

Kenyas foreign policy



The conduct of foreign policy in Kenya is a prerogative of the Head of State the Chief Executive (President). These powers are vested in the Presidency by section 16 of the Constitution of Kenya, Amendment Act No. 28 and in Section 23 of the Constitution. Consequently, the Chief Executive is the initiator, articulator and director of foreign policy. This applies universally and is not unique to Kenya. The Foreign Ministry's responsibility is that of advice and execution in consultation with the President

Several individuals, institutions and organizations participate in the foreign policy formulation and decision-making. From this perspective, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is only a facilitator, co-ordinator and a steward of the country's foreign policy; the various government agencies are complementary actors in the conduct of foreign policy. Kenya's Foreign Policy Orientation Kenya's foreign policy has, since independence been designed and guided by the following basic and universally recognized norms:

- Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states and preservation of national security. Good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence.
- Peaceful settlement of disputes
- Non-interference in the internal affairs of other states
- Non-alignment and national self-interest
- Adherence to the Charters of the UN and OAU/AU

Factors Influencing Kenya's Foreign Policy Kenya's foreign policy has since independence been guided and shaped by its own national interest. This self-interest could be grouped into three main categories:-

1. Security/Political Peace and stability are a pre-requisite to social and economic development. The governments commitment to guarantee the security of its people, and the preservation of national integrity and sovereignty within secure borders underlies the desire to advance national interests by guaranteeing a secure political environment for development. Economic Advancement or Development Economic development has played a dominant role in shaping Kenya's foreign policy. The need to pursue an open economic policy and the demand for foreign capital and investment flows, inter-alia FDI and ODA, has influenced Kenya's approach to foreign policy.

2. Geo-Political Factors Kenya's foreign policy in the region has been shaped by factors such as the presence of overlapping ethnic community across borders and the fact that Kenya is a littoral state of the Indian Ocean and which influences relations with landlocked neighbors. 3. Kenya and Regional Integration Kenya and Regional Integration International and Regional Co-operation form a major component of the foreign policy of any country. Kenya participates actively in several regional initiatives.

She is a member of East African Community, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), ACP-EU, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation, amongst others. This co-operation is borne out of the realization that the development and prosperity of Kenya are intimately tied with her neighbors in the region. With the advent of globalization and liberalization, the country's external relations are being governed more and more by the need to promote a favorable environment for trade and investment.

The Sessional Paper No. of 1997 on “ Industrial Transformation to the year 2020 clearly defines Kenya’s approach to regional integration arrangements. It identifies institutional and legal framework as pre-requisites to fostering international and regional trade which could benefit Kenya. This pro-active and participatory role in the economic and trade dynamics in the region is geared towards fighting poverty and improving the welfare of the citizens of Kenya... COMESA Kenya attaches great significance to the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, as it provides a market for its manufactured product.

The COMESA region is a vibrant economic area and membership to the Free Trade Area (FTA) launched in October 2000, is expected to boost trade and investment. COMESA is the leading destination of Kenya’s export, constituting over 40% of the total exports East African Community The revival of East African Community with a potential market of 83 million people will contribute towards building a competitive market and conducive environment for the flow of investment to the region. Membership to the EAC will enhance political cohesion and stability among the neighbouring states and thereby contribute to sustainable development of the region.

More information on <http://www. eachq. org>) Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Kenya is a member of IGAD, comprising of the seven countries of the horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa suffers from the perennial problem of drought and IGAD has concerted energies in addressing the issue of drought and development. In 1996, IGAD was revitalized and its mandate expanded to address issues of conflict and development. Under the IGAD arrangement, Kenya has played a mediating role in the conflicts of Southern <https://assignbuster.com/kenyas-foreign-policy/>

Sudan and Somalia. Kenya's role in these efforts have gained international recognition and prestige.

More information on <http://igad.int>) New Partnership for Africa's Development Kenya supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is a holistic and integrated framework for the sustainable development of the African continent. It is widely recognized that Kenya's invaluable experience in socio-economic and development processes will be useful in constructing the New Partnership. To this end, Kenya has participated in all major summits and Conference on NEPAD and looks forward to play a major role in the Implementation Committee which it seeks to join. Kenya-ACP/EU Relations

Kenya is a member of the ACP group of countries, composed of 48 countries from Africa, 15 countries from the Carribean and 14 countries from the Pacific, all totaling 77 countries. The ACP group and the European Union entered into co-operation in 1975 under the Lome I framework. Since then, the two groups have had an uninterrupted co-operation through successive Lome Conventions - Lome I, III, and Lome IV. Co-operation between ACP and EU aims at the gradual and smooth integration of ACP countries into the global economy. Under trade development, ACP countries have enjoyed preferential market access of their products to the EU market.

About 33% of Kenya's exports, for instance, find their destination to the EU market. The EU accounts for 90% of Kenya's horticulture. The country has also benefited from the stabilization of Export Earnings (Stabex) facility. Lome IV Convention expired in February 2000 and was replaced by the

Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which was signed on 23rd June 2002 in Cotonou, Benin. Unlike the successive Lome Conventions which extended preferential market access to all ACP states, the new Agreement discriminates between Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Non-LDCs.

Countries classified as LDCs will enjoy preferential market access to the EU market for all their exports, except arms, up to the year 2020, while non-LDCs will only enjoy preferential market access up to the year 2008, after which they will enter into WTO compatible trade agreements with EU.

Negotiations for the new Economic Partnership Agreement were launched on 27th September 2002. Kenya is classified as non-LDC and has formed an inter Ministerial/Institutional Committee to prepare for the negotiations.

Kenya and Multilateralism Kenya supports multilateralism through the United Nations system.

Kenya has always preferred a multilateral approach in confronting problems in the international stage. Kenya fully subscribes to the charters of the United Nations and the OAU/African Union and seek to work with like-minded states in the promotion of a new international political and economic order. This based on a strong conviction that the multi-dimensional problem affecting mankind today have to be tackled through a global undertaking. Towards this end, Kenya will continue to undertake its responsibilities in the context of UN system, World Trade Organization, IMF/World Bank and other multi-lateral bodies.

Kenya and Commonwealth Kenya is a member of the Commonwealth, a voluntary association of 54 independent states, comprising about one

quarter of the world population. Members of the Commonwealth, mainly former British colonies, dependencies and other territories, subscribe to the ideals of the Declaration of Commonwealth principles of 1971. The primary focus for the Commonwealth is the advancement of development interests of member countries. Technical assistance to Commonwealth developing countries like Kenya is a vital component of this co-operation.

Kenya and OAU/AU Kenya subscribes to the charter of OAU/AU and has been an active member since joining in 1964. President Daniel arap Moi was elected as Chairman of the Organization in 1991 and served for an unprecedented two-year term. Since then, Kenya has remained at the forefront of regional conflict resolution initiatives in Africa. Kenya has also actively participated in the transformation of OAU to the African Union and President Moi was among the heads of State and government who attended the inauguration in July 2002 Durban, South Africa.

Conclusions To attain its set goals and interests in foreign policy, Kenya will continue to seek effective strategies in its approach to foreign policy. The desire to promote economic development will influence Kenya's approach to foreign policy while maintaining its traditional core principles and norms of non-alignment, non-interference in internal affairs of other states, good neighbourliness, peaceful settlement of disputes and adherence to the charters of the UN and African Union.