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KENYA-UNITED STATES OF AMERICA MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIPS ON COUNTERTERRORISM

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ABSTRACT
Multilateralism in counterterrorism refers to global efforts led by United States of America, its allies, and international organization, to prevent, combat, and to respond to global terrorism. This study seek to examine the various dimensions of multilateralism taken by Kenya-United States of America partnership on counterterrorism. The study was informed by the two leading theories of international relation; realism and liberalism to complement each other. The study adopted a qualitative approach by utilizing existing literature and primary data collected with interview schedule. The study found out that the multilateral dimension taken by Kenya-US are; coalition, charter, and club. The study concludes that the future of counterterrorism efforts lies on multilateralism. The study recommends that for counterterrorism efforts to succeed there is need for stronger collaboration among states and non-state actors working together to ameliorate factors which may lead to rise of extremists and violent groups.
KEY WORDS: *Multilateral partnership, Counterterrorism, Kenya- United States*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Although terrorism has no universally agreed definition, it can generally understood as a method of coercion that or utilizes threatens to use violence to spread fear and thereby attain political or ideological goal. Historically, the term "terrorism" was coined to describe the Reign of Terror, the period of the French Revolution from 5 September 1793 to 27 July 1794, during which the Revolutionary Government directed violence and harsh measures against citizens suspected of being enemies of the Revolution (Friedlander, 1976). Over a period of time, aided by the global development in terms of technology, globalization and population increase the nature of terrorism and its impact has grown necessitating global response. As a weapon of politics and warfare, used by non-state actors threatens states interests in varying degree necessitating concerted efforts of states, regional institutions, and United Nations to ameliorate its effects.

Multilateralism (Keohane, 1990) is the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of more than three states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions. The salient feature defining this type of partnership is the expanded sphere to include state institutions and supra-national bodies. Ruggie (1992), further posit that multilateralism premises on indivisibility of security which necessitate collectivity of the same. Kapchans (1986) argue that for multilateralism to succeed the great powers are to be on the forefront and the decisions are arrived at by informal negotiations and consensus.

Counterterrorism is a USA initiative aimed at promoting its national security by leading the efforts to defeat terrorism within and without through coordinated strategies and approaches with the cooperation of international partners (https://www.state.gov/policy-issues/countering-terrorism).

In the aftermath of 9/11 USA federal government, local, tribal and territorial in bid to protect homeland security declared Global War on Terrorism. As a result, they used their veto power in the UN security council to act in bringing together international community under the common objective to end international terrorism (UN, General Assembly, 2001). With this influence, UN has passed several conventions on counterterrorism which has been ratified by its members. In addition, regional organizations also have passed several conventions on the same and ratified by its members in bid to thwart terrorism in the entire globe.

The authors utilized the two main theories of international relations for complementarity. For instance, realist theory emphasizes on power and national interest as the main objective of a state in its relations with other states in international milieu (Keohane, etal, 1977). In this study, USA takes the lead in counterterrorism globally to protect its national interest and also as a way of projecting its power. On the other hand, liberalists (Waltz, 1959) emphasized the need of institutions, international organizations, law, observance of human rights etc in bringing about lasting peace in the globe. In order to understand multilateralism, where not only states but also regional and international organizations collaborates in counterterrorism the two theories complements each other.

This study adopted a qualitative technique by involving the use of interview schedule (Harvey, 2011) for in-depth information regarding the subject. The contextual scope of this study coved the literature concerning the strategic partnership between Kenya and United States of America in Counterterrorism. The United States in this context is the powerful state (Kapchans (1986) while

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Kenya to succeed in counterterrorism in its territory has to partner. Geographically, the study is on Kenya.

1.2 Multilateralism in Counterterrorism

In this study, terrorism is explained as a context in which multilateral partnership acts are enacted to achieve the counterterrorism outcomes. Here multilateral acts are seen as acts of reproduction of Kenya's state power. Multilateralism (Keohane, 1990) is the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of more than three states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions. The only difference between bi-and multilateralism is the expanded sphere to include state institutions and supra-national bodies. Ruggie (1992), further posit that multilateralism premises on indivisibility of security which necessitate collectivity of the same. Kapchans (1986) argue that for multilateralism to succeed, the great powers are to be on the forefront and the decisions should be taken informal negotiations and consensus.

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Table 1 below shows the nature of multilateralism partnership between Kenya and the United States of America on counterterrorism in Kenya. It is imperative to note that all the four Cs lay claim to respective virtue: legitimacy, solidarity, capability, and flexibility (Patrick, 2021). After the table below what follows is the explanation of the dimension's multilateralism that Kenya-United states partnerships on counter-terrorism exists.

Table 1: Multi-lateral Nature of K-USA Partnership on CT

Nature of multilateral-partnership	***Description***
Coalition	Ad hoc for contingency
Charter	Led by United Nations
Club	Established democracies

Source: *Researcher, 2025*

This response shows that counterterrorism effort between Kenya and United States of America in Kenya is a concerted effort led by the charter (United Nation (UN), the assistance of a club of developed democracies (European Union (EU)) African Union (coalition) through African Mission in Somali (AMISON). Again, like my sampling of context and causal mechanisms in discussing how bilateral partnerships were picked, the authors selected power reproduction presented by Falleti & Lynch (2009:1150) as causal mechanism as a portable concept to explain choice of the multilateral partnerships. Thus, the multilateral partnerships in counterterrorism discussed below can be understood as a causal mechanism to reproduce the institutional power of the Kenyan state in the context of terrorism. This multilateral partnership is discussed below in details;

1.2.1 The Charter Multilateralism

The Charter conception of world order treats the United Nations, on account of its binding Charter and universal membership, as the ultimate foundation for international peace and security and the first port of call for cooperation on global challenges (Patrick, 2021). Further, the UN remains the world's premier multilateral body and foundational bedrock for international cooperation, by virtue of its universality, legal status, multidimensional mandate, and authority over the use of force.

United Nations remains a relative bargain, allowing America to advance global goals it cannot accomplish on its own or only at prohibitive cost. In 2020, the United States provided some $11.6 billion to the world body (Council on Foreign Relations, 2022) which was the highest than any other nation. The trajectory that multilateralism in counterterrorism takes in the Kenya-USA relations is the role played by the United Nations which is a supra-national organization consisting of 191 sovereign states who have accepted the obligation of the UN charter.

It should be noted that the USA is a Charter member of the United Nations and a host of the UN headquarters in New York City which includes a General Assembly seating place. On the other part Kenya is a host of the global headquarters for two programs: the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). In partnering with Kenya, the United States of America interests in Kenya on securing regional and global interest are great significance while United Nations interest as a supra-national organization with its two global headquarters in Nairobi converge (USDS, 2020). In an interview with one of the officers in Anti-Terrorism Police Unit noted;

> *"UN has assisted in counterterrorism to a greater extent in capacity building of security personnel and those in criminal justice system. In addition, the UN has helped the country to come with various instrument (legislation and training manuals) in efforts to help the capacity of the individuals in various government agencies deal with the terrorists and terrorism acts."*

In line with the above sentiments, Kenya through the multilateral partnership with the UN was able to develop Training Manual on Human Rights and Criminal Justice Responses to Terrorism

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(UNODC, undated). In July 2021, the United Nations concluded a three days capacity building workshop on Regional Implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in Eastern Africa (UN, 2021). This workshop is as a result of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy which was adopted by the General Assembly on 8 September 2006 and represents an important milestone the collective pursuit towards strengthening the global response on terrorism, based on a common strategic and operational framework.

The above strategy is anchored on four pillars of action namely: Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism; Measures to prevent and combat terrorism; Measures to build States' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system and finally; Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against terrorism. This Strategy calls on Member States to ensure its implementation at the national, regional, and international levels, and for enhanced coordination and coherence within the United Nations system in promoting international cooperation in countering terrorism.

In order to achieve the above stated objectives, the USA has had over 70 years defense framework cooperation with Kenya to advance its national interests in the region. The returns on this investment are readily visible through the participation in the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia by the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) and in the KDF's proven value as a partner in the fight against al-Shabaab (USDS, 2022).

Furthermore, The United States has four security assistance objectives in Kenya namely: professionalize the Kenyan military forces; increase Kenyan counterterrorism and border security capabilities; increase maritime security awareness; and to improve peacekeeping capabilities (USDS, 2022).

In addition to Kenya's commitment to partnership on counterterrorism with USA, it has ratified 19 United Nations international legal instruments against terrorist activities (Singh, 2019) of which USA is also a signatory, and which can be broadly categorized in to the following sections;

Instruments regarding civil aviation

i) The 1963 Convention on offenses and certain acts committed on board aircraft
ii) The 1970 convention for the suppression of unlawful seizure of aircraft
iii) The 1971 convention for the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of civil aviation
iv) 1988 protocol for the suppression of unlawful acts relating to international civil aviation
v) 2010 convention on the suppression of unlawful acts relating to international civil aviation
vi) 2010 protocol supplementing to convention for the suppression of unlawful seizure of aircraft
vii) 2014 protocol to amend the convention of offenses and certain acts committed on board aircraft

Instruments regarding the protection of international staff

viii) 1973 convention on the prevention and punishment of crimes against international instruments regarding the taking of hostages
ix) 1979 international convention against the taking of hostages

Instruments regarding the nuclear materials

x) 1980 convention on the physical protection of nuclear materials
xi) 2005 amendment to the convention on the physical protection of nuclear materials

Instruments regarding maritime navigation

xii) 1988 convention for the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of maritime navigation
xiii) 2005 protocol to the convention for the suppression of unlawful acts against the safety of fixed platforms located on the continental shelf.
xiv) 1988 protocol for the suppression of acts against the safety fixed platforms of continental shelf.
xv) 2005 protocol to the protocol for the suppression of unlawful acts against safety of fixed platforms located on the continental shelf

Instrument regarding terrorist bombing

xvi) 1997 international convention for suppression of terrorist bombing

Instruments regarding explosive materials

xvii) 1997 international community for the suppression of terrorist bombing

Instruments regarding the financing of terrorism

xviii) 1999 international convention for the suppression of financing terrorism
xix) 2005 international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

Despite the above-mentioned instruments, United Nations played a critical role in AMISON by the creation of the United Nations office for AMISOM (UNSOA) which has been commented as the only field support operation of its kind in the world (www.unsoa.unmission.org). The UNSOA-authorized support package basically included vital life support such as food, water, health and sanitation, fuel, facilities and engineering, vehicles and other equipment, communications and IT, property management, capacity building, aviation and medical services. This was augmented by a Trust Fund through which member states could make voluntary contributions to AMISOM.

This move marked the first time the UNSC had ever funded a peace support operation led by a regional organization. It resulted in an unprecedented level of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union which led to marked complex and often unwieldly network of international peace and security actors (http://www.un.org). In addition, USA has been instrumental in

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marshalling the support of EU, NATO and UN which has jointly held a coordinated efforts in anti-piracy mission in the Horn of Africa Sea shore support of the AMISOM by cutting terrorist main source of income (Dahl, 2021).

1.2.2 The Club Multilateralism

The Club approach to multilateralism posits that the most promising foundation for global order and cooperation is not UN universalism but a league of advanced market democracies committed to an open, liberal, and rules-based international system (Patrick, 2021). It assumes that established democracies constitute a distinctive "security community" dedicated to shared political and economic principles—namely, support for representative and accountable governance, open markets, and the rule of law at home and abroad—and among whom armed conflict has become inconceivable (Deutsch, 1957).

Multilateral partnership dimension between the Kenya-USA strategic partnership can be seen through the immense support from European Union through the African Peace Facility (APF) to AMISOM. This facility was created by EU in response to AU call for external support. With its focus on supporting the AU and African sub-regional organizations in their efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, the APF has become a central pillar of AU-EU peace and security cooperation.

USA government has also been very instrumental in assisting Africa to achieve internal peace and security. This could be attributed to the convergence of interest between EU and USA in Africa. For instance, in 2001 the USA President Joe Biden articulated its continued periodization of support for Africa's peace initiative as his predecessors in the following areas; enhancing peace and security, promoting mutually beneficial economic growth, trade, investments, strengthening democracy, and building resilience to challenges related to climate change and international security (Congressional Research Service, 2001).

Both EU and USA are states considered as developed democracies with similar defense and security objective as espoused in the trans-Atlantic partnership which are threatened by global terrorism (Mix, 2015). Through the APF, the EU disbursed over € 2.7 billion between 2004 and 2019 to provide support in three critical areas under the umbrella of the AU. The first is African-led peace support operations. The second is the African Peace and Security Architecture – i.e., the continent's institutional framework for security. The third is the APF's Early Response Mechanism that mobilizes quick financial assistance for African conflict prevention and mediation initiatives (APF Report, 2019).

Further, APF covers mission costs such as troop transport, soldiers' living expenses, communication infrastructure and medical evacuation capabilities, but it cannot pay for soldiers' salaries, arms, ammunition or military equipment and training. From 2007 to 2019, it is estimated that more than €1.94 billion in APF funding was channeled through the AU into just one operation, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the lion's share of which has covered the cost of troop stipends (International Crisis Group, 2021).

It is imperative to note that Europe as a continent has most of its states being close allies to the United States of America especially Britain which has two military bases in Kenya: Kenya Air Base in Nairobi and Laikipia Air base in Nanyuki (British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK). The British government usually train over 10,000 military personnel annually in Kenya for joint deployment in Warton zones globally to protect British interests (https://www.army.mod.uk/deployments/africa).

In totality, EU in 2019 approved a total of €500.000 aid to Kenyan government National Counter Terrorism Center to scale up country-wide public awareness efforts, in order to reach and mobilize the wider public to join government efforts to counter violent extremism by reducing misinformation, demystifying key actors, and increasing awareness about the threat and recruitment strategies (https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica).

These states also in their bid to protect their National interest in the Horn of Africa and the continental Africa at large assumes a collaborative approach which is multilateral in nature to thwart terrorism. African leaders in counterterrorism efforts established the Africa Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2007, but they were faced with serious financial constraints to thwart terrorist activities. An interview with an officer in the counterterrorism police unit revealed that;

> *"We've received a lot of counterterrorism support from our partner state in Europe, especially in areas of capacity building, joint military trainings, equipment, and preventing piracy off Kenya and Somali coast."*

From the above response it is worth to mention that terrorists have been using Somali and Kenya coast as a source of funding through piracy and armed robbery. Below is a table showing European Union funding to counterterrorism efforts in Kenya.

Table 3: EU Counterterrorism Funding to GOK

Source of Grant	Donor commitment		Amount received to date (30.06 2121)		Unclaimed amount to date (30.06.2020)	
	Euros. A	Ksh. A	Euros. B	Ksh. B	Euros. A-B	Ksh.A- B
EU	4,800,000	557,586,270	1,839,367.50	213,704,710	2960,632.50	343,881,530
Total	4,800,000	557,586,270	1,839,367.50	213,704,710	2960,632.50	343,881,530

Source: GoK, 2022

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The funding objective was to assist in operationalization of the Kenya National strategy to counter violent extremism with particular emphasis on preventive aspects. Seen broadly, European Union counterterrorism strategy has a broad dimension encompassing; government agencies, private sector, religious organizations, research institutions and regional organizations (IGAD and EAC) (Republic of Kenya, 2020). To complement the EU funding, USA department of defense provided $24 million in counterterrorism assistance in 2015 meant to build the capacity of Kenya's defense institutions, enhance military sales, and counterterrorism operations. Since 2015, the United States has been providing $ 20 million in counterterrorism efforts in Kenya (USDS, 2021).

Club Multilateralism nature of the Kenya-USA partnership in AMISOM in constructivist lenses can be seen as driven by identity motives of the club of democracies, these club of nations seek to reproduce their hegemony in the east and the Horn of Africa. This implies that multilateral efforts such as the Kenya-US partnership emanate from international political ideas on how to prevent anti-western illiberal orders from taking root or gaining more momentum in jurisdictions considered close to western powers or are strategic to western powers. Kenya and the horn of Africa fits into the description of such a region where the club powers would want to reproduce their hegemonic and geopolitical power.

1.2.3 The Coalition Multilateralism

This nature of multilateralism approach places its faith in flexible coalitions whose focus, size, and membership can be tailored to specific contingencies (Patrick, 2021). In trying to understand this nature of partnership in counterterrorism in Kenya, it is imperative to note that the US is still the world's most powerful country according to most measures, the United States has fewer short-term incentives than weaker nations to invest in formal multilateral organizations as well as greater opportunities to pick and choose among frameworks that promise to expand its freedom of action and policy autonomy in pursuing its interest.

United States has been cooperating with a several countries on different aspects of the war against terrorism, from cracking down on terrorist financing to mobilizing troop contributions in Afghanistan and other parts of the globe. Under this strategy the US determines the coalition (Patrick, 2009). Further, Patrick posits that rather than a true multilateral undertaking, the U.S. antiterrorism campaign by design was a hub and-spoke arrangement based on bilateral deals with a heterogeneous group of countries, in which an American sheriff largely determined the actions of its posse.

It should be noted that, continental Africa is vulnerable to terrorism due to its inherent challenges of weak criminal justice, inadequacy law enforcement personnel, with state hard pressed to handle disengaging terrorists (https://press.un.org/en/2020/sc14140.doc.htm). To understand the multilateral partnership on counterterrorism under the auspice of AMISOM, it is important to note that it is the creature of Africa Union which is a regional body of African state's composition of military and police personnel meant to address regional and international security and political interests (Boutellis and Williams, 2013). This body was mandated by The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) when it adopted resolution 1772 in 2007 which authorized AMISOM to take "all necessary measures" to protect to inter alia protect the institutions of the Transitional Institutions of the Somali Government and "support dialogue and reconciliation" by pro-viding protection and safe passage to personnel involved. In Resolution 2036 of 2012 the Security Council was more specific in authorizing AMISOM "to reduce the threat posed by Al Shabab and other armed opposition groups in order to establish conditions for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia." (Coning and Freear, 2013).

This means that without coalition of developed nations and regional and supra-regional organization to salvage the continent, Africa would remain to be a safe haven for terrorism. In an interview with one of the senior officers in the security sector revealed that;

> *"Counterterrorism efforts in Kenya in particular and the horn of Africa at large has necessitated concerted efforts, AMISOM has been of great help in assisting Somalia security apparatus stabilize and take control of the most conflicted state in the horn of Africa."*

Due to regular attacks on Kenya by al-Shabaab terrorists, for instance the attack of Garissa University and West Gate Mall prompted the Kenyan government to launch and adopt a counter insurgency strategy to guard and disrupt al-Shabaab militia from crossing its borders (Albrecht, 2015). Kenya defense forces were later included to Africa Mission in Somalia which is a multi-dimensional component of the African union Mission in Somalia charged with the responsibility of supporting the people of Somalia in their struggle to overcome the legacy of over 20 years of conflict and to build a stable and prosperous state.

For this mission to succeed, both financial and materiel support from members of the international community, particularly the US and other Western countries, has been critical to Kenya, and other neighboring states in AMISOM's expansion and increased operational effectiveness (Badmas, 2015). This support was necessitated due to their reluctance to involve a substantial number of troops *in any peacekee*ping operation in Somalia, US has placed support for AMISOM's five Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) Burundi (5,432), Djibouti (2,000), Ethiopia (4,395), Kenya (3,664), and Uganda (6,223) at or near the top of their strategies for defeating al-Shabaab and stabilizing Somalia's security situation (Raghavan, S. and Whitlock, C. (2016).

Kenya –United States of America partnership on counterterrorism could further be vividly espoused when the United States deployed its forces to Kenya to conduct counter-terrorism operations and to advise, assist, and accompany security forces in East Africa who are the major contributors of troops in AMISOM

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(Ngugi, 2021). This shows that the partnership between the two states has been widen to include the entire region.

1.3 Conclusion and recommendations

This study concludes that, the multilateral nature on counterterrorism between Kenya and United States takes the following .dimensions; charter multilateralism premising on the role played by the United Nations which is a supra-national organization consisting of 191 sovereign states who have accepted the obligation of the UN charter. Club Multilateral partnership dimension between the Kenya-USA strategic partnership can be seen through the immense support from European Union through the African Peace Facility (APF) to AMISOM. This facility was created by EU in response to AU call for external support. With its focus on supporting the AU and African sub-regional organizations in their efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, the APF has become a central pillar of AU-EU peace and security cooperation. Coalision Multilateralism approach which places its faith in flexible coalitions whose focus, size, and membership can be tailored to specific contingencies (Patrick, 2021).

The study recommends that, since the impact of terrorism cannot be contained within the territorial boundaries of a state due to the effects of globalization, there is need to strengthen multilateralism where all actors work together to minimize factors which creates extremism and violence.

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