

# Trends in Military Diplomacy Between Kenya and Britain, 1963–2017

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**Abstract.** Military diplomacy incorporates measures adopted by a country to enhance its defence and security capabilities. States engage in military diplomacy to share intelligence, equipment, and resources necessary to safeguard their interests. This study examined trends of Kenya-Britain military diplomacy under four regimes. The focus was on the critical areas of military diplomacy, cooperation and assistance between Kenya and Britain, trends of trade in military equipment and the factors that have influenced military diplomacy and trade in military hardware and software between Kenya and Britain from 1963 to 2017. The study was based on two theories – interdependence liberalism and realism. The study used the historical research design to trace the nature of cooperation and momentous events influencing military diplomacy. Purposive sampling was used to arrive at a sample size of 70 derived from the target population comprising the military, ministry of foreign affairs, and experts in international relations. Field data were collected through oral interviews and Focused Group Discussions. Secondary data was sourced from conference papers, books and journals. Collected data were grouped, corroborated, and presented using content analysis.

The study concludes that Kenya and Britain have engaged in military diplomacy for a long time. After Kenya attained independence from Britain, the latter immediately became instrumental in forming a military and laying necessary security and defence structures in her former colony. Britain, therefore, became Kenya's long-standing defence and security partner. Britain and Kenya signed several agreements to cement these relations that enabled the British Army to train in Kenya and conduct joint military exercises to offer military assistance to their Kenyan counterparts. Moreover, Britain supplied Kenya with military equipment and arms. But military cooperation between Kenya and Britain has shifted over the four regimes. Geopolitics and globalization have made Kenya open the doors of her militaries to more countries, especially in acquiring its military equipment.

Consequently, volumes of trade imports in military equipment from Britain to Kenya have declined. This trend has been influenced by economic and political sanctions levelled on Kenya in the advent of multiparty democracy in the early 1990s and the look-east policy adopted by Kenya to cushion her from the stringent measures on funding from the West. As a result, China, Oman and Jordan are emerging as Kenya's new trade partners in military equipment. This notwithstanding, Kenya still enjoys close business ties with Britain in military circles. The recommendations point that Kenya should strengthen its military diplomacy with Britain to enhance its national security and access to military capacity. Further research needs to be done on emerging military capacity, especially in intelligence gathering and sharing.

**Keywords:** Britain; Kenya; look east policy; military diplomacy; military equipment.

## INTRODUCTION

Military diplomacy incorporates measures adopted by a country to enhance its defence and security capabilities. Countries engage in military diplomacy to share intelligence, equipment, and

resources necessary to safeguard their interests. Kenya has advanced military diplomacy to improve its capacity to provide security and defence for its citizens. Britain has been a long-standing ally of Kenya since its independence in 1963. The engagement between the two countries has

focused mainly on the socio-economic and security concerns of both countries. Britain as a developed country has been decisive in supporting Kenya towards building its military capacity and ensuring it can secure its boundaries within the volatile Horn of Africa.

Further, the status of Britain in the international arena meant Kenya benefited immensely. Geopolitics and forces of globalization have further opened up the world to such an extent that Kenya can seek support and partnership in military engagement with other countries beyond Britain. The focus has been on fulfilling national interests, especially those pegged on the defence and security of citizens. The changes in military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain attract significant scholarly attention, especially with Kenya being a former British colony and developing nation. This, therefore, calls on the need to further interrogate the trends in military diplomacy between the two countries and the key factors that have shaped the engagement from independence up to the first term of President Kenyatta's regime.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used the historical research design to trace the nature of cooperation and trends influencing the acquisition of military equipment between the two states. The study also used a comparative case study to provide new empirical evidence on nature, trends and factors influencing trade diplomacy among the two states. The study utilized a sample size of 70 respondents. Qualitative studies focus on relatively few participants who can describe their experiences or knowledge [4]. In arriving at the sample size, the study also considered a data collection procedure. For qualitative social science research, a minimum sample for a subgroup sampling is three participants per group. Twelve participants are sufficient for interviews, while 3-6 participants are adequate for Focused Group Discussions [10]. Based on this criterion, a non-partisan political non-apolitical, and gender-sensitive interview was carried out on a population of about 70 informants. Purposive sampling was used to identify key informants of the study while snowballing was used when key informants referenced other personalities with crucial information on the topic. Field data were collected through oral interviews and Focused Group Discussions. Secondary data was sourced from conference papers, books and journals. Data was grouped, corroborated, and presented using

theoretical reflections, documentary reviews, and content or discourse analysis.

Theoretical interpretations were based on the theory of interdependent liberalism and realism used to weave together trends in diplomatic relations and issues of national interest that states hold dear, warranting changing dynamics in military diplomacy during the four regimes. Documentary reviews included the momentous events of Kenya's history and prevailing global environment dictating the bilateral relations between Kenya and Britain. Generally, the data was qualitative and presented in prose narratives. The conclusion that emerges from this study is Britain and Kenya has had long-term relations. The critical areas of military engagement between Kenya and her long-standing ally are intelligence gathering as part of fighting terrorism, especially Al-Shabaab as the critical terror threat in the region, BATUK training ground for British troops, and regional security through support in arms. However, Kenya- Britain military diplomacy has declined over time. This trend has been influenced mainly through economic and political relations, sanctions levelled on Kenya in the advent of multiparty democracy and the Look-East policy adopted by Kenya to cushion it from the stringent measures on limited funding from the West. The study also notes that globalization has opened the platform where Kenya has advanced military diplomacy with other new states from the Middle and the Far East, including Jordan and China, based on her national interests.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Conceptualizing Military Diplomacy

Military diplomacy emphasizes realizing a state's foreign policy interests in the area of defence and security. Military diplomacy depicts a set of activities initiated by representatives of defence ministries and departments that aim to advance foreign policy interests in defence and security policy [11]. Diplomatic instruments facilitate negotiations as foreign policy objectives are pursued through the peaceful application of defence capabilities and resources. In addition, military diplomacy covers the functions of gathering and evaluating information on security and defence, advancing communication and cooperation among states, and supporting business contracts in military and arms equipment [7]. Military diplomacy is thus central to any state.

Arms trade and military assistance have been one way to enhance diplomatic and military relations among states. Military diplomacy has been an essential constituent of international diplomacy. It has long been an effective platform for fostering regional and bilateral relations [8]. To this, arms transfer has, from time immemorial, been an essential foreign policy tool by defining the dimension of global politics. The conventional arms transfer defines equipment and weapons and incorporates various military commitments with long-term implications.

The USA, Britain, Russia, and Germany are the primary military equipment and arms sources for many nations, especially Sub-Saharan Africa [14]. Consequently, arms trade in these countries plays a crucial role in defining foreign policy and diplomacy. These countries engage in military trade based on two main elements: the economic incentive and foreign policy interests, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa [14]. The proceeds from the arms trade boost the trading country's economy. In addition, it facilitates the advancement of interests based on the control of security across such countries. However, the advancement of interests becomes challenging, mainly when weapons sold deadly trigger conflicts and human rights violations. This triggers the need to enhance the arms sales policy as part of improving the risk assessment policy. This is based on the fact that the focus is on bolstering security and improving military capabilities.

Many critics argue that a lack of transparency characterizes military diplomacy and the transfer of sophisticated weapons. Information on the defence budget, procurement and expenditure are ordinarily incomplete and opaque [15]. This problem is experienced in Kenya, where the Ministry of Defense does not provide clear information about the whole process of procuring military equipment. The counterargument is that military equipment is sensitive and should not be shared with the public as it raises undue insecurities and threats from adversaries [3].

The key reasons that decide of actual and official military expenditures are different and opaque: hidden defence budgets as a result of insistence by donors that expenditures of defence remain low; financing defence budget from non-defence budget sources where in some cases, the size of military expenditures exceeds the size of military budget itself; poor financial management strategies; and income sources from non-governmental

entities especially in conflict scenarios where military expenditures are funded from other sources [15]. According to Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), developing countries should strive to improve value and transparency in public procurement and adopt international frameworks to enhance scrutiny of military and defence spending [15].

Military diplomacy facilitates imports in a military capacity, which results in increased inflows of skills and knowledge, potentially enhancing security. This means that the skill levels of the military are enhanced, which in turn improves productivity. Military diplomacy is also directly related to positive productivity and upgraded skills and knowledge transfer among personnel [1]. Military diplomacy support countries by creating and improving the capacity of the soldiers and provides strong technical and analytical support and cooperation among countries, thereby facilitating consensus-building work [1]. Stronger and supported economies are vital tools that assure stability and enhance global security. As such military diplomacy facilitates the adoption of sound policies that support business activities, security and sustainability [12].

### **Trends in Military Diplomacy During the Jomo Kenyatta Era, 1963-1978**

Kenya attained its independence in 1963, with Mzee Jomo Kenyatta becoming the first President. President Jomo Kenyatta ruled Kenya from 1963 up to his death in 1978. Britain was instrumental in facilitating Kenyatta's regime. Britain assisted in forming the defence forces and ensured the country had adequate capacity to secure its borders. The support was necessary as the country was building its defence and security structures after independence. The colonial factor is one key element that defined military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain during the Jomo Kenyatta era [2]. Kenya got independence from Britain, and as such, Britain was at the centre of the formation of the government structures, including the security and defence framework.

Kenya's independence paved the way for structuring government departments that would facilitate the development of policies on how Kenya would engage with the international community [6]. Britain was strategic in providing the necessary capacity and helping create Kenya's defence forces. Kenya engaged Britain as a critical ally in

providing military training, equipment, and general capacity [5]. This resulted in the formation of the Kenya security forces, with Britain providing the necessary support and facilitating equipping the force.

The training was another factor that defined military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain. Britain needed an ideal climate and training ground for its soldiers proceeding to operations. The hot climate in Kenya's arid and semi-arid region in the Northern Frontier District (NFD) had been identified as ideal to condition the British troops. There was a need by Kenya to build the capacity of her young military, and hence the common training platform would empower the Kenya military [2]. The training was necessary to create capacity for the Kenya forces to protect its citizens, manage its borders' security, and offer the British army the much-desired training camp. Britain was strategically aligned to facilitate Kenya with the needed training during the Kenyatta era to ensure the country could protect itself both internally and against external threats.

Emerging regional security threats was another critical trigger for military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain during the Kenyatta era. Kenya is strategically placed as the gateway to the Central and East Africa region. As such, Kenya's security is essential in facilitating stability in the region. Kenyatta's government also faced the coup threat triggered by political differences and fallout between President Kenyatta and his deputy Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. As a result, there was an attempted coup where Britain was strategic in providing military capacity to Kenyatta's government and managed the attempted coup where Oginga Odinga was cited as having support from the Soviet Union [5].

The British government was keen on cementing its relationship with Kenya and proved to be a key ally. The deployment of British troops and support in military equipment's by Britain was a critical indicator that they were willing to go extra strides in expelling the influence of the Soviets in Kenya and generally the region [5]. The British military intervention focused on stabilizing Kenyatta's regime and empowering Kenyan troops through training to provide security. Generally, Kenyatta's military diplomacy with Britain focused on developing the defence forces' foundation and ensuring the government has enough military capacity to ensure the security of its citizens and along its borders.

## **Trends in Military Diplomacy During Daniel Arap Moi Era, 1978-2002**

President Daniel Arap Moi took over from President Kenyatta in 1978 and focused on advancing the military diplomacy developed by Kenyatta. The first years of President Moi's reign saw the development of a foreign policy based on cooperation and compliance [13]. The two countries enjoyed a cordial relationship based on interdependence liberalism theory, which emphasizes reliance where the interests of states are tied together. The interests of both Kenya and Britain were tied together hence both states benefiting from the engagement. In addition, Britain's investment in the country was significant. This triggered Kenya to consider the interests of Britain, especially in the arms trade and the development of the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK). However, the developing nature of politics meant that the engagement between Kenya and Britain had to change.

The 1982 coup changed Kenya politics as President Moi took a hard stance on political dissents. The democratic space initially experienced deteriorated to such an extent the regime was marred by allegations of assassinations and human rights violations. After the coup, Moi's administration was complex on those people who openly criticized the government. As a result, democracy eroded from the political sphere, and this affected Kenya's foreign policy. When Kenya could not define its governance with democracy and human rights, it failed to attract significant backing from Britain as it was before. The hard stance taken by the Kenya government meant that it had issues of diplomatic engagement, especially with the West and specifically with Britain, who tied the military assistance with conditions [6].

Moi government retaliated by reducing the contract period for BATUK to five years, and in the subsequent period, the government engaged in three years [2]. It is important to note that in the first agreement crafted by the Kenyatta government, the British troops were given fifteen years for training. The Moi government was expected to follow suit as he echoed the need to follow Kenyatta's footsteps in military diplomacy. However, the development of Kenya politics changed the engagement between Kenya and Britain, hence the British government's push for transparency in the Moi administration.

The other key element that redefined engagement between Kenya and Britain was the push for

multiparty politics. Kenya was at this time under one-party politics, which was seen as an impediment to enhanced democratic space in the country. Therefore, the Western countries led by Britain pushed for the amendment of the constitution and paved the way for multiparty politics. This was important at such a time when Western countries had accused the Moi administration of human rights violations vetting terror against all political opponents [13]. This created a tense diplomatic relation, mainly from Britain's context for a change in political governance. At the same time, the Moi government felt that Britain could not lecture Kenya on the political path to undertake.

The political unrests, demonstrations and protests by civil society, religious organizations, and political factions backed by Western countries pushed Moi to amend the constitution and pave the way for multiparty politics. Section 2(A) of the constitution was repealed in 1991 as the political space widened [2]. Moi bowed to the Western pressure as he did not want to compromise Kenya's diplomatic engagement with Britain. The country depended significantly on foreign aid and grants to support the economy. The step towards multiparty politics was seen as a platform for improving democracy and constitutionalism.

Kenya is strategically placed on defining the security and development of the region [13]. Britain had a closer diplomatic reflection on Kenya for the stability of the region. During President Moi administration, Somalia was undergoing civil war and warlords of rival ethnic groups were controlling the country after the fall of Siyad Barre. The political unrest in the country resulted in people's displacement, which was a significant security threat to Kenya. Britain supported the government of Kenya in building the Dadaab refugee camp as a way of managing the situation in Somalia.

The Dadaab camp signified a friendly gesture by the British government to facilitate the accommodation of refugees from war-torn Somalia. In this case, Kenya was decisive in taking a lead role to manage the increased infighting within Somalia, and the development of the camp was seen as an option to manage the humanitarian crisis in the country. The British government, in this case, was prepared to help Kenya in addressing the challenge of the influx of refugees from Somalia, especially within the context of security. Therefore, there was a need to be proactive.

Kenya's foreign policy came under closer scrutiny with the 1998 bombing of the US Embassy in Nairobi [13]. Hundreds of people were killed, while thousands of others suffered injuries after the attack. The attack was perpetrated by Al Qaeda, a terrorist organization that had dissenting ideologies against the West. The attack raised essential issues regarding the transformation of security to address the emerging transnational security threats such as terrorism. This created the need for Kenya to actively engage the Western allies, including Britain, to facilitate the security systems in Kenya to address the prevailing security challenge posed by terrorism.

Kenya received significant humanitarian support from Britain in saving and evacuating those who were injured [6]. Furthermore, the British government provided personnel as well as equipment's which were used in the evacuation process. In addition, Kenya received support from Britain in the area of investigation. Therefore, there was a need to examine the context within which the bombing occurred, primarily as it was targeted at the US Embassy. At this time, the US and Britain enjoyed the cordial relationship that traversed through bilateral and multilateral engagements. The support accorded to Kenya in Britain's investigations helped define how the bombing was planned and linked Al Qaeda to the terror.

The 1998 bombing served as a platform for Kenya to further seek support to address the prevailing security concern. A new phenomenon referred to as terrorism. The US and UK guaranteed to support Kenya develop enhanced structures that could help it manage the emerging terror security threats. This was vital for Kenya in helping confront the emerging insecurity triggered by terror groups. The advanced support capacity from America and Britain was mainly in the form of intelligence sharing, especially with Kenya being a key leader in East Africa [6]. The 1998 bombing, therefore, created an enhanced platform where Kenya could engage actively with Britain in enhancing its security system and ensuring the country could cope with the prevailing security challenges [13].

The 1998 bombing of the US Embassy also triggered the need to redefine Kenya's reflection on the issue with Somalia [6]. Kenya continued to receive an influx of Somali refugees in Dadaab, with most refugees moving from the camp to other parts of the country. This was seen as an emerging threat to Kenya's security, especially after facing

the bombing in Nairobi by the terror group. As a result, Britain pledged to facilitate Kenya in enhancing its intelligence to develop enhanced security systems that could tap into any emerging radical groups that could pose security concerns to the country.

The emerging security challenges happened when Kenya was still hosting BATUK. The Moi government was at a pivotal point to seek help from Britain to ensure BATUK supported Kenya security forces primarily through training. This was based on the fact that the British troops training in Nanyuki had enhanced the capacity and network that defined its training. As a result, Kenya would be able to tap into the capacity of British troops and be supported by advanced capacity to deal with emerging security threats. Thus, BATUK proved to be a key platform for Britain to facilitate Kenya in building Kenya's security forces.

The need for enhanced security and Kenya cordial relations with Britain enabled British troops to support Kenya security agencies [2]. In addition, BATUK provided a platform for training Kenya security personnel to cope and address the emerging security challenges. In this way, Kenya gained the enhanced capacity to secure its citizens and ensure greater cooperation with Western allies as terrorism emerged to be a global challenge and concern and not only a Kenya affair.

The UK is among the world's leading defence exporters, the second biggest after the US. It is Europe's leading defence exporter [6]. The UK has a dynamic arms export license platform that ensures countries purchasing military equipment's do not use them for human rights violations. They can revoke agreements for exporting defence equipment for countries that violate the agreements. The UK considers every application on a case-by-case basis to ensure proper control of the arms sale system.

From 1990 to the early 2000s, Kenya faced a deteriorating internal security state and widespread human rights violations [6]. This raised concerns about Kenya's role in the proliferation of light weapons within the Great Lakes region. Ethnic clashes and violent political conflict, especially immense violence by police on civilians, put pressure on the UK to reconsider its arms diplomacy with Kenya. However, the UK continued to export military equipment's to Kenya but in small quantities. This is based on the UK export standards.

In the period from January 1992 up to January 1998, the UK issued 380 standard individual licenses for arms export to Kenya for goods defined under Export Control Organizations Military List: this included plastic baton rounds, tear gas, assault rifles, ammunition, body armour, anti-riot shields, crowd-control equipment, gas mask filters, signalling equipment, and air surveillance equipment's. These equipment's defined the engagement between Kenya and Britain in military equipment's between the periods.

Based on the standards set by the UK from 1990 to 2000, Kenya was in the limelight with regards to violations of the standards set for arms control. At that time, the Labour administration in the UK tightened restrictions for Kenya as defined by the Foreign Secretary in 1997. Based on this criterion, the restrictions prohibited the use of military equipment for internal repression. In 1997, the government of the UK rejected applications by the Kenya government for licenses for riot control systems worth about £1.5m. The UK government then expunged Kenya from coverage of multiple Open Individual Export Licenses.

### **Trends in Military Diplomacy during Kibaki Era, 2002-2013**

After 24 years at the helm of the country leadership, the exit of the Moi era ushered in Mwai Kibaki's regime at the beginning of 2003. The setbacks of the Moi regime primarily increased corruption, lack of democracy, decreasing economy and mismanagement of public resources, pushed the opposition to unite under the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition and overwhelmingly toppled the Kenya African National Union regime that had ruled the country since independence [6]. The opposition political parties provided limelight and hope for the country, especially in changing Kenya's tense diplomatic relations with the international community, including Britain. The government created a conducive environment where the international community could support economic recovery and facilitate democratic governance.

As a critical ally of Kenya, Britain congratulated President Kibaki and pledged to work together with the new administration in areas of mutual interest. The key areas Kenya and Britain continued to engage actively engage in include economy, security and defence. However, the engagement between Kenya and Britain was posed to change based on establishing a new regime. The new

administration committed to change and reforms, especially in drifting the country's negative image externally within the international community that characterized the former administration of President Moi [13].

The engagement between Kenya and Britain was defined by the foreign policies of both countries as defined by President Kibaki and UK Prime Minister than Tony Blair [6]. One of the critical elements that guided foreign policy development was security. As Kenya had suffered terror caused by attacks orchestrated by Al Qaeda, Britain intensified its security and defence intelligence to protect the international community against terror. Therefore, the fight against terror was not construed within one country but was a global plan based on the developing adverse effects of terror activities.

The Kibaki government did not at once renew the British military training permit. The delay in renewal of the training permit coupled with the fact that the Moi administration had reduced the length of the permit to one year renewal period worried Britain. Kibaki's government hesitance to renew the annual permit for the training exercises was informed by several reasons. Part of the reason was the issues raised in different quarters regarding Britain's lack of swift response to investigations on 694 claims raised regarding human rights violation, injustice and rape by its troops. The claims of violation of the country's laws stretched 30 years back. Amnesty International and other non-governmental organizations had documented grave allegations related to human rights violations pursued by the British Army within the Kenya training camp. The allegations covered a period of about 35 years from 1965 up to 2001 [13].

There were hostile relations between the British military and civil societies, which continued to cloud the diplomatic relations between Kenya and Britain. This also could have been more complimented with negative civil-military engagement regarded as a colonial relic. However, the negative civil-military engagement was regarded as a colonial relic where Britain exercised immunity in the wake of its troops engaging in unlawful acts [6].

The anti-base sentiments and arguments have often been elicited by the friction between the local population and communities and the visiting forces [2]. As a result, there grew bitter relations between the British troops in the area and the locals. This created discontentment by the locals on the British troop's activities in the area. Therefore,

the new Kibaki regime's focus was on solving the issues raised and ensuring immunity does not prevail in place of human rights and the value of sovereignty of Kenya state. When Kenya failed to renew the permit instantly, there was growing frustrations on the side of the British High Commission. Kenya had been an ideal location for training British troops, and the idea of moving out of the country was thus tricky. The British military did not pull out of Kenya but renegotiated with the government on how well to expedite investigations and ensure a change in the immunity used initially by the British troops to cause violence against the locals.

Kibaki's diplomatic engagement with Britain changed from political diplomacy initially used by the Moi regime to economic diplomacy. This broad term of diplomacy focused more on economic development. Therefore, the interests of Kenya were defined based on how the country benefited from the active relations with Britain. In addition, the Kibaki regime focused on implementing constitutional reforms and laying down structures that defined Kenya's engagement with Britain and the international community. Kenya's principles of diplomacy during the Kibaki era were defined by five key pillars: economic, security, cultural, environmental and diaspora diplomacy [6].

Kibaki adopted the Look East Policy in defining military diplomacy. The Look East Policy was adopted to increase Kenya's avenues of foreign investments in the country. It provided a platform for Kenya to consider a wider net of international partners who could help spur growth and development and facilitate military diplomacy. At this time, China and other eastern economies were on the rise and making significant penetration into Africa. This was part of the long-term strategy these countries had initiated to expand their market into Africa. Kibaki government was strategically positioned to benefit from the opportunities posed by China and other eastern countries. This meant that the relations between Kenya and Britain in terms of economic diplomacy decreased significantly during the Kibaki administration.

The entry of China into Kenya provided a platform for the Chinese government to engage in military and arms trade with the Kibaki regime. China exported to Kenya military equipment and vehicles. The entry of Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) into Somalia through Operation Linda Nchi was vital in defining the relations between Kenya and Britain

and ensuring the security of Kenyans. Operation Linda Nchi, was triggered by rampant kidnappings and a series of grenade attacks in Kenya. The Kenya government wanted to create a buffer zone and protect the Kenyan homeland against Al Shabaab and continued instability across Southern Somalia. The intervention was vital in safeguarding Kenya's interests in terms of political, economic and security. Britain was instrumental in supporting KDF in its intervention in Somalia through Operation Linda Nchi. Britain provided training opportunities to the Kenya military. In its military base in Kenya, Britain conducted joint exercises with KDF and this prepared Kenya towards increasing its expertise and capacity towards combat in Somalia.

In addition, Britain also deployed its personnel to work alongside KDF to provide logistical support in the fight against Al Shabaab. This was decisive in ensuring the KDF had enough capacity to manage the emerging security challenge that had continued to affect the region. Britain also contributed significantly towards anti-terrorism training for border guards and Kenya Police. This was important, especially in the areas alongside the Somalia border, which were used as avenues for Al Shabaab to cross over to Kenya and cause terror attacks.

### **Trends in Military Diplomacy During the First Term of Uhuru Kenyatta Era, 2013-2017**

President Uhuru Kenyatta, son of the first president Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, was elected in 2013 following a tense diplomatic engagement between Kenya and the international community. Both President Uhuru and Deputy President William Ruto had been indicted by the Hague based International Criminal Court (ICC). The duo had been indicted for their involvement in post-election violence after the run-up of the 2007 General Elections. As a result, Britain distanced itself diplomatically from the engagement with Kenya as the two main suspects in the violence that caused loss and injury of life, displacement of people and destruction of property.

The election of Uhuru and Ruto at the top office in Kenya in 2013 created a tense diplomatic moment as the two had to attend trials at the ICC while at the same time being at the helm of power in Kenya. Britain High Commissioner to Kenya at this time was Christian Turner. He stated that Britain would engage diplomatically with Kenya

based on essential business only. The ICC situation polarized the country in the run-up to the 2013 elections and after the Uhuru and Ruto win as ICC suspects. The then High Commissioner of Britain, Christian Turner, stated that Britain would only deal with Kenya on essential business. However, in 2014, President Kenyatta's case in the ICC was dropped. With this development, Britain changed its hard-line stand.

During Kenyatta's era, there was greater cooperation between Kenya and UK on security and defence issues, especially in intelligence sharing in the fight against terrorism [8]. One key area has been the Somalia issue and terrorism. For instance, in May 2013, the UK organized the London - Somalia Conference, culminating in a high-level meeting between President Uhuru Kenyatta and UK Prime Minister David Cameron. The meeting enhanced the long-standing cooperation between Kenya and the UK and resulted in two mutually beneficial security and defence agreements. The Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs met with the UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond to fast track the agreement by both Heads of State.

In the agreement, both countries pledged a new Defense Cooperation Agreement, which both parliaments ratified. The agreement boosted the defence relationship, facilitated the UK to support Kenya in maritime security, and sustained British military training [8]. Furthermore, the new agreement echoed improved military capabilities for both states, allowed concurrent jurisdiction and recognized that the laws and policies of both countries apply to visiting military personnel. In addition, the UK and Kenya established a new platform to provide technical training and capacity building on improvised explosive devices (IEDs). President Kenyatta's era has been defined by the need for advanced technologies and intelligence gathering devices to manage the prevailing security threats.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

As the need for enhanced security continues to define the relationship between Kenya and Britain in military equipment. The state of security across the world and the threat to the safety of citizens means that countries must forge common alliances that result in enhanced defence. Governments have the prerequisite responsibility of protecting their citizens, and it is within this role, they unite within common interests. The interest

towards safety creates the concept of dependence across the common areas of interest. The government of the day in Kenya has been decisive in defining military diplomacy between the state and Britain. Military diplomacy has been advanced by

the four regimes that have governed Kenya, focusing on creating capacity and amassing necessary resources to provide adequate security and defence.

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