


*Approved
SNA
22/4/25*

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT- FOURTH SESSION (2025)
**DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND FOREIGN
RELATIONS**

REPORT ON:
**SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 1 OF 2025 ON THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF KENYA**

The Grand Strategy to Position Kenya's Foreign Policy in the Global Landscape

 THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID	
DATE: 22 APR 2025	
DAY: TUESDAY	
TABLED BY:	Hon. (M.A.) (L.D.) SHEIKH ABDULHAKI, MP (VICE CHAIR)
CLERK-AT THE-TABLE:	INZOFU MURALE

CLERK'S CHAMBERS
DIRECTORATE OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
NAIROBI

APRIL, 2025

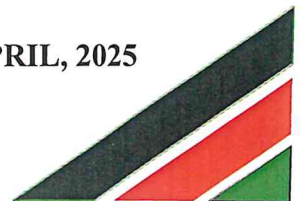


TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	3
LIST OF ANNEXURES	5
CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD.....	6
1.0 PREFACE	8
1.1 INTRODUCTION	8
1.2 COMMITTEE'S MANDATE	8
1.3 COMMITTEE SUBJECTS	8
1.4 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP.....	9
1.5 COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT	10
2.0 CONSIDERATION OF SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 1 OF 2025 ON FOREIGN POLICY	11
2.1 BACKGROUND	11
2.2 SCOPE OF THE SESSIONAL PAPER.....	11
2.4 THE PROBLEM THAT THE SESSIONAL PAPER SEEKS TO ADDRESS.....	12
2.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION	13
2.6 LEGISLATIVE INTERVENTIONS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE POLICY.....	13
3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION / STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION	14
3.1 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SOCIETY OF KENYA (IRSK)	14
3.2 MS. ANASTASIA MWANGI.....	16
3.3 KENYA NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS	17
3.4 FOOD SECURITY CONSORTIUM (FSC) & ONE VOICE CONSORTIUM (OVC).....	21
3.5 KENYA NATIONAL INTERFACE TEAM	23
3.6 AKDBL BELGUIM-LUXEMBOURG	27
3.7 CONSULTATIVE MEETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND DIASPORA AFFAIRS	28
4.0 COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS	30
5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.....	32

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	-	African Continental Free Trade Area
AGOA	-	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AI	-	Artificial Intelligence
AKDBL	-	Association of Kenyan Diaspora in Belgium
ANC	-	Amani National Congress
AU	-	African Union
AUC	-	African Union Commission
BATK	-	British American Tobacco Kenya
BETA	-	Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda
BPS	-	Budget Policy Statement
CBS	-	Chief of the Order of the Burning Spear
CEPA	-	Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
CoG	-	Council of Governors
COMESA	-	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CRRF	-	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CSOs	-	Civil Society Organizations
DPA	-	Diaspora Placement Agency
EAC	-	East African Community
EMCA	-	Environmental Management and Coordination Act
EU	-	European Union
FSC	-	Food Security Consortium
GCR	-	Global Compact for Refugees
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
IEBC	-	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IFFs	-	Illicit Financial Flows
ILO	-	International Labour Organization
IOTC	-	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IRSK	-	International Relations Society of Kenya
JCC	-	Joint Commission for Cooperation
JMCs	-	Joint Ministerial Commissions
JTCs	-	Joint Trade Commissions
KEPROBA	-	Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency
KMFRI	-	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
KNCHR	-	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
KRA	-	Kenya Revenue Authority
KSA	-	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
MDAs	-	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MEA	-	Multilateral Environment Agreements
MFDA	-	Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs
MoU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMEs	-	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NEMA	-	National Environment Management Authority
NIMES	-	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
NIS	-	National Intelligence Service
OACPS-EU	-	African, Caribbean and Pacific States- European Union
ODM	-	Orange Democratic Movement
OVC	-	One Voice Consortium
PPP	-	Public Private Partnership

R&D	-	Research and Development
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
SADR	-	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
STEM	-	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STI	-	Science, Technology, and Innovation
TJNA	-	Tax Justice Network Africa
TTIs	-	Technical Training Institutes
UAE	-	United Arab Emirates
UK	-	United Kingdom
UDA	-	United Democratic Alliance
UDM	-	United Democratic Movement
UN	-	United Nations
UNDRIP	-	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	-	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UN-Habitat	-	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
US	-	United States
USD	-	United States Dollar
VTCs	-	Vocational Training Centers

LIST OF ANNEXURES

- Annexure 1: Committee's Report Adoption Schedule
- Annexure 2: Minutes of Sitzings of the Committee
- Annexure 3: Advertisement Inviting the Public to Submit Memoranda
- Annexure 4: A Copy of Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya.
- Annexure 5: Submissions from Stakeholders

CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

Kenya's place in the world is neither accidental nor static; it is shaped by a deliberate, constitutionally grounded foreign policy. *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya* was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 13th February 2025 and thereafter committed to the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations for consideration. Foreign policy is a blue print of goals, strategies and actions that a state adopts to guide its foreign relations and diplomatic engagements with other states, international organizations and a myriad of non-state actors in the global arena.

Guided by its constitutional mandate under Articles 10 and 124, the Committee critically reviewed Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 and found it to be a timely and strategic framework for advancing Kenya's sovereignty, economic prosperity, and global influence. In a volatile international environment, the Paper presents a necessary response rooted in national values and legal obligations. Drawing on insights from public participation and consultations with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, the Committee assessed the Paper through the lenses of diplomacy, security, and governance. Indeed, the Sessional Paper is a solid foundation to navigate global complexities with coherence, purpose, and constitutional fidelity.

Kenya's foreign policy was consolidated into a single framework in 2014, bringing together provisions from various sources including the Constitution, treaties, and political pronouncements. The Sessional Paper updates this foundational document to reflect the evolving global and domestic context - climate change, geopolitical shifts, digital disruption, and pandemics. It aligns Kenya's external relations with national agendas like Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), while modernizing the Foreign Service and broadening engagement in emerging diplomatic spheres. Structured across eight chapters, the policy outlines Kenya's diplomatic history, key influences, thematic priorities, institutional frameworks, and strategies for effective implementation and evaluation.

The Sessional Paper aims to elevate Kenya's global standing as a regional leader and advocate for Africa's interests. It prioritizes protecting sovereignty, promoting peace and security, advancing economic and environmental agendas, strengthening global cooperation, and enhancing diaspora engagement. It offers a comprehensive framework grounded in historical context, current global trends, and strategic themes such as digital diplomacy, oceans economy, and science diplomacy.

The Sessional Paper addresses gaps in coordination, funding, and risk management that hindered the 2014 framework. It proposes institutional reforms, legal adjustments, and new focus areas to ensure responsive and inclusive diplomacy. Emphasis is placed on integrating diaspora, environmental, and digital initiatives to better project Kenya's influence and protect its interests in an unpredictable global arena.

To ensure effective execution, the Sessional Paper introduces a robust monitoring and evaluation system supported by NIMES and guided by performance-based frameworks. Annual Foreign Policy Outlook papers will track progress, with diaspora-specific metrics like remittances and labor agreements. Legislatively, the policy calls for updates to the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E and Privileges and Immunities Act, Cap. 179 to institutionalize professionalism, enhance Nairobi's role as a diplomatic hub, and align Kenya's diplomacy with international standards.

In line with Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution, the Committee ensured robust public participation in its review of the Sessional Paper. A public call for memoranda published on 19th February 2025

yielded six submissions from key stakeholders, including IRSK, MEA, FSC & OVC, and AKDBL Belgium-Luxembourg. While some proposals echoed existing policy provisions or lay outside the Sessional Paper's scope, all contributions enriched the Committee's deliberations—reinforcing transparency, accountability, and constitutional integrity in Kenya's foreign policy making process.

The Committee, after reviewing Sessional Paper and engaging stakeholders made the following observations.

First, it found the policy to be forward-looking and constitutionally grounded. It positions Kenya as a strategic global actor, anchored in peace and security, economic diplomacy, oceans and blue economy, multilateralism, climate action, innovation, diaspora engagement, and socio-cultural diplomacy—all aligned with constitutional mandates. However, the Committee noted implementation hurdles. Weak legal frameworks, institutional inefficiencies, underfunded missions, lack of diaspora and labour migration policies, and poor strategic communication hinder impact. These gaps undermine Articles 10, 19 and 232, calling for reforms, increased funding, and a coherent public diplomacy strategy to protect national interests.

Further, the Committee observed that the Sessional Paper identifies key risks, including legal misalignments, forex instability, shrinking markets, climate shocks, austerity, cybersecurity threats, and regional insecurity. It proposes mitigation via legal reforms, creation of a Diaspora Welfare Fund, digital diplomacy, mission expansion, PPP-driven asset optimization, and reclassification of the Ministry under the Security Sector—a move already approved by Cabinet.

Finally, the Committee noted that to ensure accountability, the Sessional Paper proposes a Results Framework with mid- and end-term reviews, anchored in NIMES, Strategic Plans, and Annual Contracts. Metrics such as remittances and diaspora agreements will guide progress. Partnerships with academia and think tanks will drive adaptive policy through regular assessments.

In conclusion, the Committee urges the House to adopt this Report and approve *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya* as Kenya's authoritative foreign policy blueprint. Its adoption will ensure coherence across all diplomatic legislation and initiatives—fortifying Kenya's voice on the global stage, advancing national interests, and anchoring international engagement in constitutional values and strategic clarity.

Hon. Nelson Koech, CBS, M.P.

Chairperson, Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations

1.0 PREFACE

1.1 Introduction

1. Kenya's place in the world is neither accidental nor static; it is shaped by a deliberate, constitutionally anchored foreign policy. The Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations, pursuant to its oversight mandate under Article 124 of the Constitution and Standing Order 216 of the National Assembly Standing Orders, has rigorously examined Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 - *The Grand Strategy to Position Kenya's Foreign Policy in the Global Landscape*. This Grand Strategy is anchored in Articles 2(5)-(6) and 132(5) of the Constitution and presents a bold vision to safeguard Kenya's sovereignty, expand economic and diplomatic influence, and secure the welfare of Kenyans.
2. The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs, mandated under Executive Order No. 2 of 2023 was instrumental in formulating the Grand Strategy. The Ministry works to safeguard Kenya's sovereignty, enhance international partnerships, and integrate the diaspora into national development efforts.
3. In line with Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution, the Committee facilitated extensive public participation by soliciting views from the public. These contributions, which have been carefully analyzed and incorporated into Chapter three (3) of this Report, enriched the Committee's analysis, ensuring that the final outcome reflects a wide spectrum of aspirations.

1.2 Committee's Mandate

4. The Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations is one of the Departmental Committees of the National Assembly established under Standing Order 216 whose mandates, pursuant to the Standing Order 216 (5) includes, among others, *to investigate, inquire into, and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities, administration, operations and estimates of the assigned ministries and departments; and to study the programme and policy objectives of Ministries and departments and the effectiveness of the implementation.*

1.3 Committee Subjects

4. The subject matter of the Committee is stated in the Second Schedule of the National Assembly Standing Orders and includes: *defence, intelligence, foreign relations, diplomatic and consular services, international boundaries including territorial waters, international relations, and veteran affairs.*
5. In executing its mandate, the Committee oversees the following government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs):
 - a) The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs;
 - b) The Ministry of Defence;
 - c) The State Department for East African Community Affairs (EAC); and
 - d) The National Intelligence Service (NIS).

1.4 Committee Membership

6. The Committee, initially constituted by the House on 27th October 2022 and reconstituted on 6th March 2025, brings together a diverse and experienced team of legislators entrusted with steering the nation's Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Policy agenda. Its membership is as follows:

Chairperson

Hon. Nelson Koech, CBS, M.P.

Belgut Constituency

UDA Party

Vice-Chairperson

Hon. Maj. (Rtd.) Sheikh Abdullahi Bashir, M.P.

Mandera North Constituency

UDM Party

Members

Hon. Wanjira Martha Wangari, CBS, M.P.

Gilgil Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Joshua Kandie, M.P.

Baringo Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Hassan Abdi Yusuf, CBS, M.P.

Kamkunji Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Kwenya Thuku Zachary, M.P.

Kinangop Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Odhiambo Millie G. Akoth, M.P.

Suba North Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Logova Sloya Clement, M.P.

Sabatia Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Kanchory Elijah Memusi, M.P.

Kajiado Central Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Ikana Fredrick Lusuli, M.P.

Shinyalu Constituency

ANC Party

Hon. (Dr.) Kasalu Irene Muthoni, MP

Kitui County

WDM-K

Hon. Mohamed A. Hussein, M.P.

Lagdera Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Kirima Moses Nguchine, M.P.

Imenti Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Anne Wanjiku Muratha, M.P.

Kiambu County

UDA Party

Hon. Luyai Caleb Amisi, M.P.

Saboti Constituency

ODM Party

1.5 Committee Secretariat

7. The Committee Secretariat is composed of a dedicated team of technical experts who provide crucial support to the Committee. It comprises the following staff:

Mr. Dennis Mogare Ogechi
First Clerk Assistant/Head of Secretariat

Mr. Lenny Muchangi
Legal Counsel II

Mr. Bernard Njeru
Clerk Assistant III

Martin Sigei
Research Officer III

Mr. Edwin Machuki
Fiscal Analyst III

Mr. Salat Ali
Principal Serjeant-at-Arms

Ms. Noelle Chelagat
Media Relations Officer II

2.0 CONSIDERATION OF SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 1 OF 2025 ON FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 Background

8. The *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya* was laid on the Table of the House on Thursday 13th February 2025 and thereafter committed to the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations for consideration. A Foreign Policy is a blue print of goals, strategies and actions that a state adopts to guide its foreign relations and diplomatic engagements with other states, international organizations and a myriad of non-state actors in the global arena.
9. In 2014, Kenya consolidated its foreign policy into a single document. Hitherto, it had been captured in a myriad documents including the Constitution, Sessional Papers, party manifestos, international treaties, agreements, conventions and charters, various national plans, policy and legal frameworks as well as political leadership pronouncements. It is the 2014 Foreign Policy document that is being revised to ensure it remains relevant and effective.
10. The Sessional Paper comprises eight (8) chapters. Chapter one outlines Kenya's foreign policy evolution, national interests, values, and objectives, emphasizing the need for a dynamic, inclusive, and development-focused international engagement. Chapter two analyzes global, regional, and domestic factors shaping Kenya's foreign policy, identifying key trends, actors, environments, and legislative frameworks influencing diplomatic strategies. Chapter three reviews Kenya's bilateral relations regionally and globally, and its role in multilateral institutions, highlighting the country's diplomatic achievements and future priorities. Chapter four presents the key thematic areas — including peace, economic diplomacy, environment, technology, diaspora, and socio-cultural relations — that define Kenya's foreign policy priorities and action plans. Chapter five identifies institutional, financial, operational, and strategic challenges facing Kenya's diplomacy and outlines emerging threats such as terrorism and diaspora management concerns. Chapter six explains the structural organization of Kenya's Foreign Service, including financing mechanisms, legal frameworks, and institutional reforms to enhance the effectiveness of diplomatic missions. Chapter seven highlights strategic risks affecting Kenya's foreign policy implementation — including legal, financial, geopolitical, and technological threats — and proposes recommendations to mitigate them. Chapter eight details the framework for measuring and evaluating diplomatic outcomes to ensure continuous improvement, accountability, and alignment with Kenya's foreign policy goals.

2.2 Scope of the Sessional Paper

11. The overall goal of the policy is to enhance the country's standing as a regional leader and an effective advocate for Africa's interests on the global stage. To fulfil this goal, the Foreign Policy will pursue the following specific objectives:
 - a) Protect Kenya's sovereignty and territorial integrity;
 - b) Promote regional and global peace and security;
 - c) Advance the country's development agenda and economic prosperity;
 - d) Position Kenya as a leader in environmental and climate action;
 - e) Project, promote and protect the country's image and prestige globally;
 - f) Promote sub-regional and regional integration and cooperation;
 - g) Promote international cooperation, multilateralism and active participation in global governance;
 - h) Enhance the voice of Kenyans in Diaspora and promote, protect their interests and welfare abroad.

12. The Sessional Paper provides a framework for guiding Kenya's engagement with the international community, reflecting both historical evolution and new strategic priorities. It covers:

- a) Historical Evolution: A detailed review of Kenya's foreign policy trajectory from independence to the present, showing shifts from political to economic diplomacy and the era of formal documentation (2013–2022).
- b) Contextual Analysis: An assessment of global, regional, and domestic trends affecting diplomacy, including technological change, climate challenges, regional security dynamics, and economic globalization.
- c) Thematic Focus Areas: Articulates nine key priority areas (peace and security, economic diplomacy, diaspora engagement, environmental diplomacy, oceans diplomacy, global governance, digital diplomacy, socio-cultural diplomacy, and science and innovation diplomacy).
- d) Bilateral and Multilateral Diplomacy: Reviews Kenya's relations with its neighbors, the rest of Africa, global powers, and its role in multilateral organizations (e.g., UN, AU).
- e) Institutional and Financial Frameworks: Lays out the governance structures, funding mechanisms, and legal adjustments required to operationalize the foreign policy.
- f) Emerging Challenges: Identifies institutional, financial, technological, and geopolitical risks that could undermine the implementation of Kenya's foreign policy.
- g) Strategic Risk Management: Proposes ways to anticipate and mitigate risks, from cybersecurity threats to shifts in global power dynamics.
- h) Monitoring and Evaluation: Establishes clear guidelines for measuring diplomatic performance, ensuring that the policy remains dynamic and adaptable to changing circumstances.

13. In essence, the scope is both broad and deep - covering Kenya's foreign policy principles, operational strategies, thematic priorities, institutional reforms, funding structures, risk mitigation, and accountability mechanisms. It positions Kenya to project influence, safeguard national interests, and actively shape regional and global affairs in a dynamic, uncertain world.

2.3 Rationale for Developing the Sessional Paper

13. The Sessional Paper was developed to respond to profound global, regional, and domestic changes since 2014. Emerging challenges such as climate change, digital transformation, shifting geopolitical alliances, and pandemics made it necessary for Kenya to adopt a more dynamic and responsive foreign policy. The revision aligns Kenya's diplomatic efforts with national priorities like the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and Vision 2030, emphasizing economic growth, peace, environmental sustainability, and citizen engagement. It also integrates new focus areas such as diaspora diplomacy, digital diplomacy, oceans economy, and climate action. The policy aims to strengthen Kenya's global influence, modernize its diplomatic service, enhance institutional governance, and ensure that foreign policy directly supports Kenya's development and security interests in an increasingly competitive international arena.

2.4 The Problem that the Sessional Paper Seeks to Address

15. The Sessional Paper seeks to address the limitations of the 2014 policy in responding to emerging global, regional, and domestic challenges. It aims to bridge the gap between Kenya's diplomatic ambitions and the rapidly evolving international environment by strengthening institutional coordination, aligning foreign policy with national development goals, expanding economic and diaspora diplomacy, and incorporating new areas like digital diplomacy, climate action, and blue economy initiatives. The policy also tackles issues of inadequate financing, risk management, and the need for more citizen-centered, inclusive, and proactive foreign engagement.

2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

16. Chapter 8 of the Sessional Paper emphasizes the importance of systematically measuring diplomatic outcomes to assess the effectiveness and impact of its initiatives. The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs will collaborate with academic institutions and think tanks to develop tools for evaluating progress, with both mid-term and end-term reviews planned. A dedicated Results Framework will define specific performance indicators, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and allowing for timely adjustments to strategies in response to emerging global and domestic challenges. This progressive approach ensures that the policy remains flexible, continuously improves during implementation, and stays aligned with Kenya's evolving national priorities.
17. Monitoring and evaluation activities will be coordinated under the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) and guided by national frameworks like Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Contracts, and the Medium-Term Plan.
18. The Ministry will prepare Annual Foreign Policy Outlook papers to guide yearly implementation priorities and assess performance through regular reports. Specific diaspora indicators, such as remittance flows and successful labour agreements, will also be tracked to ensure alignment with the Kenya Diaspora Policy. Ultimately, the success of monitoring and evaluation will depend on the commitment of all implementing institutions, with provisions for periodic policy reviews to adapt to changing domestic and international environments.

2.6 Legislative Interventions Highlighted in the Policy

19. The Sessional Paper underscores the need for a strong legal framework to support the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs in effectively implementing its mandate. To this end, the Ministry will prioritize reviewing and developing laws that strengthen its operations and align them with evolving domestic and international demands. A key focus is the review and full operationalization of the Foreign Service Act Cap. 185E through the development of comprehensive Foreign Service Regulations. This review aims to address gaps in the Act, enhance institutional capacity, professionalism, and accountability, and ensure that Kenya's Foreign Service remains relevant in the changing global diplomatic environment. Additionally, amendments will seek to institutionalize a 70:30 ratio favoring career diplomats over political appointees in ambassadorial appointments.
20. The policy also calls for the review of the Privileges and Immunities Act Cap. 179 to bolster Kenya's ability to attract and host regional, United Nations, and other intergovernmental agencies. Strengthening this legal framework will enhance Nairobi's position as a global diplomatic hub by ensuring that Host Country Agreements with international organizations are efficiently administered. The review aims to modernize the processes for granting privileges and immunities to external officials and organizations, aligning Kenya's diplomatic infrastructure with international best practices and supporting the country's broader foreign policy objectives.

3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION / STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

21. Pursuant to Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution, which requires Parliament to facilitate public participation and involvement in the legislative and other business of Parliament and its Committees, the Committee conducted public participation in its consideration of the Sessional Paper. The Committee invited written submissions through advertisements placed in two local dailies, on 19th February 2025, calling for submissions of memoranda from the public.
22. By the close of the deadline, the Committee had received six (6) memoranda on the Sessional Paper from the following stakeholders: *International Relations Society of Kenya (IRSK); Anastasia Mwangi; Kenya National Commission on Human Rights; Food Security Consortium (FSC) & One Voice Consortium (OVC); Kenya National Interface Team; and AKDBL Belgium-Luxembourg - Sammy Mburu*. In addition, the Committee held a consultative meeting with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs on 4th and 5th April 2025 to deliberate on the contents of the Sessional Paper. The insights gathered informed the Committee's analysis and are duly reflected hereunder.

3.1 International Relations Society of Kenya (IRSK)

24. The International Relations Society of Kenya (IRSK) serves as a forum for exchanging ideas and networking among those involved in the study, teaching and practice of international relations and diplomacy. The Society made proposals on the following aspects of the Sessional Paper:
25. On page 7, Chapter 1 under subsection 1.3.1 on Policy Context and Rationale for the Foreign Policy Review, where the government identifies illicit financial flows and money laundering as one of the newly emerging global security threats.

Proposal: The Society urges that Illicit Financial Flows be redefined to include proceeds of crime, money laundering, and aggressive tax avoidance, framing these exploitative losses as a security threat that worsens Kenya's debt and undermines public services. The society cites the February 2025 study *Missing Millions (Investigative Desk, University of Bath Tobacco Control Research Group, and TJNA)* uncovered unexplained gaps of KES 9.6 billion (USD 93 m) in BAT Kenya's 2017–18 accounts, pointing to as much as USD 28 m in avoided profit tax.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted that the issue was not within the purview of the State Department of Foreign Affairs.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the proposed definition of Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) is best suited under the relevant legislation dealing with economic crimes, proceeds of crime and anti-money laundering.

26. On page 38, Chapter 4 under subsection 4.2.1, on the Table describing the objectives of Peace and Security Diplomacy, the third objective states that Kenya seeks to "Enhance regional capacity for conflict, mediation, and negotiations"

Proposal: Amend the likely typographical error by removing the comma to read Kenya seeks to "Enhance regional capacity for conflict mediation and negotiations". The Society felt that with Kenya's recent involvement in DRC and Sudan, the objective in question risks suggesting a capacity—and intent—to destabilize the region, contradicting its peace-focused policy.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry concurs with the proposed amendment.

Committee Observation: The Committee endorsed that the proposed amendment be adopted in the Sessional Paper.

27. On page 51, Chapter 4 under subsection 4.9.1 specifically describing Cultural Diplomacy.

Proposal: Create Walibora Kiswahili Centres in embassies worldwide to advance soft power through language education, translation, and national branding. The Society argued that Prof. Walibora – an author of 40 + works since the 1996 classic *Siku Njema*—symbolizes Kiswahili’s allure and leveraging his legacy can propel Foreign Policy *Mashinani* and Diaspora Policy *Mashinani* outreach initiatives.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Diaspora Policy 2024 materials will be translated into Kiswahili and, with a new popular edition, distributed to churches, NGAOs, recruitment firms, and Kenyan and foreign missions. A broadened communication plan will publicize the State Department’s mandate, distress-contact channels, and overseas job-placement process to deepen diaspora engagement.

Committee Observation: The Sessional Paper already champions all forms of cultural expression—from literature and language to cuisine, media, science, and heritage tourism.

28. On page 68, Chapter 5 under section 5.4 in relation to Country Positions on Strategic Foreign Policy Issues where Kenya aligns itself to the African Union’s (AU) position on West Asia, plus the Israel-Palestine crisis. In the case of Israel this is the espousal of achieving a two- state solution through negotiations founded on relevant UN resolutions, and supporting homegrown solutions based on socio-cultural tolerance in the region’s conflict.

Proposal: Include the support for AU position on Western Sahara to apply in similar fashion among the list of Kenya Country Positions on Strategic Foreign Policy Issues on page 68. The Society urged for the need to state clearly that Kenya aligns with the AU on Western Sahara, backing the UN-led peace process through the AU troika.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya backs the OAU’s 1982 admission of the SADR, aligns with AU self-determination resolutions, and supports UN Security Council Resolution 690 (1991) calling for a UN-AU-supervised referendum in Western Sahara.

Committee Observation: The Committee observed that due to the dynamic nature of foreign relations and policy, it is prudent to exclude the position of the country in its foreign policy document on such matters.

29. On page 86, Chapter 7 on under section 7.3 on Recommendations and Petitions, (viii) focuses on diplomatic representation in relation to the amendments of the Foreign Service Act to progressively change the staffing composition in relation to High Commissioners, Ambassadors, plus Diplomatic and Consular representatives by drawing from career diplomats and other appointees at a proposed ratio of 70:30.

Proposal: Amend this recommendation to ensure that the changes to the Foreign Service Act plus its attendant regulations guarantee the *immediate* realization of the objective to fully enhance all of Kenya's diplomatic representation and *staffing at the proposed ratio of the proposed ratio of 70:30*. The Society argued that greater transparency in diplomatic appointments will also expose the Foreign Service's opaque hiring practices for lower cadres, which flouts constitutional, legal, and strategic HR standards.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The 70:30 ratio would be achieved by amending Section 20 (3) (a) of the Foreign Service Act to provide for a fair balance between career diplomats and other appointees of which three quarters shall be career diplomats. The Public Service Commission, under Article 234 and Sections 36, 37, and 45 of the Public Service Commission Act, 2017, oversees recruitment of all other diplomatic staff.

Committee Observation: Implementing a 70:30 ratio favoring career diplomats for Heads of Mission requires amending the Foreign Service Act to establish the necessary legislative framework.

3.2 Ms. Anastasia Mwangi

30. Ms. Anastasia Mwangi made proposals on the following aspects of the Sessional Paper:

31. On page 48, Chapter 4 under subsection 4.8.1, on Rights, welfare and interests of the Kenyan Diaspora, The diaspora will be mainstreamed into the national development and democratic processes

Proposal: Establish a Dedicated Diaspora Engagement Unit in Kenyan embassies/consulates to focus on consular services, investment facilitation, cultural promotion, and grievance resolution, ensuring proactive and responsive diaspora engagement.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department for Diaspora Affairs has prioritized posting Diaspora Officers in high-distress missions to deliver frontline assistance and advance diaspora diplomacy by engaging Kenyan communities abroad.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Sessional Paper already tasks Kenya Missions abroad with advocating targeted investments via intermediary investment-management facilities. The other aspects articulated by Ms. Mwangi can be infused into the regular roles played by Foreign Service Officers already stationed abroad with support from a slim establishment of Diaspora Officers in high-distress missions.

32. On page 49, Under Chapter 4 subsection 4.8.3 Partnerships and engagement with the Kenyan Diaspora, Kenya will foster open and transparent communication to ensure that every Kenya abroad feels connected and valued.

Proposals: First, create a one-stop digital diaspora platform integrated with government databases for services, feedback, and sentiment analysis. Second, launch official social-media channels to share updates, reminders, and impact stories. Finally, modernize the MFA website for richer content and full accessibility, including streamlined e-services like passport renewal.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department for Diaspora Affairs is building the Diaspora Integrated Information Management System (DIIMS) to

centralize engagement, service delivery, and mapping, while eCitizen integration across agencies continues to improve access. The Ministry of ICT is securing verified social-media handles for MDAs to boost credibility, and the State Department is revamping its website to include PWD-friendly features under government web-standards.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted the Ministry's steps to address the memoranda's concerns.

33. On page 49, Under Chapter 4 subsection 4.8.3 Partnerships and engagement with the Kenyan Diaspora, A Diaspora Summit, comprising of elected diaspora council members will be formed to foster unity. Cooperation, resolve conflicts and strengthen Kenya Identity abroad.

Proposal: Establish a formal Diaspora framework and advisory council to engage community groups, collect and analyze diaspora sentiments and demographics, and integrate their input into policy-making.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The 2024 Diaspora Policy establishes an elected Diaspora Summit to foster unity, cooperation, and Kenyan identity abroad through dialogue, collaboration, and advocacy. This structured forum will align diaspora contributions with Kenya's development goals.

Committee Observation: The Committee notes that the 2024 Diaspora Policy establishes the Diaspora Summit to foster cooperation and unity.

3.3 Kenya National Commission on Human Rights

34. The Commission asserts that the following Human Rights related concerns ought to be addressed:

35. Peace and Security

- a) Porous borders vulnerable to foreign attacks; cross-border conflicts that endanger Kenyans' lives and livelihoods; and persistent harassment of Lake Victoria fisherfolk by Ugandan authorities—resulting in deaths, kidnappings, loss of livelihood, and unfair trials.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The issues raised are critical and may need to be addressed through the existing mechanisms already in place to deal with them.

- b) Asymmetrical defense pacts with other countries for example, the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) which has inflicted deaths, injuries, sexual violence on the host communities; Uncertainty on funding of peacekeeping missions.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry submitted that this issue was not within the purview of the State Department for Foreign Affairs.

- c) Uncertainty on funding of peacekeeping missions-the Kenya-led Haiti Multinational Security Support (MSS) Mission faces funding uncertainties, risking the possibility of diverting funds meant for development towards funding it.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Kenya-led Haiti MSS is funded by trust-fund contributions under UN Res. 2699 (2023); the UN Secretary-General now recommends shifting to assessed funding.

- d) Address women's marginalization in peace and security and the forced return of refugees, breaching the UN Refugee Convention.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Since UNSCR 1325, Kenya has championed Women, Peace and Security—highlighting women's roles in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and making it a priority during its 2021–22 UN Security Council term. As a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention (domesticated via the Refugee Act 2021 and 2024 Regulations) and the Global Compact for Refugees, Kenya launched the Shirika Plan on 28 March 2025 to shift from camps to integrated settlements, promote self-reliance, and pursue durable, inclusive solutions.

36. Economic and Commercial Diplomacy

- a) Economic Partnership Agreements and Human Rights: Foreign companies in Kenya must follow the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the National Action Plan, yet some face allegations of low pay, poor working conditions, unfair dismissals, environmental damage, and resource smuggling.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya's ratified frameworks require multinationals to safeguard national and worker interests through anti-exploitation rules, fair pay guarantees, and strict adherence to local labour laws.

- b) Labor Migration: Full Implementation of the Global Labor Market Strategy. Guarantee fair pay and working conditions in Bilateral Labour Agreements—with clear accountability for breaches—while mandating Kenyan Missions abroad to register migrants, keep their records current, and promptly assist those in distress.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department for Labour and Skills Development is rolling out the Global Labour Market Strategy and Sessional Paper No. 5 (2023) to ensure safe, orderly, and productive labour migration. It's negotiating bilateral labour agreements with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, UK, Austria, and Germany—now being aligned to ILO standards and the Global Compact for Migration—and expanding Labour Attaché posts (currently in KSA, Qatar, UAE, Geneva, plus a new post in Germany) to enhance consular support.

- c) Proactively resolve bilateral trade and livestock disputes—like Tanzania's 2017 burning of chicks, 2020 livestock auctions, and Uganda's 2012 herder detentions—through diplomatic negotiation to safeguard Kenyan livelihoods.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department uses Joint Trade Commissions, Joint Commissions for Cooperation, Joint Ministerial Commissions, and EAC Sectoral Councils to resolve NTBs and strengthen trade ties, producing MoUs that prevent future disputes.

- d) Protect local industries with import safeguards and production subsidies, and support MSMEs with funding and export links for avocados and macadamia nuts.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: KETRA shields Kenyan producers from dumping and unfair subsidies; the National Fertilizer Subsidy Program boosts farm productivity and competitiveness; and MSMEs gain affordable credit (Uwezo, Hustler Fund), training (KIBT), incubation (Kenya Industrial Estates), and market development support.

- e) Expedite ratification of ILO Conventions 189 (Decent Work for Domestic Workers) and 190 (Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work).

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department for Labour has begun ratifying ILO Conventions 189 (Domestic Workers) and 190 (Violence and Harassment).

- f) Tourism Diplomacy- Enforce child-protection laws (from sexual exploitation), share wildlife revenues with communities, compensate wildlife-attack victims, uphold responsible hospitality conduct, and mitigate travel advisories through intelligence sharing and 24/7 security.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry stated the issue falls outside its remit.

37. Oceans and Blue Diplomacy

- a) The government should strengthen enforcement against illegal, unlicensed, and unregulated fishing in Lake Victoria and the Indian Ocean; equitably share Port of Mombasa revenues with the county government and expand seafaring training for coastal youth; and enhance water-transport safety by forging public-private partnerships for Likoni Channel crossings, bolstering rescue capacity on Lake Victoria and Lake Turkana, and coordinating multinational efforts to combat Indian Ocean piracy.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Prioritize digital traceability to curb illegal fishing, ratify the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement, and strengthen research and management through IOTC and IORA collaborations.

- b) Enforce strict controls on industrial effluent and plastic waste while turning Lake Victoria's water hyacinth into a resource; bolster flood preparedness as rising water levels threaten communities; and restore shrinking rivers and lakes (Ol Bolosat, Kenyatta, Kanyaboli) via large-scale tree planting under the 15 billion-trees by 2032 plan.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: In 2019, Kenya banned single-use plastics in protected areas under KWS oversight, and KMFRI now leads national marine-litter monitoring to inform local pollution control efforts.

38. Global Governance and Multilateral Diplomacy

The government should expedite ratification and domestication of human-rights instruments—such as the Convention on Enforced Disappearances—while faithfully upholding the UN Charter, the AU Constitutive Act, and the EAC Treaty.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya demonstrates its human-rights commitment through broad treaty membership, regular reporting and dialogue with treaty bodies, and comprehensive domestic legal, policy, and judicial measures to protect every citizen's rights.

39. Environment and Climate Change Diplomacy

Kenya should fully implement its MEA commitments—Paris Agreement and UNFCCC—and enforce EMCA through NEMA and stakeholders; fund climate-smart agriculture and innovations (adaptation, mitigation, carbon trading, renewables, early warning and response); and urgently ratify UNDRIP to protect Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya is a signatory to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, pledging to cut greenhouse-gas emissions, build climate resilience, and shift to a low-carbon economy, and it has bolstered its global leadership by actively engaging in UNFCCC conferences and negotiations.

40. Science, Technology and Innovation Diplomacy

Kenya must shore up cybersecurity to protect government websites; invest in AI capacity building for responsible technology use; enforce local laws on tech giants to curb labor abuses, online hate, child sexual abuse, and disinformation; boost STEM by funding TTIs, VTCs, exchange programs, scholarships, and encouraging women and girls; resource tech incubation hubs like Konza Technopolis and ward-level centers; and fast-track Science, Technology and Innovation laws, including the Technopolis Bill 2024.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya is finalizing its National Cybersecurity Policy and audit framework, ratifying AU and UN cyber conventions, and has launched the Kenya AI Strategy 2025–2030 to drive AI investment and talent; it's drafting Social Media Guidelines, actively implementing the Data Protection Act while harmonizing with GDPR, and engaging stakeholders across government, private sector, and donors; under its STI strategy it commits 2 percent of GDP to R&D, and the Konza Technopolis Bill—now before Parliament—will establish regional tech hubs.

41. Diaspora Diplomacy

Ensure the State Department for Diaspora Affairs remains permanent and well-resourced to serve over four million Kenyans abroad; progressively guarantee diaspora voting in presidential elections, starting with countries hosting the largest communities; secure National Assembly funding for missions to provide consular support; engage diaspora stakeholders like the Kenya Diaspora Alliance; implement the Diaspora Policy and operationalize the Diaspora Placement Agency; and regulate labour migration effectively.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Government will anchor diaspora matters in law through the Diaspora Bill 2025—being drafted with stakeholders—to institutionalize the State Department's mandate, implement the Kenya Diaspora Policy 2024 across MDAs, counties, Parliament, diaspora associations, development partners, and the private sector, and establish the Diaspora Placement Agency as a

semi-autonomous body to ensure ethical recruitment, international labour-mobility frameworks, and the welfare of Kenyan workers abroad.

42. Socio-cultural Diplomacy

- a) Guarantee full facilitation for athletes abroad (e.g., Rio 2016) and enforce transparent, accountable governance in sports federations to maintain morale and prevent talent defections.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry submitted that the issue falls outside its mandate.

- b) Enforce IP laws—patents, copyrights, and trademarks—for Kenyan cultural goods like the Maasai shuka; meet the Abuja Declaration by allocating at least 15 % of national and county budgets to health to reduce aid reliance; and grant citizenship to returning African diaspora under the AU's Abuja Proclamation.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: There is need for a Policy framework to align with the AU Declaration on the 6th region.

Committee Observation: The Committee observed that the KNCHR's submissions reflected general foreign-relations challenges rather than issues specific to the Sessional Paper, and that the Ministry clarified which concerns lay outside its scope and outlined actions taken to address the other human-rights issues raised.

3.4 Food Security Consortium (FSC) & One Voice Consortium (OVC).

43. The Consortium made proposals on the following strategic objectives of the Foreign Policy—

44. Protect Kenya's sovereignty and territorial integrity:

Proposal: The Kenyan diaspora in the US can protect Kenya's sovereignty and advance its interests by engaging policymakers, promoting investment and tourism, fostering academic partnerships, and using media to shape narratives—strengthening US-Kenya ties and empowering the diaspora.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department, through Missions in Washington D.C. New York, and Los Angeles, empowers the Kenyan diaspora to serve as brand ambassadors by supporting diaspora associations and leveraging them to boost trade and investment with the USA.

Committee Observations: The Committee asserted that the diaspora community cannot directly engage foreign governments or lawmakers since it is a preserve of official diplomatic representatives.

45. Promote regional and global peace and security:

Proposal: Engage US lawmakers, media, and diaspora communities to advocate for Kenya's peace and security efforts; host educational events; partner with African diaspora groups; and promote US investment in Kenya's security and humanitarian sectors—advancing global peace, regional stability, and US-Kenya ties.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The State Department, through Missions in Washington D.C. New York, and Los Angeles, regularly engages US State

Department officials, lawmakers, and congressional staff on regional and global peace and security. The Missions also promote Kenya's cultural heritage through events, while the US continues to fund the MSS mission and other security programs in Kenya.

46. Advance the country's development agenda and economic prosperity:

Proposal: To drive development and economic prosperity, Kenya must fully engage its population in maximizing land use to achieve food security—viewed as a national security priority. Robust food value chains and supporting infrastructure should absorb deployable labor across all skill levels.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry submitted that the issue was not within its purview.

47. Position Kenya as a leader in environment and climate action:

Proposal: Kenya must cut greenhouse gas emissions—particularly from used vehicles—and expand green leaf cover to absorb CO₂, lower surface temperatures, reduce evapotranspiration, curb soil erosion, and boost water percolation.

48. Protect, promote and protected country's image and prestige globally:

Proposal: Expand consular services across the US to reduce delays, enhance online platforms for timely information, and strengthen ties with the US Embassy in Nairobi to ease visa processes and push for ESTA status. Develop a diaspora social welfare system, enable portability of social protections, and facilitate recognition of Kenyan qualifications. Foster partnerships with US institutions and labor offices to support smooth labor exchange, enhance outreach, and promote employment and social integration—ultimately strengthening diaspora relations and boosting national development.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry, through Missions in Washington D.C. New York, and Los Angeles, conducts Mobile Consular Services to reach Kenyans across the U.S. It also engages foreign missions in Nairobi through regular briefings, exchanges, and meetings.

49. Promote sub-regional and regional integration and cooperation:

Proposal: Kenya should market its exports and promote businesses abroad by leveraging the diaspora as brand ambassadors, while tapping into AfCFTA, EAC, and SADC blocs with skilled negotiators to secure better terms—especially in value addition and manufacturing. Diaspora remittances and investments remain key drivers of national and regional development.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Through the State Departments for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and KEPROBA, the government promotes Kenyan MSME products abroad by participating in trade exhibitions and organizing Business and Investment Forums to connect producers with foreign investors.

50. Promote international cooperation multilateralism and active participation in global governance:

Proposal: Kenya should uphold true multilateralism and actively advocate for a just, equitable global governance system, including pushing for a permanent UN seat to represent African interests.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Kenya values multilateralism and a rules-based international system with the UN at its core, calling for renewed, integrated, and inclusive multilateral approaches to tackle global challenges effectively.

51. Enhance the voices of Kenyans in the diaspora and promote and protect their interests and welfare abroad:

Proposal: Facilitate diaspora voting by extending registration periods and expanding centers, increase consulates or mobile services, and incentivize remittances through diaspora bonds and investment protections. Establish a welfare fund for financial distress, prevent double taxation via reciprocal treaties, and uphold diaspora rights, especially in regions like the Middle East. Engage Parliament to amend laws that bar dual citizens from state appointments—strengthening diaspora ties, boosting remittances, and deepening national pride.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry, in collaboration with IEBC, continues to enhance diaspora participation in Kenya's democratic processes through voter registration, education, and expanded polling access. Mobile Consular Services have supported registration and documentation, while strengthening diaspora associations. The Ministry, in conjunction with the National Treasury, is negotiating Double Taxation Agreements despite their complexity. Additionally, the diaspora plans to petition Parliament to amend constitutional clauses that bar dual citizens from state appointments.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the memorandum lacked clarity on whether it sought to replace or expand the current strategic objectives of the policy. Additionally, the Ministry had adequately responded to the concerns raised.

3.5 Kenya National Interface Team

52. The Kenya National Interface Team made the following submission on the Sessional Paper—

53. Public Participation:

Proposal: The team noted the absence of documentation outlining the changes made from the 2014 Foreign Policy to the current Sessional Paper. It is essential to include this information, along with public input, to clarify what prompted the review of the 2014 policy—particularly in light of the Cabinet Secretary's reference to "rapid changes" as the rationale.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry undertook a comprehensive review of Kenya's Foreign Policy, initially published in 2014, through an inclusive and participatory process. Stakeholders were engaged via colloquia, roundtables, and written submissions, including input from the public, MDAs, counties (via CoG), Parliament, senior officials, academia, media, CSOs, youth, judiciary, private sector, and faith-based organizations. Notably, a public stakeholders' forum was held on 18th November 2024 to enrich the review process.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Ministry had conducted public participation on the Sessional Paper.

54. Budgeting requirements and allocations:

Comment: The Kenya National Interface Team noted that the Sessional Paper lacks clear implementation costing and enters FY 2025/26 with a KES 31.25 B deficit—allocated KES 21.65 B against a requirement of KES 52.9 B—with similar shortfalls in the development and Diaspora budgets.

55. Outputs reporting, not outcomes:

Comment: The MFDA has dwelt, in a lot of pages, including also in the BPS, to show results of these monies allocated. But they demonstrate outputs and not outcomes of even impact of their presence or existence (raison d'etre). So, what is the justification of Kenya having all these missions or consular services if they only exist to suck up taxpayers' money rather than achieve the key objectives or outcomes of what we want as a national interest? For instance, in one of the activities, they cite their role in placement of Kenyans in international and regional organizations.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The MFDA serves as Kenya's frontline defense of sovereignty and national interests, with diplomatic missions providing the framework for negotiations, representation, and diaspora protection—engagements that over 60 years have delivered economic, security, agricultural, health, education, and cultural benefits.

Committee Observation: The Committee found the Ministry's response justifiable and aligned with the Sessional Paper.

56. MFDA Raison D'etre:

Proposal: Despite missions rising from 16 in 1995 to 68 in 2025 and plans to expand staff to 3,000 by 2030 under a 70:30 career-to-other appointees ratio, staffing already consumes 65 % of the MFDA budget. Before approving this Sessional Paper, a full staff audit is essential to verify compliance and ensure the policy review meets legitimate scrutiny.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The 70:30 ratio is a new proposal to ensure that appointment of Ambassadors and High Commissioners is fair and equitable and does not disadvantage career diplomats. Facing under-resourcing and rising global demands, the Ministry needs a professional, skilled Foreign Service to fully fulfil its mandate.

Committee Observation: The Committee endorsed a staff audit as reasonable to verify Foreign Service qualifications and support the 70:30 ratio's implementation.

57. Guiding Values and Principles on Environmental Sustainability and Natural Resources Including Minerals:

Proposal: Environmental sustainability should be guided by the values and principles of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. This approach ensures that foreign policy on natural resources, including minerals, protects national sovereignty, promotes sustainable development, and guarantees equitable benefit sharing for all Kenyans.

Committee Observation: The Sessional Paper already addresses environmental and climate change diplomacy. Article 10 of the Constitution, as part of Kenyan law, must guide the policy's implementation.

58. Public Debt, National Interest and National Obligations

Proposal: While the policy recognizes the importance of managing public debt, it must ensure debt repayment does not compromise national interest. Clear guidelines are needed to balance repayments with investments that uphold sovereignty, economic stability, and social justice under Article 43 of the Constitution.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry submitted that the issue falls outside its mandate and the scope of the Sessional Paper.

59. Overarching Guiding Values and Principles

Proposal: The policy lacks clear guiding values and principles for its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It should adopt key principles such as Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity, National Unity and Patriotism, Rule of Law, Social Justice, Economic Stability, Environmental Sustainability, Public Participation, and Accountability.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Sessional Paper already outlines core principles to guide its implementation and international relations.

60. Lack of Clear Definition of National Interest

Proposal: Include a clear definition in the policy: Kenya's primary national interest is to safeguard its sovereignty.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Sessional Paper, on page 2, clearly defines prioritized national interests as per Article 238(1) of the Constitution and the national security sector. These include sovereignty, territorial integrity, citizen security, economic prosperity, socio-political stability, national values, constitutionalism, sustainable development, and global competitiveness.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Sessional Paper already outlines Kenya's national interests.

61. Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:

Proposal: Develop a detailed action plan with clear timelines for each policy objective, and establish strong monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure timely tracking of progress and resolution of issues.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Government will track policy implementation using existing tools such as MDAs' Strategic Plans, Performance Contracts, and the Annual President's Report. The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs will publish Annual Foreign Policy Outlook papers to guide priorities. Progress will be monitored through periodic evaluations, midterm and end-term reviews, and partnerships with academic institutions to develop impact assessment tools.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Sessional Paper includes a monitoring, evaluation, and reporting framework, along with a summary of institutional roles in policy implementation.

62. Balancing National and Public Interest:

Proposal: Provide clearer guidance on balancing national and public interests, especially where conflicts may arise, by including case studies or best practices to illustrate practical approaches.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: Balancing national and public interests is a broader governance issue. The policy addresses this by promoting public engagement in its eight focus areas as needed and by briefing citizens through the Kenya Foreign Policy Mashinani initiative—ensuring a people-centered, dialogue-driven approach.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that national interest is sufficiently addressed in the Sessional Paper and found the Ministry's response adequate.

63. Engagement with Social Media Feedback:

Proposal: Include a summary of key public concerns raised via social media and outline how this feedback will inform policy implementation—strengthening transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry handles public concerns raised on social media through immediate responses and referral to the Public Complaints Committee for analysis and resolution. An Access to Information Officer will be appointed to facilitate information sharing, and a proposed monthly public engagement will address compiled feedback across platforms to enhance transparency and service delivery.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the Sessional Paper already provides for incorporating feedback from social media engagement.

64. Economic Sovereignty:

Proposal: Develop clear guidelines to balance debt repayment with strategic investments that strengthen economic sovereignty and reduce external dependence. Enact stand-alone Public Debt Management legislation to ensure transparency, enforce prudent borrowing, establish oversight bodies like a Public Debt Management Authority and Registrar of Debts, and align with Articles 211, 212, and 203(1)(a) of the Constitution—while addressing odious debt and related sanctions.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry submitted that the issue falls outside its purview.

Committee Observation: The Committee observed that the National Treasury is the appropriate entity to implement the proposal.

65. Regional and Global Integration:

Proposal: Outline targeted strategies for strengthening alliances within regional and international frameworks, including structured engagement with key partners, proactive participation in platforms like the AU, EAC, COMESA, AfCFTA, and UN bodies, and leveraging these relationships to advance Kenya's trade, investment, and economic diplomacy objectives.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry engages continuously at bilateral and multilateral levels to build and strengthen trade partnerships. Recent agreements like the Kenya-EU EPA and Kenya-UAE CEPA reflect this commitment. Kenya also actively participates in frameworks such as AfCFTA, EAC, COMESA, OACPS-EU, and AGOA to advance its trade and economic interests globally.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that while the Ministry adequately outlined its efforts to promote regional and global integration, it did not provide specific strategies for strengthening regional and international alliances.

66. Capacity Building:

Proposal: Invest in capacity building and training programs for government officials and stakeholders to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed for effective policy implementation.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that proposed amendments to the Foreign Service Academy aim to provide training for all public and state officers in Foreign Service.

67. Public Participation:

Proposal: Enhance public participation by expanding opportunities for citizens, civil society, the private sector, and other non-state actors to engage in policy implementation through consultations, town halls, and online forums.

Comments by the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs: The Ministry noted that the review of the 2014 Kenya Foreign Policy followed a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, with broad stakeholder engagement—including a Public Validation Forum on 18th November 2024. Inputs from these consultations were incorporated into the revised 2024 Policy. Implementation will involve continuous stakeholder engagement, monitoring, and evaluation using existing government tools.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that public participation was undertaken in the development of the Sessional Paper.

3.6 AKDBL Belguim-Luxembourg

68. AKDBL Belguim-Luxembourg submitted the following proposals to be included in the foreign policy:

69. Refugee Integration:

Proposal: Kenya should legally guarantee refugee access to education, documentation, jobs, housing, and citizenship to boost stability and affirm its role as a responsible host.

70. Increasing Labour Flow within the EAC region

Proposal: Seamless EAC labour flow is key to integration. Cutting job barriers boosts interdependence, competitiveness, and regional stability.

71. Collective Trade Negotiations as the EAC Customs Union

Proposal: Kenya should prioritize negotiating trade agreements through the EAC Customs Union framework rather than pursuing unilateral deals, to uphold regional unity and collective bargaining strength.

72. Securing Kenya's Genetic Wealth and Biodiversity

Proposal: Kenya must legally protect its agricultural and genetic resources by recognizing communal ownership in trade diplomacy, ensuring access to seeds and fertility artefacts, and safeguarding indigenous knowledge from exploitation by multinationals.

73. Freedom of Speech in Trade Negotiations and Sovereignty in Bilateral Agreements.

Proposal: Trade agreements must uphold Kenya's sovereignty and protect freedom of speech, allowing open discourse on issues like genocide and human rights.

74. Respecting and Enforcing International Treaties

Proposal: Kenya must enforce human rights treaties and avoid becoming a haven for perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

Committee Observation: The Committee noted that the memoranda offered general suggestions best addressed during the policy's implementation phase.

3.7 Consultative Meeting with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs

75. The Cabinet Secretary for Foreign and Diaspora Affairs appeared before the Committee on 4th and 5th April 2025 and briefed it on the contents of the Sessional Paper. The briefing focused on the following aspects: transitioning from Kenya Foreign Policy to Sessional Paper; financing of the Foreign Policy; and the acquisition, development, and management of Kenya's assets at the headquarters and abroad.
76. On transitioning from Kenya Foreign Policy to Sessional Paper, the following issues were articulated and attendant resolutions made:
- (1) To reposition Kenya's Foreign Policy, the Sessional Paper should address shifting global alignments, including the U.S. 10% tariff on exports, assert sovereignty amid declining UN financing, and clarify U.S. policy impacts on peacekeeping and labour mobility.
 - (2) To clarify mandates in diaspora and labour engagement, it was resolved that the State Department for Diaspora Affairs should focus on broader diaspora support, advocacy, and facilitation, while labour mobility abroad should remain under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection to avoid mandate overlaps.
 - (3) To optimize human resources in missions abroad, it was resolved that the State Department for Diaspora Affairs should utilize existing embassy personnel instead of establishing new diaspora offices, and the Ministry should repurpose current roles to address emerging policy needs without increasing staff.
 - (4) To reaffirm foreign policy as a strategic instrument, it was resolved that the Sessional Paper must reflect Kenya's long-term national aspirations, not just budgetary goals. Additionally, diaspora policy should prioritize the welfare, dignity, and inclusion of Kenyans abroad, fostering meaningful engagement over mere remittance extraction.
 - (5) To strengthen Defence Diplomacy, it was resolved that the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs should establish a Defence Coordination Office to support joint planning and diplomatic roles for military officers in missions, and formalize a framework with the Ministry of Defence for sustained collaboration in projecting Kenya's security interests abroad.
77. On Financing of the Foreign Policy, the following issues were articulated and attendant resolutions made:
- (1) To secure strategic financing and advance economic diplomacy, the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs will deepen collaboration with the Ministries of Trade, Investments and Industry and Labour and Social Protection to mobilize funding; diversify Kenya's export markets—especially in Europe and beyond—to sustain long-term engagements; and urge the AU to strengthen regional cooperation, drive economic diversification, and bolster strategic partnerships.
 - (2) Following its reclassification from the Public Administration and International Relations cluster to the Security Sector Working Group, the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs will benefit from a higher budget ceiling to support more robust global security engagement and strategic diplomacy.
 - (3) To enhance efficient representation, the Ministry will expand the use of Honorary Consuls in countries with limited diplomatic presence—while acknowledging their political

limitations—prioritize multiple accreditation of missions to optimize coverage and reduce costs, ensure all outbound and inbound visits, including presidential travel, adhere to budgetary limits, and urgently resolve delayed remuneration for diplomats abroad to uphold the Foreign Service’s dignity.

78. On acquisition, development, and management of Kenya’s assets at the headquarters and abroad, the following issues were articulated and attendant resolutions made:
- (1) To optimize Kenya’s diplomatic assets and bolster mission security, the Ministry will adopt a PPP model to modernize infrastructure at home and abroad; pursue reciprocal land-allocation agreements where PPPs aren’t viable; prioritize securitization of high-risk posts—drawing lessons from the DRC attack; and submit to Parliament a comprehensive matrix of all movable and immovable assets, both domestic and foreign.
 - (2) To ensure accountability and stewardship of diplomatic properties, the Ministry will prioritize developing underutilized assets abroad—such as Kinshasa land that is lacking title deeds and remains undeveloped despite reciprocal investment in Nairobi—and establish an institutional mechanism to formally register, safeguard, and protect sovereign gifts and donated properties for the long term.

4.0 COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

75. Having carefully examined the proposed strategy as presented in *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya*, cognizant of Kenya's national interests and responsive to evolving regional and global dynamics, the Committee made the following key observations:

- (1) Fundamentally, the Sessional Paper articulates a forward-looking and constitutionally grounded foreign policy framework that positions Kenya as a dynamic, resilient, and influential actor on the regional and world stage. The paper reaffirms the nation's enduring commitment to strategic, sustainable, and globally responsive diplomacy across multiple critical **focus areas**:
 - a) First, Kenya's Peace and Security diplomacy, anchored in Article 238 of the Constitution and aligned with the UN Charter, AU Constitutive Act, and EAC Treaty, reinforces its role as a regional stabilizer through peacekeeping, mediation, and defence partnerships, guided by a structured defence diplomacy strategy.
 - b) Moreover, the Paper elevates Economic and Commercial Diplomacy as central to Kenya's foreign policy, anchored in Articles 10 and 201 of the Constitution. It emphasizes trade, FDI promotion, tourism, the creative economy, and conferencing to foster global partnerships and drive inclusive, sustainable growth.
 - c) In addition, Oceans and Blue Diplomacy is prioritized for sustainable development, anchored in Article 69 of the Constitution, by promoting marine resource use, maritime security, and diaspora expertise for national prosperity.
 - d) Furthermore, Global Governance and Multilateral Diplomacy remains grounded in Articles 2(5)-(6), as Kenya advocates for rule-based multilateralism, AU empowerment, and institutional reforms to foster peace and equity.
 - e) Equally, Environment and Climate Change Diplomacy aligns with Article 69, with Kenya advancing climate financing, UNEP and UN-Habitat support, and green innovation partnerships to lead Africa's green transition.
 - f) Similarly, Science, Technology, and Innovation Diplomacy, under Article 11(2) (b), focuses on digital infrastructure, green technologies, and cyber diplomacy to position Kenya as a continental tech leader.
 - g) Likewise, Diaspora Diplomacy, aligned with Articles 16 and 19, seeks to protect diaspora rights, boost remittances, and harness skills through agreements, diaspora councils, and placement initiatives.
 - h) Finally, Socio-Cultural Diplomacy, rooted in Articles 11 and 43, leverages culture, sports, education, and health to build soft power, foster global ties, and promote justice and sustainable development.
- (2) Further, the Sessional Paper highlights **emerging challenges** that impede effective diplomatic engagement, including weak legislative and institutional frameworks, contrary to constitutional obligations under Articles 10 (good governance), 16 and 19 (citizens' rights), and 232 (efficient public service). The absence of comprehensive policies on diaspora affairs, Foreign Service coordination, and labour migration, alongside operational inefficiencies at the Ministry and missions, underinvestment in diplomatic assets, and forex vulnerabilities, undermines Kenya's foreign relations. Persistent security threats demand enhanced counterterrorism measures aligned with Article 238 (national security). Additionally, limited strategic communication and unclear foreign policy positions weaken citizen engagement and coherent international advocacy. Addressing these gaps through legal reforms, improved funding, stronger public diplomacy, and principled foreign policy

stances is essential to safeguarding Kenya's interests and fulfilling its constitutional and international obligations.

- (3) In addition, the Sessional Paper highlights **strategic risks** to Kenya's foreign policy, including legal incompatibilities (contrary to Articles 2(5)-(6)), foreign exchange losses, shrinking global market access, climate disruptions (against Article 69 obligations), austerity-driven budget constraints, cybersecurity threats, and rising insecurity abroad. To mitigate these, it recommends strengthening the legal framework through the approval of the Foreign Policy Sessional Paper, revision of the Foreign Service Act, reclassification of the Ministry under the Security Sector, and establishment of the Kenya International Technical Cooperation Agency (KITCA). It further calls for creating a Diaspora Welfare Fund, reinstating the Forex Loss Assumption Facility, expanding missions, enhancing digital diplomacy frameworks, optimizing diplomatic assets via PPPs, and institutionalizing social benefit portability, ensuring Kenya's foreign policy remains resilient, constitutionally anchored, and globally competitive. It is noteworthy that reclassification of the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs under the Security Sector Working Group has already been effected via Cabinet approval.
- (4) Furthermore, the Sessional Paper underscores the need for systematic **monitoring and evaluation** through a dedicated Results Framework, with mid-term and end-term reviews developed in collaboration with academic institutions and think tanks. Monitoring will align with the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES), Strategic Plans, Annual Performance Contracts, and the Medium-Term Plan, while Annual Foreign Policy Outlook papers and diaspora-specific indicators, such as remittance flows and labour agreements, will track progress. Ultimately, success will depend on institutional commitment and periodic policy reviews to adapt to evolving domestic and global dynamics.
- (5) Equally, the Sessional Paper underscores the urgency of strengthening the **legal framework** supporting foreign relations. The review and full operationalization of the Foreign Service Act, Cap. 185E — including the adoption of a 70:30 ratio favoring career diplomats — will enhance professionalism, meritocracy, and institutional effectiveness. Similarly, revising the Privileges and Immunities Act, Cap. 179 will modernize Kenya's capacity to host international organizations, reinforcing Nairobi's role as a diplomatic hub. These legislative measures are critical for aligning Kenya's foreign policy implementation with international standards and advancing its strategic global interests.
- (6) Finally, in full compliance with Article 118(1) (b) of the Constitution, the Committee actively sought **stakeholder input** on the Sessional Paper through a public call for memoranda. This yielded six (6) substantive submissions from key stakeholders (captured in Chapter three (3) of this Report). The Committee noted that largely, the contributions from stakeholders were either already provided for in the Sessional Paper, fell outside the scope of the paper or were suggestions to ensure effective implementation of the Sessional Paper. Nevertheless, the contributions critically shaped the Committee's deliberations, reinforcing transparency, inclusivity, and constitutional fidelity in foreign policy formulation.

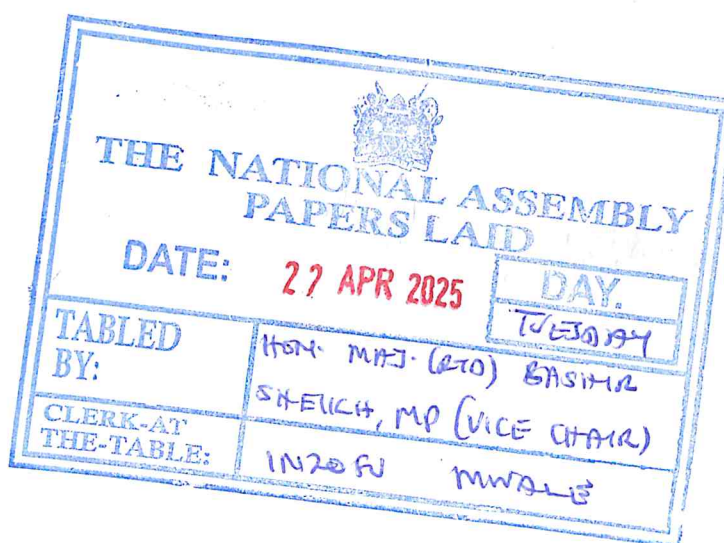
5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

76. The Committee recommends that:

- a) The House adopts this Report and **approves** *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 on the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kenya* as the definitive strategic framework to steer Kenya's international relations and diplomatic engagements, ensuring a unified and resolute approach to global affairs.
- b) Once adopted, all foreign policy legislation and initiatives must fully align with Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2025 without exception. This alignment is critical to maintaining coherence, maximizing effectiveness, and safeguarding Kenya's national interests in an increasingly complex global arena.

SIGNED: DATE: 22.04.2025

THE HON. MARTHA WANGARI, CBS, M.P.
MEMBER, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND
FOREIGN RELATIONS





**REPUBLIC OF KENYA
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
13TH PARLIAMENT – FOURTH SESSION- 2025**

**DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE, AND
FOREIGN RELATIONS.**

REPORT ADOPTION LIST

REPORT ON

**CONSIDERATION OF SESSIONAL PAPER NO. 1 OF 2025 ON THE FOREIGN
POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA.**

We, Members of the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence, and Foreign Relations, have pursuant to Standing Order 199, adopted this Report and affix our signatures to affirm our approval and confirm its accuracy, validity and authenticity today, **Tuesday 22nd April, 2025.**

	NAME	SIGNATURE
1.	The Hon. Koech Nelson, CBS, M.P. (Chairperson)	
2.	The Hon. Maj. (Rtd.) Sheikh Abdullahi Bashir, M.P. (Vice Chairperson)	
3.	The Hon. Yusuf Hassan Abdi, CBS, M.P.	
4.	The Hon. Wanjira Martha Wangari, CBS, M.P.	
5.	The Hon. Odhiambo Millie Grace Akoth, CBS, M.P.	
6.	The Hon. Kanchory Elijah Memusi, M.P.	
7.	The Hon. (Dr.) Kasalu Irene Muthoni, M.P..	
8.	The Hon. Kirima Moses Nguchine, M.P.	
9.	The Hon. Kandie Joshua Chepyegon, M.P.	
10.	The Hon. Kwenya Thuku Zachary, M.P.	
11.	The Hon. Luyai Caleb Amisi, M.P.	
12.	The Hon. Muratha Anne Wanjiku, M.P.	
13.	The Hon. Logova Sloya Clement, M.P.	
14.	The Hon. Ikana Fredrick Lusuli, M.P.	
15.	The Hon. Mohamed Abdikadir Hussein, M.P.	

