export Iron and ore but not steel products. So, it has to be expanded in terms of product coverage. It also has to be expanded in terms of country coverage.” The US Congress first passed AGOA’s legislation in 2000. It expires in 2025, having been extended four times before. Initially, it was meant to last until 2007 but was amended to clarify on preferential treatment of African goods and other standards required of goods.

Source: The EastAfrican