

Dynamics of Kenya's Participation in AMISOM: An Assessment of National Interests and Impact on Security Strategies

By

Gicovi Winfred Mukami

Email: winniegicovi@gmail.com

Abstract

Kenya's participation in the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has been a significant aspect of the country's foreign policy and national security strategy. Since its deployment in 2011, the Kenyan Defense Forces (KDF) has played a critical role in fighting Al-Shabaab militants in Somalia, along with troops from other African countries. This military intervention was motivated by Kenya's national interests, including protecting its territorial integrity, promoting regional stability, and combating terrorism. This study assessed Kenya's participation in AMISOM and its impact on the country's security strategies. It explored the motivations behind Kenya's involvement in the mission, the military and diplomatic efforts deployed by the country, and the outcomes achieved so far. The study also evaluated the challenges and opportunities presented by Kenya's involvement in AMISOM, including the risk of blowback from Al-Shabaab and the possibility of enhanced regional security cooperation. Ultimately, this study provided a comprehensive analysis of Kenya's participation in AMISOM and its implications for the country's security and foreign policy. The study found that: Kenya's involvement in AMISOM was primarily driven by its national security interests. The country has been a victim of terrorist attacks carried out by al-Shabaab, a militant group operating in Somalia, and saw its participation in AMISOM as a way to counter this threat. Kenya's participation in AMISOM had a significant impact on its security strategies. It allowed the country to gain valuable experience in conducting counter-insurgency operations and also helped to strengthen its military capabilities. Kenya's involvement in AMISOM was not solely driven by security considerations. There were also political considerations at play, as Kenya sought to maintain its influence in the region and protect its economic interests. Further, Kenya's participation in AMISOM had challenges. The mission has been criticized for human rights abuses and civilian casualties, which has led to tensions between Kenya and Somalia. Additionally, there have been allegations of corruption within the Kenyan military, which undermined the effectiveness of the mission. Despite these challenges, Kenya's participation in AMISOM is likely to continue in the future. The country has made significant contributions to the mission and has a vested interest in seeing it succeed. However, there is a need for greater accountability and transparency to ensure that the mission is conducted in a manner that is consistent with international humanitarian law.

Key Words: Kenya, Participation, National Interests, Security Strategies

Dynamics of Kenya's Participation in AMISOM: An Assessment of National Interests and Impact on Security Strategies

By

Gicovi Winfred Mukami
winniegicovi@gmail.com

Introduction

The study assessed Kenya's national interests in joining the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and looked at how this involvement affected the nation's security plans. The necessity to comprehend the influences on Kenya's participation in the mission and the efficiency of its security policies in advancing its national goals served as the driving force behind the study. Kenya's involvement in AMISOM has been a key foreign policy initiative, to address regional security issues and defend the nation's interests. Since the mission's commencement in 2007, Kenya has been one of the top nations sending troops, and its military has been instrumental in battling terrorism and extremism in Somalia. To give a thoughtful evaluation of the influence of Kenya's participation in AMISOM on its security plans, the study included a thorough investigation of pertinent literature and data, including government reports, scholarly articles, and interviews with important players. The report assessed the nation's strategies' strengths and flaws, pointed out areas for development, and offered suggestions for future actions.

Assumptions

Kenya saw its involvement in AMISOM as a way to counter the threat of terrorism and extremism, protect its borders and interests, and contribute to peace and security in the region, hence had a significant impact on its security strategies, both positively and negatively, and that there was a need for continuous evaluation and adaptation of these strategies to ensure they align with the country's national interests.

Objective

The study identified the specific ways in which Kenya's participation in AMISOM has impacted its security strategies and evaluated the effectiveness of these strategies in achieving the country's national interests.

Statement of Problem

The assessment of Kenya's role in AMISOM aimed to comprehend how much Kenya's participation in the mission was driven by national interests and how this involvement affected the nation's security plans. The evaluation looked at Kenya's role concerning its particular national interests, especially its attempts to combat the danger of terrorism posed by al-Shabaab. The study examined the effects of Kenya's participation in AMISOM on its security plans as well as the military capabilities that have been built and the lessons that have been gained through waging counterinsurgency operations. The assessment offers insights into the elements that have influenced Kenya's participation in the operation and the implications for its national security by addressing these challenges. In this regard, it is important to note that previous studies on Kenya's participation in AMISOM took into account national interests and impacts on security strategy. Understanding the precise causes

that have influenced Kenya's participation in the mission and the amount to which its security plans have been affected poses a challenge, though. More in-depth research is required, namely on the political and economic issues as well as the national interests that motivated Kenya's participation. Additionally, although studies on the military capabilities created as a result of Kenya's participation in AMISOM have been done, a more thorough analysis of the influence on Kenya's overall security strategy is required. By filling in these gaps, a more thorough comprehension of Kenya's participation in the operation and its consequences for national security can be attained.

Review of Related Literature

National Interests and Motivations for Kenya's Participation in AMISOM

Kenya's involvement in AMISOM was motivated by a mix of interests in national security, worries about regional stability, and a desire to improve the nation's standing and influence abroad. Understanding these motives helped one better appreciate how Kenya's participation in the mission evolved and what it meant for regional security. Many academics and researchers are interested in Kenya's national interests and motivations have studied the country's participation in AMISOM.

Kenya's interests in national security were among the most frequently claimed justifications for its participation in AMISOM. Al-Shabaab, a terrorist organization with a base in Somalia, attacked the nation frequently, which resulted in substantial human casualties and economic losses. Kenya was compelled to adopt a more proactive strategy to counteract the threat of terrorism in the area as a result, including its participation in AMISOM. Bailey (2019) claims that Kenya's main reasons for joining AMISOM were to counter the threat presented by Al-Shabaab and to defend its people and interests.

Regional stability was a significant national objective for Kenya's participation in AMISOM. A stable Somalia was essential to maintaining peace and stability in the region because Kenya is situated in a dangerous and conflict-prone area. The nation's involvement in AMISOM was considered a method to support initiatives to bring about peace and stability in Somalia, which would then help Kenya and the rest of the region. Hesse (2015) claims that Kenya's desire for a stable Somalia would foster a safer environment for commerce and economic development, which is what motivated its participation in AMISOM.

Kenya's ambition to improve its international standing and influence was noted as a driving force behind its participation in AMISOM. Kenya showed its dedication to regional security and support global efforts to battle terrorism by taking the lead in the mission. As a result, Kenya got higher visibility on the international scene and more influence over local and global events. As Jowell (2019) mentioned, Kenya's participation in AMISOM aided in establishing it as a regional force and a significant actor in the war on terrorism.

Previous AU operations showed that the bulk of people who were willing to risk their lives to carry out peace enforcement were those whose interests were at risk (Ninshaba, 2019). Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya are three examples of Somalia. As such nations pursue national interests rather than work to fulfill the mandate, this strategy might not be ideal for the mission as a whole. Due to its shared border with Somalia, which permits the free movement of illegal weapons and refugees, Djibouti was put in jeopardy by the Somalia problem (Dahir & Sheikh Ali, 2021). Uganda and Sudan were concerned about the likelihood of terrorist attacks from Somalia even though they did not share a border with Somalia (Nzau, 2023). Uganda also provided the majority of the soldiers for AMISOM. Sudan does not share

a border with Somalia and stayed out of Somalia's business. This was a result of internal problems. Sudan, on the other hand, felt compelled to care about the fate of the Somali people because of its religious ties to Somalia.

From a historical viewpoint, Eritrea's involvement in the Somalia incident was seen in the context of its hostile relationship with Ethiopia (Newbery, 2021). According to Newbery, this hostile relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia caused them to fight for a portion of the Badme territory along their shared border, which resulted in the deaths of people, damage of property, and the eviction of civilians. The United Nations decided to get involved in this dispute. According to Newbery, Eritrea allegedly supported the Union of the Islamic Court (UIC), whereas Ethiopia allegedly chose to support the Transition Federal Government (TGF). However, it can be inferred that little, in terms of fundamental national interests, linked Eritrea to UIC.

Soldiers from Burundi were stationed in sector 5 to the north of Mogadishu and beyond their base in Jowhar, the troops' impact and reach was limited (Williams, 2020). Given that Burundi had been unstable for a long time and still struggles to calm the ethnic undertones that have been the cause of her domestic problems, Burundi's contribution of troops to AMISOM was seen as a sacrifice. The briefing provided by the minister of foreign affairs was given during a recent trip to Burundi by the National Defence College. It detailed the crucial role that her forces performed in AMISOM in the pursuit of regional stability and as a means to recognize the contributions that the region had made to ensure the peace and security of Burundi. However, the battle with Alshabaab provided Burundi troops with valuable field experience, which also improved the cohesion of their forces (Gjelsvik, 2019).

Ethiopia is one of the nations connected to Somalia through history and is a neighbor of Somalia. These two neighbors previously engaged in conflict with one another in the 1970s. According to the study, the Ogaden dispute in Somalia caused the two neighbors to go to war in 1978, for instance (Newbery, 2021). Similar to Kenya, Ethiopia has an area bordering Somalia that is home to a sizable Somali population. Additionally, Somalia's historical irredentism, which has never been repudiated, remains present. Therefore, Ethiopia would be content with a friendly Somalia government that had no connections to the Ogaden region and did not pose a danger to its security.

Due to its geographic isolation, Ethiopia has had to rely on the ports of Kenya and Djibouti to transport products and services to and from Ethiopia. With its extensive coastline and numerous ports, a peaceful Somalia would offer Ethiopia an alternative to taking advantage of it (Albrecht & Haenlien, 2016). Given the distance and cost of services, several of these ports might be a better option. Given that Ethiopia and Somalia share a border, any possibility of conflict in Somalia would result in an influx of displaced people crossing the border into Ethiopia. Any such migration could alter the ethnic balance, which in combination with the Ogaden region might serve as a haven for terrorism. Due to these worries, Ethiopia unilaterally deployed to Somalia in July 2006 to pursue the Islamic Court Union (Bode & Karlsrud, 2019).

The first nation to deploy under AMISOM was Uganda in 2007 (Iazzolino & Hersi, 2019). The nation sent troops to support Somalia's weak federal administration for six months. Uganda has commanded the force in addition to providing troops by appointing Ugandan generals to the position of Force Commanders. Uganda no longer has exclusive control over troop command because of the arrival of Kenya and then Ethiopia (Newbery, 2021). It is believed that reputational considerations played a role in Uganda's decision to join

AMISOM, especially at a period when Alshabaab had a firm grip on territory throughout Somalia. Uganda had always bragged about fighting liberation battles throughout its several coups as distinguishing it from other regional forces, which she derided as being simply professional and lacking the experience and capability to fight and win wars. As a result, she had something to show by sending out her troops and setting an example for others (Ninshaba, 2019).

Uganda's unilateral entry into Mogadishu at a time when previous efforts have fallen short and have been abandoned is a significant achievement and a step in the right direction toward inspiring others during a trying period. Al-Shabaab struck Uganda twice to weaken Uganda's resolve and compel a withdrawal, just as it did with Kenya (Albrecht & Haenlien, 2016). Uganda responded by sending out more troops, showing no signs of being scared. Uganda and Sudan are concerned about the likelihood of terrorist attacks from Somalia even though they do not share a border with Somalia. Additionally, Uganda is the country that sends the most troops to AMISOM. Sudan doesn't share a border with Somalia and stays out of Somalia's business. This can be a result of internal problems. On the other side, Sudan felt compelled to care about Somalis because of its religious ties to them. Therefore, Uganda's contribution of troops to AMISOM was mostly reputational to portray her image as the dominant nation in the Horn of Africa.

In reaction to an Al Shabaab incursion into Kenyan territory, Kenya launched an independent military campaign in Somalia in October 2011. To continue pursuing its various national objectives, Kenya later combined its forces and joined AMISOM in 2012. These included economic, social, political, and strategic interests as well as those related to national security (Albrecht and Haenlien, 2016). For instance, because ethnic Somalis reside in Kenya's northeastern region, the country's border with Somalia poses a threat to Kenya. Similar to Ethiopia, Somali organizations regularly attack Kenya with terrorist attacks. Terrorists from Somalia committing assaults on Kenyan land were also viewed as a costly political possession and a breach of national sovereignty.

Protecting the populace and their property was one of the reasons Kenya entered Somalia and the acts of Al-Shabaab entering Kenya and harassing, robbing, and even kidnapping both Kenyans and foreigners made this necessary. Al-Shabaab had frequently abducted tourists on both sides of the border as well as in the coastal town of Lamu, which ties this to the economic front. Unfortunately, some of the abducted people have never been found. Tourists and other foreign nationals who were in Kenya for a variety of purposes were among those kidnapped. The kidnapping hurt tourism (Williams, 2020). Since tourism is Kenya's second-largest source of foreign exchange, its loss would seriously harm the country's economic and general development.

Al-Shabaab took advantage of the monitoring vacuum to dominate areas along the shared border with Somalia thanks to the lengthy and porous border as well as the absence of a functioning government in Somalia. They engaged in trade with Kenya, mainly the sugar trade. The Kenyan market was soon overrun by this inexpensive sugar. As a result of the trade that was being carried out through unofficial crossing points to avoid paying taxes, the government suffered a loss of revenue (Ninshaba, 2019). Unfair competition with Kenya's domestic industries resulted from the illegal importation of sugar across the border and the flooding of the market. The majority of sugar-producing enterprises were forced out of business, which resulted in employment losses and, in certain cases, factory closures.

The long and permeable boundary between Kenya and Somalia saw many small arms and light weapons get to the hands of the wrong people in the Horn of Africa region. Kenya had to safeguard the border and stop the rise of insecurity along the border because Somalia had no discernible form of government (Albrecht and Haenlien, 2016). To do this, Kenya had to conduct surveillance, stop the importation of small guns, and monitor Al-Shabaab operations.

The presence of refugees in some areas of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti had a severe impact on the region's economy, security, and environment. At Dadaab, which is around 70 kilometers from the two countries shared border, Kenya shelters refugees from Somalia. The indigenous people are also of Somali descent. Kenya faces challenges while attempting to monitor refugee activity and manage border crossings due to their proximity to the border and shared ethnicity (Albrecht and Haenlien, 2016). Conflicts between the community and the refugees have occasionally been seen. This has to do with the UN agencies' need for manual labor and restricted resources like firewood and water. The ecology has been destroyed as a result of the over 500,000 additional restrictions on the usage of firewood.

Intriguingly, none of the motivations discussed in this study require a TCC to take chances with the individuals it deploys on peacekeeping missions. The more democratic the state, the less likely it is to accept such a risk given the potential for a domestic political response if national troops are compromised. Wealthier nations tend to support missions to maintain peace through financial contributions rather than sending troops since they are unsure of the potential dangers. As part of peacekeeping and peace enforcement missions, the majority of nations use the opportunity to get practical experience while also serving mankind. International deployment in support of a UN mission also carries some reputational risk, as it is perceived as a show of force in some areas.

The Impact of AMISOM on Kenya's National Interests and Security

The national interests and security of Kenya have been impacted by Kenya's participation in AMISOM in both positive and negative ways. While the mission improved regional collaboration and Kenya's national security, it had potential threats and put a burden on the nation's resources. Understanding these effects help policymakers strike a compromise between Kenya's national security interests and the potential risks and expenses of its participation in the mission. The decrease in the threat of terrorism in Kenya has been one of the biggest effects of Kenya's participation in AMISOM. The mission helped to weaken Al-Shabaab, which is accountable for many attacks in Kenya. Prestholdt (2020) claims that Kenya's involvement in AMISOM aided in weakening Al-Shabaab's capabilities and decreasing the frequency of assaults in the nation. Kenya has been able to increase its level of national security and defend its people and interests as a result.

The expansion of regional collaboration and alliances is another result of Kenya's participation in AMISOM. The mission united the nations in the area to cooperate toward the shared objective of promoting stability and peace in Somalia. This collaboration transcended the military sphere, with Kenya taking the lead in diplomatic initiatives to end the conflict in Somalia. Reuben (2021) claims that Kenya's involvement in AMISOM aided in fostering regional trust and cooperation, which improved regional stability and security.

However, several academics have also pointed out the drawbacks of Kenya's involvement in AMISOM. One of them is the chance of fallout from Al-Shabaab, which pledged to intensify attacks against Kenya in retaliation for the nation's participation in the

mission. According to Anzalone (2021), the expedition gave Al-Shabaab a reason to launch assaults in Kenya that caused casualties and financial loss. This demonstrated the need for Kenya to weigh its national security interests against any dangers involved in participating in the operation. The burden Kenya's participation in AMISOM placed on the nation's resources, particularly in terms of financing and military personnel, was another adverse effect. Kenya paid a hefty price for the mission, carrying a huge share of the project's financial load. According to Anzalone, this affected Kenya's capacity to devote funds to other national objectives including social welfare and economic development projects.

Strategies for Securing Kenya's National Interests in AMISOM

Kenya's involvement in AMISOM required a multifaceted strategy that prioritizes civilian protection, effective military, diplomatic, and humanitarian cooperation, crystal-clear national security goals, and long-term funding. Kenya may improve its national security and contribute to the peace and stability of the area by implementing these initiatives. The successful coordination of the mission's military, diplomatic, and humanitarian activities was one of the primary tactics for protecting Kenya's national interests. Otieno (2019) claims that Kenya's participation in AMISOM necessitated the employment of a multifaceted strategy to address the root causes of the crisis in Somalia. To guarantee that the mission was successful in attaining its goals, careful coordination between military and civilian operations was required.

Prioritizing the safety of civilians in the war zone was another tactic. Significant population displacement had occurred as a result of Kenya's participation in AMISOM, notably in the regions that border Somalia. According to Nanima (2021), safeguarding the rights and welfare of civilians impacted by the conflict was one of Kenya's national interests in the mission. This included offering aid to the needy, fostering respect for human rights, and making sure that no civilians are killed during military operations.

A third tactic was to guarantee that Kenya's participation in AMISOM was determined by a clear knowledge of the nation's national interests and mission objectives. Albrecht & Cold-Ravnkilde (2020) contend that a clear national security policy outlining Kenya's objectives in Somalia and how they might be realized through the mission drove the country's engagement in the operation. This called for a thorough examination of the advantages and disadvantages of Kenya's participation in the mission and how they balanced to advance the nation's interests.

Securing long-term funding for AMISOM was a crucial approach to protecting Kenya's national interests in the organization. Henke (2019) asserts that Kenya incurred enormous financial costs as a result of its participation in the mission. It was crucial to make sure that there was enough money from both domestic and foreign sources to ensure that the mission became sustainable and met its goals.

The designers of Kenya's initial unilateral mission in Somalia and subsequent participation in AMISOM provided clear-cut, uplifting descriptions of the objectives and successes of the operation (Albrecht & Cold-Ravnkilde, 2020). This clearly defined strategic goal and performance indicators. However, because adequate standards were not established during the initial years, it was thought that the goal did not have a realistic path to accomplishment as Albrecht & Cold-Ravnkilde discourse, which made it impossible to protect the nation's interests. In operations like AMISOM, which involve numerous

participants, it is also crucial that all partners have a clear understanding of the nature of the mission.

Kenya's inability to develop essential enablers made it nearly impossible to quickly neutralize Al-Shabab's fighting forces and threats (Ogonji, 2019). Despite this, local and international stakeholders voiced their disappointment at AMISOM's failure to completely remove Al-Shabab. One of the most obvious shortages was in aviation: although a 12-military-helicopter component was authorized in February 2012, AMISOM did not receive it until December 2016, when Kenya delivered three helicopters. Thus, it should be highlighted that an earlier deployment of these helicopters would have provided Kenya an advantage in the mission's early days and resulted in the completion of goals on schedule.

Missions that heavily rely on the military forces of neighboring countries should consider the advantages and challenges of these contributions and be ready to head off any potential negative effects (Harig, Jenne & Ruffa, 2022). Kenya, a neighbor of Somalia, had vital interests at risk and was prepared to spend a tremendous amount of money or even lose badly by losing people. Because of its politicized goals, AMISOM simultaneously had political and military repercussions. In particular, Kenya's suspected participation in local administration; including the support of its preferred candidates and financial worries such as unlawful trading, are cause for concern and might hamper AMISOM's and Kenya's withdrawal strategy (Ninshaba, 2019). As a result, Kenya acted quickly to address and dispel these unfavorable impressions to avoid harming its objectives in AMISOM.

To lay the foundation for the security sector changes that would lead to the restoration of law and order in Somalia, Kenya needed to act rapidly to urge regional political leaders to take particular actions. Evidence from previous decades indicates that modernizations of Somalia's security sector were greatly hampered by Somali national politics (Nzau, 2023). As a result, Kenya has the best possibility of using its affiliation with AMISOM to fight for these changes that will eventually result in law and order, lowering the security dangers that Kenya faces. In a similar spirit, Kenya should not have had inflated expectations for how quickly the AMISOM mission would advance and terror concerns would be eliminated. Patience was essential because the AMISOM mission had a huge territory to cover given the size of Somalia under Al Shabaab control (Williams, 2020). While Kenya had hoped to see results quickly by underestimating the enemy's capabilities, the national interests of territorial sovereignty and national security call for patience and time. The AMISOM and Kenyan scenarios did not show this.

In the case of AMISOM, the partners lacked appropriate liaison channels and were infrequently closely enough positioned to carry out fully cooperative operations. "What signal does it send to the locals when they see the SNA and AMISOM still not working very closely together and using two separate bases," one Somali government official asked in February 2016 (Williams, 2020). It seemed that AMISOM was acting more like an invading army than a partner in the SNA. Soldiers departed to allow for transition to occur while Kenya conducted joint operations with AMISOM and the SNA, but without comparable Somali forces to take their place. This put Al Shabaab at risk of regrouping. To sustain the peace and security that Kenya had attained in the industry it was operating in, it was necessary to build a framework for deploying SNA in the liberated regions. Kenya must rely on other processes and collaborations in addition to its own for an efficient exit. As Williams (2020) opines Kenya and AMISOM should take note of the fact that departing should be viewed as a political process to lower the likelihood of insurgents reappearing. The main takeaway is that

it is a grave error to conduct a peace operation without making effective strategic communication efforts according to Williams. Kenya needs a permanently established framework of strategic communication to develop policies and plans, maintain consistency, and promote communication in all its peace-related actions to prevent this from happening again.

Methodology

The following methodology was applied to inform a study on Kenya's involvement in AMISOM taking into account national interests and effects on security strategies: The researcher reviewed all of the published material on Kenya's involvement in AMISOM, including scholarly papers, official reports, and news pieces. This served as a foundation for comprehending the setting and background of Kenya's participation in the mission. Interviews were performed by the researcher with important participants, such as regional security specialists, military personnel, and government officials. The impact on Kenya's security strategy and the specific national interests that motivated Kenya's participation in the operation were both discussed in these interviews. Focus groups with members of the public, including representatives from civil society organizations and communities impacted by the crisis in Somalia, were convened by the researcher. This gave viewpoints on how Kenya's participation in AMISOM might affect regional security and stability.

To find patterns and themes about Kenya's engagement in AMISOM, national interests, and effects on security tactics, the researcher evaluated the data from the literature study, key informant interviews, and focus groups. Additionally, the researcher conducted case studies of certain instances, such as military operations or diplomatic initiatives, connected to Kenya's participation in AMISOM. These aided in illuminating significant findings and gave a more thorough grasp of the processes at work. Kenya's participation in AMISOM was compared to other nations' involvement in regional peacekeeping and counterterrorism operations in a comparative analysis. This gave a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of Kenya's participation in AMISOM and its implications for regional security. Lastly, the study produced policy recommendations based on its findings, including ideas for enhancing Kenya's engagement in AMISOM and its influence on national security plans.

Findings

The study emphasized the significance of comprehending the intricate interactions between national interests, security plans, and the effects of joining AMISOM. Kenya may maximize the advantages of its participation in the mission and improve its national security by implementing effective measures. Kenya's participation in AMISOM was motivated by several national reasons, including securing its borders, preserving national security, battling terrorism, and fostering regional peace. These interests changed over time in reaction to shifting conditions and were impacted by a convoluted web of political, economic, and social forces.

Kenya's security plans have been significantly impacted by its membership in AMISOM. To address the root causes of the war in Somalia, the mission required a multifaceted strategy, which had an impact on Kenya's military, diplomatic, and humanitarian efforts. The mission made clear how crucial it is to prioritize protecting people in conflict zones and the demand for improved cooperation between national and international players.

The study recommended some tactics to protect Kenya's national interests in AMISOM. This included prioritizing the protection of civilians, maintaining a clear understanding of the nation's national interests and objectives in the mission, and providing sustainable finance for the mission. It also included good coordination between military, diplomatic, and humanitarian efforts. Kenya may improve its national security and contribute to the peace and stability of the area by using these tactics.

Conclusion

The study emphasized the significance of comprehending the intricate interactions between national interests, security plans, and the effects of joining AMISOM. In conclusion, Kenya may maximize the advantages of its participation in the mission and improve its national security by implementing effective tactics. Kenya's participation in AMISOM was motivated by several national reasons, including securing its borders, preserving national security, battling terrorism, and fostering regional peace. Over time, these interests changed as a result of a complicated network of political, economic, and social variables.

Kenya's security plans were significantly impacted by its AMISOM engagement. To address the root causes of the war in Somalia, the mission required a multifaceted strategy, which had an impact on Kenya's military, diplomatic, and humanitarian efforts. The mission also emphasized how crucial it is to prioritize protecting civilians in conflict zones and the demand for improved coordination between national and international players.

Kenya needed to adopt effective strategies that prioritize protecting civilians, ensure effective coordination between military, diplomatic, and humanitarian efforts, ensure a clear understanding of the nation's national interests and objectives in the mission, and ensure sustainable funding for the mission to protect its national interests in AMISOM.

Kenya's participation in AMISOM improved national security, regional stability, and efforts to combat terrorism. The mission did, however, come with difficulties, such as the potential for innocent casualties, enormous financial expenses, and the potential for political backlash.

Recommendations

Kenya can maximize the advantages of its membership in AMISOM, increase the efficacy of its participation, and contribute to regional peace and security. This can be accomplished by continuing to support AMISOM as part of measures to protect national interests and promote regional stability. Kenya ought to take a multifaceted approach that emphasizes the safety of civilians, efficient military, diplomatic, and humanitarian coordination, a clear comprehension of the nation's national interests and mission objectives, and mission funding that is sustainable. To achieve efficient coordination and cooperation in the mission, including exchanging information, resources, and expertise, Kenya should also cooperate closely with foreign actors. For handling the risks connected with joining AMISOM, such as the potential of civilian casualties, significant financial costs, and the risk of political backlash, a thorough strategy must be developed. Kenya should keep making military investments to improve its ability to contribute productively to peacekeeping operations like AMISOM. Last but not least, as part of its larger plan to foster regional peace, Kenya should give priority to efforts to address the root causes of war in Somalia, such as poverty, inequality, and political instability.

References

- Albrecht, P., & Cold-Ravnkilde, S. (2020). National interests as friction: Peacekeeping in Somalia and Mali. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 14(2), 204-220.
- Albrecht, P., & Haenlein, C. (2021). Dissolving the internal-external divide: Sierra Leone's path in and out of peacekeeping. *Conflict, Security & Development*, 21(2), 107-127.
- Anzalone, C. (2021). Framing Insurgency and the Rebel Proto-State: Al-Shabaab's Media and Information Operations. *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, 12(3), 343-360.
- Bailey, C. E. (2019). Counterterrorism Law and Practice in the East African Community. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Nijhoff.
- Bode, I., & Karlsrud, J. (2019). Implementation in practice: The use of force to protect civilians in United Nations peacekeeping. *European Journal of International Relations*, 25(2), 458-485.
- Dahir, A., & Sheikh Ali, A. Y. (2021). Federalism in post-conflict Somalia: A critical review of its reception and governance challenges. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 1-20.
- Gjelsvik, I. M. (2019). *Should I stay or should I go?: Security considerations for members leaving al-Shabaab in Somalia*. Norwegian Institute for International Affairs (NUPI).
- Harig, C., Jenne, N., & Ruffa, C. (2022). Operational experiences, military role conceptions, and their influence on civil-military relations. *European Journal of International Security*, 7(1), 1-17.
- Henke, M. E. (2019). Buying allies: payment practices in multilateral military coalition-building. *International Security*, 43(4), 128-162.
- Hesse, B. J. (2015). Why deploy to Somalia? Understanding six African countries' reasons for sending soldiers to one of the world's most failed states. *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, 6(3-4), 329-352.
- Iazzolino, G., & Hersi, M. (2019). Shelter from the storm: Somali migrant networks in Uganda between international business and regional geopolitics. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 13(3), 371-388.
- Jowell, M. (2019). Peacekeeping in Africa: Politics, Security and the Failure of Foreign Military Assistance. United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Nanima, R. D. (2021). The right to education of the refugee girl affected by armed conflict in Kenya: insights from the jurisprudence of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. *Law, Democracy and Development*, 25(SPE), 119-145.
- Newbery, K. M. (2021). State identity narratives and threat construction in the Horn of Africa: revisiting Ethiopia's 2006 intervention in Somalia. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 15(2), 255-273.
- Ninshaba, E. (2019). *The effectiveness of peace enforcement missions in the promotion of peace in Africa: a case of AMISOM (2007-2019) Halane area* (Doctoral dissertation, Nkumba University).
- Nzau, M. (2023). Confronting Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Eastern Africa. In *State Politics and Public Policy in Eastern Africa: A Comparative Perspective* (pp. 137-156). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Ogonji, M. (2019). *Promoting Security in Africa through effective counter cyber terrorism Strategies* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).

Citation: Gicovi, W. M. (2023). Dynamics of Kenya's Participation in AMISOM: An Assessment of National Interests and Impact on Security Strategies. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 7(4), 120 – 131.

Otieno, F. O. (2019). *Counterterrorism strategies and performance of the national police service in managing terrorism in Lamu County, Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology).

Prestholdt, J. (2020). Counterterrorism in Kenya: Security aid, impunity, and Muslim alienation. In *Non-Western responses to terrorism* (pp. 387-409). Manchester University Press.

Reuben, J. K. (2021). Peacebuilding Efforts in Somalia: Jubaland's Actors and Contribution to Success in Peacebuilding. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 28(3), 261-282.

Williams, P. D. (2020). Building the Somali National Army: anatomy of a failure, 2008–2018. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 43(3), 366-391.