Immigration Regulatory Updates

JUNE 2026

In this June 2026 edition of the Moroom Africa Immigration Update, we track a month defined by expanding consular infrastructure and new compliance obligations for travellers, alongside a hardening of migration and labour policy in several major destination markets. Lagos features prominently this month, both as the site of a new Turkish visa office and as one of only 20 African cities retained as a U.S. visa processing hub. Elsewhere, South Africa's new traveller declaration and Kenya's Alien ID requirement add fresh compliance steps for travellers and residents, while Kuwait, Japan, and Namibia have all tightened access for foreign nationals. On a brighter note, Grenada has opened visa-free entry to Nigerian passport holders and Italy has gone fully digital for Schengen and national visa applications. We also cover the continuing fallout from anti-immigrant unrest in South Africa, including further deportations and the completion of Nigeria's evacuation exercise.

1. Embassy of Türkiye Opens New Visa Application Office in Lagos

The Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Abuja has announced the opening of a new SEFA visa application office in Lagos, becoming fully operational on 1 June 2026. The office is located at Suite F1.A, 1st Floor, Cardinal Place, Plot 115 Ayo Babatunde Crescent, Oniru, Lekki, Lagos.

Previously, many applicants resident in Lagos and neighbouring states had to travel to Abuja or other designated centres to complete parts of their Turkish visa application. The new Lagos office removes that requirement, reducing both the cost and the stress associated with the process for leisure, business, and education travellers headed to Türkiye.

Business relevance: Companies with staff travelling to Türkiye for business or training should note the new Lagos-based option, which is expected to shorten processing timelines for applicants based in southern Nigeria.

2. Lagos Retained Among 20 African Cities as U.S. Trims Visa Processing Hubs

The U.S. State Department is restructuring its consular network across Africa, reducing the number of embassies and consulates handling visa applications from nearly 50 to 20. Lagos has been retained as one of the 20 hubs, alongside cities including Abidjan, Accra, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Dakar, Johannesburg, Kampala, Kigali, Nairobi, and Yaoundé.

Under the new arrangement, applicants from countries without a designated hub will need to travel to an approved city for full visa processing, while non-hub missions will continue limited services focused on American citizens and emergency response. Officials describe the move as part of a broader push to tighten screening and use consular resources more efficiently.

Why this matters: The consolidation is likely to increase demand pressure on high-volume hubs such as Lagos, Johannesburg, and Nairobi, and to raise travel costs and processing times for applicants in non-hub countries. It also reinforces Lagos's position as a key diplomatic and mobility centre — a role reflected in the ongoing construction of a new U.S. consulate campus in Eko Atlantic City.

3. Grenada Grants Visa-Free Entry to Nigerian Passport Holders

The Consulate of Grenada in Nigeria has announced visa-free access for Nigerian passport holders as part of efforts to strengthen trade, tourism, and investment ties between the two countries. Grenada's Consul to Nigeria, Ambassador Abidemi Sonoiki, confirmed that Grenada has already approved free entry for Nigerians and is now awaiting reciprocal action from the Nigerian government.

The Consul highlighted investment opportunities for Nigerians in tourism, aviation, real estate, maritime services, education, agriculture, and financial technology, describing Grenada as a stable, investment-friendly destination.

4. Kuwait Restricts Domestic Worker Recruitment From Nigeria, Kenya, and 22 Other African Countries

Kuwait has introduced new restrictions on the recruitment of domestic workers, excluding applicants from 24 African countries and two Asian countries. The measure follows recommendations from Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, and Public Authority for Manpower, and is aimed at tightening administrative control over the recruitment process.

- Recruitment is now permitted only from a limited list of countries, including South Africa, Benin, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Vietnam, and Nepal.
- Recruitment from Senegal is permitted, but restricted to male workers only.
- Excluded countries include Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Togo, Malawi, Chad, Cameroon, Rwanda, the DRC, Angola, and several other major labour-sending nations.

The policy adds to a broader pattern of tightening entry conditions across Gulf labour markets, where nationality, skill category, and bilateral agreements increasingly determine access. Given the importance of remittances to several African economies, sending countries are likely to face growing pressure to renegotiate recruitment frameworks to preserve access for their workers.

5. Federal Government Completes Evacuation of 801 Nigerians From South Africa

The Nigerian Federal Government, working with Air Peace, has completed the evacuation of 801 Nigerian nationals from South Africa across three humanitarian flights, carried out amid renewed xenophobic tensions in parts of the country. The flights brought home 262 Nigerians on 11 June, 271 on 30 June, and 268 on 3 July.

The evacuation forms part of a voluntary repatriation programme for Nigerians affected by the unrest. Air Peace said the missions reflect its broader record of more than 16 humanitarian and evacuation operations across Africa and beyond, and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Nigerians in emergencies abroad.

6. South Africa Introduces Compulsory Traveller Declaration

From 1 July 2026, South Africa requires all travellers entering or leaving the country by air, road, sea, or rail to complete a new SARS Online Traveller Declaration. The declaration must be submitted within 24 hours before departure and includes:

- Passport or travel document details
- Travel itinerary
- Contact information
- Travelling companions
- Any currency or goods requiring declaration

Failure to complete the declaration may result in delays at customs, additional inspections, penalties, or other enforcement action. We encourage all travellers to and from South Africa to familiarise themselves with this requirement well in advance, and to confirm details with the South African High Commission or relevant authorities before departure.

7. Namibia Ends Visa-Free Entry for the US, UK, and Over 30 Other Countries

Namibia has ended visa-free entry for citizens of the United States, the United Kingdom, and more than 30 other countries, a policy shift that has been in effect since April of last year. Travellers from affected countries must now obtain a visa before entering Namibia.
Namibian authorities describe the change as a reciprocity measure, noting that many of the countries whose citizens previously enjoyed visa-free access to Namibia continue to require visas from Namibian passport holders.

Travellers from the affected countries should plan for visa applications ahead of any upcoming trips to Namibia.

8. Kenya Requires Alien ID for Foreign Nationals Staying More Than 90 Days

Kenya requires foreign nationals staying longer than 90 days to obtain an Alien ID card, officially known as the Foreign Nationals Certificate. Applicants must be at least 18 years old, hold a valid passport, have legal immigration status such as a work permit, student pass, or dependent pass, and intend to remain beyond the 90-day threshold.

- Annual application or renewal fee: KSh 5,000 (about $39)
- Penalty for non-compliance: KSh 10,000 (about $77)
- The card is used to access regulated services, including banking and SIM registration, and to demonstrate legal residency

According to Principal Secretary for Immigration and Citizen Services Julius Bitok, the Alien ID card is distinct from documents issued to refugees and does not confer citizenship or citizenship-related rights. Expatriates, students, foreign workers, investors, and dependents residing in Kenya beyond 90 days should ensure they register promptly to avoid penalties and service disruptions.

9. Ireland Deports 42 South Africans in Immigration Enforcement Operation

Ireland has deported 42 South African nationals found to be residing illegally in the country, in a chartered operation estimated to have cost around €735,000. The group — nine men, 18 women, and 15 children travelling as family units — was flown from Dublin to Johannesburg after receiving removal orders from the Garda National Immigration Bureau and not taking up voluntary return options.

This was Ireland's fourth charter deportation flight of 2026; the previous three flights removed 130 people, including 67 EU citizens deported on criminality-related grounds. Irish Justice Minister defended the enforcement action as necessary for a credible, rules-based immigration system.

The deportations come against a backdrop of rising anti-immigrant sentiment in South Africa, which has also prompted Nigeria's evacuation of its own nationals.

10. Italy Launches Fully Digital Schengen and National Visa System

As of 1 June 2026, Italy became the first large Schengen member state to move to a fully digital workflow for both short-stay Schengen (Type C) and long-stay national (Type D) visas, including applications for its digital nomad visa. Applicants can now submit documents online without an in-person appointment at the document-submission stage, although biometrics still require a consular visit.

France, Spain, and Germany have signalled similar full-digital rollouts between 2027 and 2028. For applicants comparing Italy's digital nomad visa against Spain, Portugal, or Greece, Italy's process friction has now dropped, though eligibility criteria remain unchanged — this is a procedural shift, not a relaxation of requirements. Applicants should verify current procedures with the Italian consular network for their country before submitting an application.

11. Japan to Raise Visa Fees for the First Time in 48 Years

Japan will raise visa fees for foreign nationals for the first time since 1978, effective for applications submitted on or after 1 July 2026. The single-entry visa fee rises from ¥3,000 to ¥15,000, and the multiple-entry fee rises from ¥6,000 to ¥30,000.

The increases follow a bill enacted last month allowing visa-related fees to rise by up to 30 times current levels. The statutory cap for residency status changes and stay extensions rises from ¥10,000 to ¥100,000, and the cap for permanent residency applications rises from ¥10,000 to ¥300,000, with actual fees to be set within these new limits by Cabinet order before the end of the next fiscal year (31 March 2027). Japan's government says the additional revenue will support processing for its growing foreign resident population — now a record 4.13 million — as well as Japanese-language programmes and measures against overstayers.

Conclusion

June 2026 illustrates two parallel currents in global mobility: expanding access and convenience in some corridors — a new Turkish visa office in Lagos, Grenada's visa-free offer to Nigerians, and Italy's digital visa system — set against tightening controls and new compliance burdens elsewhere, from South Africa's traveller declaration and Kenya's Alien ID requirement to Kuwait's labour restrictions, Japan's fee increases, Namibia's reciprocity measure, and the U.S. consolidation of its African visa hubs.

The continuing unrest in South Africa, and its consequences for Nigerian nationals and other foreign residents, remains a priority issue for regional mobility and should be monitored closely by organisations and individuals with staff, family, or interests in the country.

Should you require further assistance or clarification on any of the above, please feel free to contact ***pamilerin.akabunwa@moroomafrica.com***, ***uzochukwu.kpaduwa@moroomafrica.com***

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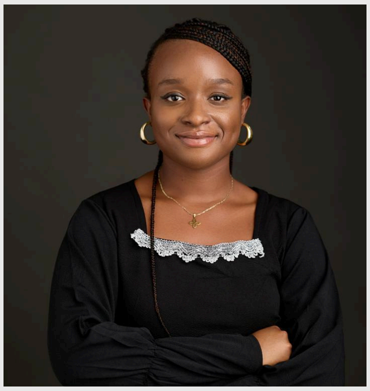

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