

**EARLY EXIT IMPLICATIONS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN
TROOP-CONTRIBUTING COUNTRY AND HOST NATION: A CASE OF
KENYA MILITARY CONTINGENTS IN CONGO 2022-2023**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my late grandparents because of their unwavering love, wisdom, and support that have been the foundation of my journey. To my son Alvin whose belief in my abilities has been a constant source of motivation.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ATMIS	African Union Transition Mission in Somalia
AU	African Union
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East Africa Community
EACRF	East African Community Regional Forces
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GI-TOC	Global Initiative Against Transnational Crime
KENCOM	Kenyan Contingents
KENCON	Kenya Defence Forces
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAPSSET	Lamu Port South – Sudan Ethiopia Transport
LRA	Lord’s Resistance Army
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR Congo
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SNA	Somali National Army
UN	United Nations
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Bilateral relations	Are how two sovereign states conduct and execute their political, economic, and cultural relationship.
Crisis	A situation such as the one in DRC in which the inhabitants of the eastern part are affected by the instability posed by the militia before and after the exit of Kenya Contingents of the East African Standby Force deployed in Congo.
Diplomacy	This is the art of dealing with both representatives of states and non-state actors through negotiations with a view to influencing the behaviour in relation to existing controversy or status quo.
Diplomatic implications	Potential consequence or effect that diplomatic actions, negotiations or statements may have on the relationship between countries, in this case, Kenya and the DRC.
Early exit	This stands for the premature withdrawal of troops from a mission before completion or before the attainment of mission mandate.
Host Nation:	A country that provides facilities to accommodate a group of people such as troops or even refugees from another nation
Kenyan Military Contingent	The troops deployed to the DRC as part of the peacekeeping mission under the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) to help restore security in the region.
Mediatory role	Facilitating negotiations and conflict resolution between two conflicting states. It serves as a tool for

de-escalating tensions, preventing conflicts and promoting cooperation among nations.

Military intervention

Military operations intended to alter the course or outcome of the conflict in the Eastern part of the DRC in the general interest of alleviating human suffering

Regional peace and security

A condition where nations within a specific geographical area enjoy stable and harmonious relations free from conflicts and threats to their safety.

Security threat

Any action or situation that could potentially undermine the stability and peace between any two or more nations.

Troop Contributing Country

The country that provides its contingent or troops to go to another country for a mission/intervention

Withdrawal:

Pulling back or retreating of military forces while maintaining contact with the enemy

ABSTRACT

This study explored the Kenya Defense Forces' exit and its implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The study set out to analyze the rationale for deploying Kenya Military Contingents (KENCON) troops in DRC and their implications for bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC; evaluate the events that led to the early exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC and the effects on bilateral relations; assess the implications of the KENCON Troops' exit on bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo; and explore strategies for restoring the mediatory role of the KENCON Troops in the DRC and their impact on bilateral relations. This study provided policy makers in the diplomatic space a comprehensive understanding of the situation of KDF's exit for better policy development. The study was confined to the two countries of Kenya and the DRC between the years 2022 and 2023. In this regard, the study locale was the two countries of DRC, where the peace-keeping was happening and Kenya, which contributed its soldiers to EACRF. The study adopted an explanatory research design and utilized a sample population of 28 respondents, including staff at Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs (MoFDA), Embassy staff in Kenya, KDF soldiers, Kenyans living in DRC, Political Analysts and academicians. The study was guided by the Expected Utility Theory of International Conflict and adopted an explorative research design, with the main data collection tools being interview guides and document analysis. This data was thematically analyzed. The findings indicate that the reasons for deploying the KENCON Troops to the DRC include regional stability, the rise of several extremist groups such as M- 23, the need for regional cooperation on matters of peace and security, and the UN mission requiring other East Africa Community Regional Forces (EACRF) to support the United Nations (UN) humanitarian personnel in affected areas. Regarding the factors behind the exit, findings indicate they include the expiry of the KENCON mandate in the DRC and diplomatic considerations. On the effects of the exit on bilateral relations between the two countries, the study identified effects such as strengthened economic ties, improved relations, an indicator of non-interference in DRC matters, enhanced political and diplomatic relations, future regional and international partnerships, and public perception and domestic politics. Finally, concerning strategies for strengthening KENCON's mediatory role, the study identified leveraging regional and international partnerships, strengthening diplomatic channels and trust, building capacity for peace and security, and offering humanitarian support. It also recommended that similar studies be conducted to include larger samples of respondents from the affected areas where KENCON Troops were conducting operations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides basic background information on this research problem statement, the study objectives, the research questions, the significance, scope, limitations, and research assumptions. It will also provide some operational definitions.

1.1 Background to the Study

Cases of early exit are replete in the history of peace support operations (Kamais, 2019). In the early 1990s, the US deployed its troops to Somalia due to the civil war that had ensued following the overthrow of Mohamed Siad Barre's government, which was characterized by dictatorship (Peter, 2006). Despite having put in place some humanitarian operations, the situation remained extremely difficult due to ongoing fighting, hijacking, and looting of food convoys by Somali militias (Menkhaus, 2010). The US later withdrew its troops, and this brought about a whole state of anxiety, with many feeling that this would create an opportunity for the resurgence of the militia. In a way, this did not go well with the two countries, the US and Somalia, in terms of bilateral relations as Somalia felt that the US did not support them fully (Delaney, 2017). Accordingly, the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Somalia affected the bilateral relations between the two countries in various ways; first, it indicated some form of change in U.S. policy away from direct involvement in Somalia; second, the withdrawal compromised the bilateral relations between the two countries given the instability that characterized Somalia at the time and third; it was perceived as an indication of failure of humanitarian intervention since the number of casualties was rather high (CMH 2014, Somalia-UNISOM II Background 2014).

Peace Support Operations remain a major recourse for containing armed conflict whenever they erupt (Anne, 2005). In most cases, peace support operations last to completion of the cycle. However, some peace operation may abort either due to abrupt termination of mandate or withdrawal of troops leading to early exit of troops. Early exit in peace support operation has diplomatic implication on both the host nation and the troop contributing state (Kamais, 2019).

In the 2000s, the United States had also deployed its troops in Afghanistan following the bombing of the American World Trade Centre by terrorist groups that later confirmed that they surely did it (Kirstein and Chris, 2009). These terrorists were traced back to Afghanistan and Iraq. The US deployed its troops to these areas with a view of flushing out these terrorists. Mann, (2004) states that, to a large extent, this operation pacified Iraq even though it also led to some destruction. But again, the US had to bow down to some diplomatic pressure that wanted its troops out of Iraq and when this happened, the Iraqi people felt that America had left them in a delicate state. This negatively affected the bilateral relations between Iraq and the US.

Though less pronounced, the withdrawal of the U.S. troops from Afghanistan had some effects on the bilateral relations between the two countries in some ways. For instance, it saw the conclusion of the strategic partnership agreement that was aimed at improving both their bilateral relations and the lives of the Afghans. Further, after the Taliban took over the leadership in 2021, the U.S. government has since changed its approach to

pragmatic engagement while at the same time focusing on humanitarian aid (U.S. Department of State, 2022).

In Somalia, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), a peacekeeping force, has declared its intention to withdraw and subsequently be replaced by a smaller new force. While a smaller force is a preference due to a reduction in the heavy presence of foreign troops in Somalia, it has also been argued that this is a sure way of building domestic security capacities. Such intentions were also evident in 2021. This has, however, threatened the neighbouring countries who see the possibility of a security vacuum and a resurgent al-Shabab armed group fighters seizing power. This decision appears to be founded on the concerns of the top funders of the AU force in Somalia; over the long-term financing and sustainability. At the same time, it is feared that such a prolonged political dispute could also lead Ethiopia to withdraw its troops (Liaga, & Habib 2024).

Other cases in the past, where countries withdrew from peace missions include cases such as the 1994, France brought its Operation Turquoise mission to an end in Rwanda after the genocide, handing over operations to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). There is also the 2013, South Africa withdrew its troops from the Central African Republic after suffering heavy losses during clashes with rebel forces in the Central African Republic. More recently, there was the case of Mali, where the government called for the withdrawal of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in 2023. In its view, the government of Mali felt that the mission had failed in its mission to restore peace. This was after the United

Kingdom had just ended its involvement in the UN mission in Mali, citing the Malian government's cooperation with Russian Wagner Group mercenaries in 2022.

In general, available literature indicates that such withdrawals often result from a combination of factors, including frustration with the perceived ineffectiveness of peacekeeping missions, changing political dynamics within the host countries, increasing security challenges that outpace the capabilities of peacekeeping forces and geopolitical shifts, and changing international relations.

For many years Kenya has deployed its defence troops in various peacekeeping and enforcement missions in Africa and elsewhere. Earlier on, Kenya also had some troops deployed in South Sudan as part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission commonly referred to as the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (Glassmyre & Simbanis, 2008). These troops were later withdrawn even though the peace-keeping mission was not yet complete. However, Kenya withdrew all its forces after the UN Secretary-General dismissed the Kenyan commander of the peacekeeping forces, blaming him for failing to protect civilians during violence in Juba, a decision that was strongly contested by Kenya.

Unlike the other foregoing cases of withdrawal, the withdrawal of Kenyan troops from South Sudan did not compromise their bilateral relations. This was due to several reasons, thus; pre-independent Kenya had welcomed many refugees from Sudan and Kenya played a very big role in the peace process leading to the birth of South Sudan as a nation in 2011. Further, Kenya has collaborated with Sudan in areas of culture, and trade and has some infrastructural links such as Kitale-Juba which is under rehabilitation, and the planned LAPSSSET program.

It is however notable that Kenya and South Sudan are both members of the East African Community (EAC) which deployed a regional force to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 2003 but both exited later in the year (Center on International Cooperation, 2008).

The Kenyan Defence Forces (KENCON) have participated in several peacekeeping missions under the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) since 2011. For instance, in the 1990s, the KENCON sent troops to the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, the UN Protection Force in Croatia and the UN Mission in Liberia (UN Publications UNIDIR, 2000). In 2011, KENCON troops entered Somalia in pursuit of the militant group Al-Shabaab, which had launched cross-border attacks into Kenya. This marked the unofficial beginning of KENCON's involvement in Somalia's security situation (UN Publications UNIDIR, 2000). In 2012, KENCON formally integrated into AMISOM, significantly contributing to the fight against Al-Shabaab. Between 2012 and 2014, the KENCON forces, alongside AMISOM partners, made significant territorial gains from Al-Shabaab, capturing key towns and strategic locations in southern Somalia (Muyingi, 2013). From there, between 2014 and 2017, AMISOM, including KENCON, launched several offensives to further weaken Al-Shabaab's control thereby helping secure major supply routes and strategic ports like Kismayo.

These interventions have had some consequences. In the first place, there have been territorial gains. In this regard, AMISOM, with KENCON's contribution, managed to liberate major Somali cities from Al-Shabaab control, creating space for the Somali Federal Government to establish its presence (Nelleke van de Walle, 2022). Secondly, there is evidence of a weakened Al-Shabaab. Indeed, KENCON's involvement helped

disrupt Al-Shabaab's operations and limit their territorial control. However, Al-Shabaab continues to pose a security threat through asymmetric attacks. Third, there is a general increased AMISOM effectiveness where KENCON's military capabilities have been seen to have significantly bolstered AMISOM's overall force, contributing to its initial successes (The Platform Magazine, December 2022). Although the KENCON has immensely contributed to AMISOM, there have been intentions to gradually withdraw the troops in the future to focus on supporting the Somali National Army (SNA) in taking over primary security responsibilities.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) faces numerous security threats that warrant peacekeeping efforts and diplomatic interventions to ensure stability in the region (McCreedy, 2022). Some of the key security threats include armed conflict often fuelled by ethnic tensions, competition over natural resources, and the presence of numerous armed groups; presence of various militia groups, such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Mai-Mai militias, and others, poses a significant security challenge; DRC's vast mineral wealth, including gold, diamonds, coltan, and other minerals, has been a driver of conflict as armed groups and even state actors vie for control over resource-rich areas; ethnic tensions and rivalries have fuelled violence in various regions of the DRC, leading to communal conflicts and displacement of communities and DRC's weak governance structures, corruption, and lack of effective state institutions contribute to insecurity and hinder efforts to maintain peace (ISS, 2022). Addressing these security threats and achieving sustainable peace in the DRC requires a comprehensive approach involving diplomatic efforts, conflict resolution initiatives, peacekeeping operations, support for

governance and institution-building, and efforts to promote economic development and social cohesion (Defis Humanitaires, (2023).

In 2022, a surge in violence in the eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu exacerbated insecurity in the DRC, causing extensive internal displacement and substantial loss of life. From 2022, Eastern DRC witnessed serious ethnic conflict and violence occasioned by competition for the extraction of abundant mineral resources in the region. The infighting involved ethnic militias, Congolese security forces, UN troops, and complex external interests (Center for Preventive Action, 2023). This led to deployment of the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF), in the war-torn area of the DRC. Among the troops were approximately 900-man battalion from Kenya (Defis Humanitaires. (2023). Accordingly, in November 2022, Kenyan defence troops were deployed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) under the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) and the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF).

DRC has had conflict in many of its borders. For instance, on its border with Uganda, the DRC has had to content with border conflict with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) (Conciliation Resources E-Newsletter, 2023). However, in eastern DRC, there has been deep-rooted mistrust between civilians. This has been perceived as one of the underlying factors for the ensuing conflict. It is estimated that about 120 armed groups operating within the region with approximately 4.5 million internally displaced people (Center for Preventive Action 2023). Indeed, there has been a feeling that the DRC army is ineffective unwilling to protect communities. But on the other hand, the DRC forces feel frustrated by a lack of support from the civilians. There is thus a strained relationship between

civilians and the military in the Eastern region of the DRC. As a result, violence and killings have taken an upward trend. But in such a scenario, there continues to be an increasing number of casualties as armed groups attack displacement camps, civilians and self-defence groups. Following such a trend, In May 2023 the South African Development Community (SADC) agreed to deploy troops to eastern Congo to assist UN forces ahead of the December 2023 elections. However, a month later, the UN announced a planned withdrawal of the largely unpopular MONUSCO peacekeeping mission, albeit prematurely. In the meantime, DRC's relations with her neighbours such as Burundi and Uganda continue to be not so good.

Despite the announcement of the withdrawal of the MONUSCO peacekeeping mission Kenyan troops were later deployed to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) under the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). In this mission, Kenyan forces joined the battle to support the Congolese military, in a bid to bring peace to the mineral-rich country which is being fought over by numerous different armed groups (Center for Preventive Action 2023). The Kenyan troops were to work alongside other troops from Uganda, South Sudan and Burundi, their compatriots in the EACRF. The role of the East Africa regional force is clearly defined as targeting armed groups. In particular, Kenyan forces were tasked with focusing on rebels in the North Kivu area where some of their counterparts are already embedded in the UN force. Previously, Kenya has been instrumental in trying to broker a permanent peace deal between DR Congo and the rebels. This followed the resolution of an earlier dispute between Kenya and DRC over the presence of the troops in eastern DRC under the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF). But this time around,

besides the need to keep peace, it has also been noted that Kenya has some business interests in the DR Congo, and therefore, Kenya must equally show interest in the search for peace (The East African Newspaper Saturday November 12, 2022. Online edition).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The Civil War in the Democratic Republic of Congo has spanned decades. Several military interventions and peace support operations have been sanctioned to contain the situation. The deployment of military troops in the DRC by the Kenyan government in November 2022 as part East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) elicited mixed diplomatic feelings amongst the involved states. For instance, collaborative media reports indicated that some of these groups were perceived to be serving proxies for DRC's neighboring countries. This painted those neighboring countries with troops in the DRC in ways that may negatively affect their diplomatic relations with the DRC. On its part, Kenya defended the deployment of her troops to the DRC, citing the need to protect her 'strategic interests' (thus, expanding trade between the two states) and the need to safeguard her investments in DRC. In early 2024, Kenya withdrew its forces (KENCON) from Goma DRC. This has led to a general feeling that Kenya abandoned its mission midstream leaving DRC vulnerable and unprepared to take up the responsibility immediately and effectively. This was considered to have some implications for the conduct of bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC. Indeed the early exit generated and continues to generate some tension between Kenya and the DRC and it threatens to further strain their bilateral relations, which this study was keen on establishing.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study was to investigate the implication of the early exit of Kenya Defence Forces' troops on bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo

The specific study objectives were:

- i. To analyze the rationale for deploying KENCON Troops in DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC.
- ii. To evaluate the events that led to the early exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC.
- iii. To assess how early exit of the KENCON Troops affected the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo
- iv. To explore strategies for restoring the mediatory role of the KENCON Troops in the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC.

1.4 Research questions

The study endeavored to answer the following questions:

- i. What was the rationale for deploying KENCON Troops in DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC?
- ii. Which events led to the exit of the KENCON troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)?
- iii. How did the early exit of the KENCON Troops affect the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo?
- iv. Which strategies can be used to restore the mediatory role of the KENCON in the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC?

1.5 Justification of the study

The Kenya Defence Forces Contingents have participated in numerous peace keeping mission across the globe. Previous commendable outcomes of Kenyan Missions have rendered the mediatory role of the Kenya Defence Forces as faultless. The recent rushed exit of the Kenyan Contingents (KENCON) of the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) from the Democratic Republic Congo elicited mixed reaction and cast doubt over the dwindling mediatory role of Kenya instruments state policy in fostering regional peace and security besides affecting her policy of good neighbourliness with East African Community Member States especially the Democratic Republic Congo Democratic Republic Congo. This calls for urgent investigation of the implication of deployment and hurried exit of the Kenyan Contingents (KENCON) of the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) from the Democratic Republic Congo on the bilateral relations of between Kenya and the Democratic Republic Congo Democratic Republic Congo.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Premature withdrawal of troops before completion of mission or attainment of its mandate may strain relation between troop contributing country and the host nation. This study provides an in-depth analysis on the bilateral implication of the deployment and exit of the KENCON Troops from DRC. While much research has been conducted on the immediate impacts of peacekeeping operations, less attention has been given to the aftermath of troop withdrawal. By examining this case, the study filled a critical gap in the literature on post-peacekeeping dynamics and offered new insights into the long-term effects of such military and diplomatic decisions.

Understanding the ramifications of exit of the KENCON Troops is crucial for policymakers in both Countries, as well as for international organisations involved in peacekeeping. The findings can guide future policy decisions on the deployment and withdrawal of peacekeeping forces, ensuring that such actions are taken with a clear understanding of their potential impact on bilateral relations. Moreover, the study offered valuable lessons for other nations involved in or considering peacekeeping missions, providing a framework for assessing the broader diplomatic consequences of their actions.

The study's findings are expected to have significant social implications, by highlighting the changes in diplomatic engagement amongst the two countries, contributing to the discourse on sustainable peace. At the same time, policy makers on diplomatic relations matters are expected to have a comprehensive a nuanced understanding of the situation, setting a precedent for future research on similar topics.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study sought to examine the implications of Kenya sending and hurriedly withdrawing her troops from the eastern part of the DRC. In other words, the study was confined to the two countries between 2022 and 2023. Therefore, the study mainly covered sources that address this issue and which have been written covering the period within which Kenya declared this kind of support for DRC and eventually withdrew her troops from the mission in DRC. Accordingly, the study did not go beyond these boundaries of space and time.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This particular research was conducted in Kenya using secondary sources and interviews with some selected Kenya government officials and staff from various diplomatic

missions who understand well the diplomatic relations especially for these two countries. The researcher also contacted people from DRC Congo living and working in Kenya. Given the sensitive nature of the issue under investigation, the information that the researcher obtained was not the type that can be verified more conclusively but rather, were held as mere opinions which had to be subjected to further analysis. This would certainly have posed some kind of a challenge and limitation for the researcher. However, to address this challenge, the researcher had to diversify sources of this information and corroborate them to come up with more reasonable conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines and presents literature on the themes derived from the objectives of the study. It also presents theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as the knowledge gaps which this research undertook to address. Literature covered in this section was reviewed along the lines of the objectives of the study. In other words, the objectives were the source of the themes in terms of which the literature was reviewed – including literature on causes of conflict, ways in which this conflict has been addressed in the past, impact of the military approach in cases of conflict like the one in the DRC and so on. The main purpose of reviewing literature on these themes was to identify gaps in the existing and available knowledge on the subject of study. These are the gaps this study set out to generate knowledge to fill.

2.2 Rationale for the Deployment of KENCON Troops in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC)

Deployment of forces to a given country has been used as an intervention approach on various occasions. American troops, for instance, have been deployed to places such as Iraq and Afghanistan, with a general feeling that this may strengthen the case against the US for purportedly invading Islamic lands and fighting Muslim governments (O’Hanlon 2008, Salaun 2019). But while the world has more than 20 million soldiers in arms today, it does not have enough capability of deploying quickly and effectively to all the places in the world in good time (Ibid: pp.6).

In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), for about three decades, they have been embroiled in violence. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC; the Congo) achieved its independence in 1960 (Center on International Cooperation, 2008). It is the fourth-largest African country by population and is endowed with many vital natural resources. However, these natural resources and massive human resource endowment, peace has eluded the DRC, and human security challenges have been on an upward trend.

Although there are some exceptions, the majority of the clashes in the eastern region of the DRC revolve around regional politics and are the result of factors such as local ethnic structures and competition over natural resources. Nonetheless, some political analysts have opined that rather than see it in strictly political terms, the situation is not merely the product of a lack of political will on the part of the DRC government, but more of a manifestation of the intricate and rather fragmented nature of its military landscape (Baaz and Verwijen, 2013).

One of the evident reasons behind the conflict in the DRC is weak governance. This is exacerbated by the presence of various armed groups (Global Conflict Tracker, 2023). Such groups have indeed, subjected the people of Congo to widespread suffering including rape and sexual violence, massive human rights violations, as well as extreme poverty. Indeed, it is estimated that more than 100 armed groups operate in eastern DRC, an unsettled region where conflict has raged for decades but has escalated in recent months (Bwire & Guensburg 2022, Adunimay 2022). This generates a humanitarian crisis as has been witnessed in other places where such situations have occurred (Bruwer & Dyk 2005).

Another reason for the conflict is the availability of numerous natural resources. Therefore, competition for resources and influence in DRC also has sharpened long-standing rivalries between Rwanda and Uganda. In a way, this has globalized the conflict in eastern DRC where most of these minerals are found (Defis Humanitaires, 2023). In this regard, it is notable that the U.S. companies have in the past owned vast cobalt mines in the DRC, but later, many of these have been sold to Chinese companies to the extent that nowadays, most of the cobalt mines are controlled by China. This arguably gives China a comparative advantage in terms of energy and technology over the U.S.A.

China's relationship is also another emerging reason behind the Congo conflict, particularly, its economy. It has been noted that the Congolese government is getting support from China to fight the rebel groups and Uganda as well acquires arms from China to carry out military operations within DRC's borders. One more thing about the China-DRC relationship is the fact that it has resulted in limited access to these resources both by other countries and the people of Congo.

Another factor behind the conflict, especially in the Eastern part of Congo is the Nairobi Agreement. In this regard, the rebel groups are rooting for the implementation of a 2013 pact signed with the DRC government, in Nairobi) that would grant them amnesty and reintegrate them into the Congolese army or civilian life (ISS, 2022). Nonetheless, despite tensions as to whether this was a worthy step to take, it generally appeared agreeable that it was worth it to risk the lives of the Kenyan troops, for the sake of the many innocent lives that would be saved by the end of the mission to protect humanity (The Platform Magazine, 2022 December).

In general, studies have identified several reasons for the persistence of war, especially in the volatile east of the country which include; ethnic intolerance, the illegal exploitation of the country's vast natural resources and a Congolese elite that benefits from the chaos. However, the available sources have not come out clearly to talk about the causes of the current situation and the real stakeholders involved in the conflict. This is because, as it is alleged, there are some hidden hands behind what is being seen to be the parties involved. This study seeks to bring out such details.

There are various reasons why an individual state would come a decision to intervene in internal conflicts of other states. States intervene in the internal conflicts of other nations for various reasons, often driven by strategic, humanitarian, or economic interests. For instance, for security reasons, sometimes a conflict in one country can spill over to the neighbouring country thereby causing further instability to the neighbouring country. In such a situation, other states may intervene to prevent threats such as undue migration. At the same time, there could be situations of severe human rights violations such as genocides, and in this case, other nations may want to intervene. Again, it could be for economic reasons, where a country or state may want to intervene so as to secure the existing trade routes. Sometime, intervention process may be as a result of global organization's need to collectively push for security efforts. The need for allied governments to give support to states they align with politically could also be a reason for a nation intervening in another government's internal conflict.

While much of the available literature has tended to focus on reasons behind the persistence of conflict in the DRC, particularly in the Eastern part, not much of this literature addresses the reasons behind the current situation and the real stakeholders

involved in the conflict, possibly due to the alleged hidden hands in what is being seen as the parties involved. Little is mentioned about the reasons for deployment of the KENCON troops in DRC.

2.3 Exit of the KENCON Troops from the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC)

Literature on conflict management has provided various explanations as to what it means. For instance, the term has been understood to refer to the processes, methods, device and the techniques one may employ in the entire process of resolving conflict. Other scholars have used the term mechanism and even strategy interchangeably to refer to ways of resolving conflict (Lepgold, 2006).

While conflict management approaches or mechanisms may include global, regional and national mechanism of conflict resolution, this study is concerned with the particular regional mechanism or approach where Kenya has sent its military troops to help pacify the Eastern region of DRC as documented in the various resources (Muyingi, 2013).

There have been various attempts at conflict reduction initiatives between Congo and its neighbours (Wielenga, Igba & Hajayandi, 2023). These include the establishment of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1999, implemented of a number of peacebuilding programs at the local level following the end of the Congo Wars in 2003 such as community-led programs focused on mediation and several others.

This particular effort has been criticized for failing to fully recognize and consider the political economy of conflict in the DRC in its analysis, political strategy as well as in its

programming (McCreedy, 2022). This has left many structural factors that promote instability to remain unaddressed. These include the promotion of ethnic conflict based on political and economic disparities. This takes various manifestations such as escalation in intercommunal violence such as the one in the Ituri province of eastern DRC. Such initiatives include but not limited to; power-sharing arrangements as in the case of the Sun City Agreement of 2002; integration of Armed Groups where an attempt is made to try and integrate former fighters into civilian life or even the national army; Community level peace-building which involves addressing grievances at the grassroots level and, lately; regional and international involvement where the UN has taken lead in peace-keeping mission (MONUSCO) (Muyingi, 2013). Other organizations that have also contributed to the facilitation of peace in DRC include the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In essence, over time, the parties in the DRC conflict have been pressured to engage in the peace-building process by the regional, international and even domestic communities (Apuuli, 2004).

Despite all these initiatives and efforts, the achievement of lasting peace has eluded DRC. These approaches have failed to address the root causes of the conflict and instead, left these including long-standing grievances unaddressed (Nibizi, 2018). These include issues of marginalization of the Lendu due to discriminatory policies and political structures instituted during colonialism and the post-independence period, with the distribution of power still perceived as favouring some groups over others.

It has, therefore, been the point of the political opinion of most political scientists of the DRC crisis that the UN to undertake a coordinated approach to address these structural factors. What this implies is that, in its approach, the UN should, necessarily, include

reframing stabilization not only in terms of security, but also governance and development, and supporting the implementation of reforms and targeted measures to address the deeply rooted causes of conflict (McCreedy, 2022). Indeed, there have been calls to re-evaluate the approaches used in addressing the conflict in DRC Congo with a view of working towards a holistic approach (Kamais, 2019).

Several factors have been associated with the exit of the Kenyan contingents from the DRC. For instance, the East African Newspaper (December 2023), has outlined the end of a mandate as one of the reasons. Accordingly, there had been an agreed-upon timeframe for the force's operation, a mandate that was not to go beyond 2023 hence prompting the withdrawal. Nonetheless, this exit drew mixed reactions among stakeholders (The East African Newspaper, December 2023). Another reported factor was the feeling of inability of EACRF forces including Kenyan contingents to achieve the desired results, that is, fully resolve the crisis. Of course, there were some sporadic reports of tensions between the DRC and some regional actors involved in the EACRF and hence, contributed significantly to the ineffectiveness (Ibid, 2023 Pp2.col.1). The exit of KENCON from the DRC drew mixed reactions among stakeholders and yet all the documented reasons appear speculative rather than authentic. This is a gap the study will seek to fill.

2.4 Exit of the KENCON Troops from the Democratic Republic Congo and its implication on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC

The decision to deploy Kenya's troops to DRC for the peace mission working with the East African Community Regional Force in the Democratic Republic of Congo had to be

approved by the National Assembly (The Weekly Review in Sunday Nation, 2022). And even though there was a general feeling that this was such an expensive decision, for a country that had in the recent past embraced austerity measures due to limited fiscal space, it was argued, by the national assembly in their bid to explain their support for the deployment that the cost of not deploying these troops was equally high. In the past, KENCON have been deployed to places such as Somalia for the same Peace keeping mission. Studies on this intervention such as Migue (2014) led to the positive conclusion that a regional and multilateral practice of military diplomacy is a plausible approach to the mitigation of security threats to a country's national interests. This was therefore going to strengthen the relations between the two countries.

It was also felt that the deployment of the KENCON to the Regional Force was aligned strategically to Kenya's national interests as this was going to enhance the country's ability to respond to threats emanating from the Great Lakes Conflict System as well as helping to mitigate threats to Kenya's stability and thereby enhancing the security of its citizens. Despite the clear thinking behind the decision to deploy the Kenyan troops to DRC, some cautions have been floated by critics and observers. For instance, there is the sense of distrust of the new force among Congolese, many of whom deeply resent what they see as a long history of foreign meddling in the resource-rich East (Nelleke van de Walle, 2022). This has been manifested in the protests that were staged by civilians in Kinshasa to protest the regional force's deployment. However, political analysts have maintained that the multilateral force structure in itself and which includes the DRC itself may help to reduce perceptions among Congolese that outsiders are intervening in the country to secure particular foreign interests (Nelleke van de Walle, 2022).

But on their part, Kenyans have repeatedly emphasized that they would prefer to avoid fighting if they can, and that diplomatic pressure on Rwanda could bring about a ceasefire. If this happens, then it means that their deployment would be limited to Goma (International Crisis Group, 2022). This view is made in the context of the fact that Kenya has good relations with all countries in the region, including Rwanda and that it has no record of supporting armed groups in the eastern DRC and due to this, it has always curved the image of a neutral arbiter. The same applies to the real reason(s) behind the exit and more so, how this is likely to shape future diplomatic relations between Kenya and the DRC and hence a knowledge gap. To deploy KENCON troops to DRC and hurried withdrawal would appear to run counter to these apparent good relations. This makes it necessary to analyse the possible implications of the diplomatic relations of Kenya and the DRC following this deployment of KENCON, a task which this study is designed to undertake.

2.5 Strategies for restoration of mediatory role of the KENCON Troops in DRC

Diplomacy is an essential part for any country in bettering its relationship with neighbouring or even other countries beyond their borders. In a way, good diplomatic relations enable countries to strengthen their own foreign objectives. Strong bilateral relations of a country have a positive impact on its standing in the global arena. While diplomacy is mostly used to serve the interests of individual governments, the end result is a more peaceful international community.

In general, the term diplomacy may be used to describe a situation of someone dealing with another person or difficult situation with skill, in a way that creates a peaceful solution without offending or upsetting them. It is this notion that is often applied in

situations where countries are dealing with one another (Muyingi, 2013). There are several instruments that guide the process of maintaining diplomatic relations between countries. One of such instruments is the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations of 1961 (UN Vienna Convention 1961). However, the nature of the current crises such as the one feared to occur between Kenya and the DR Congo is typically of the nature of bilateral diplomacy (Hofmann & Schneckener, 2011). This is the kind of diplomacy that occurs between two countries and officially involves foreign ministries and heads of state.

In the present day, this kind of diplomacy is increasingly taking the shape of other government departments, from trade to culture and defence engaging in bilateral negotiations and cooperation. Alternatively, there is the option of use of diplomatic missions (Glassmyre & Simbanis, 2008). These appear to be rather permanent structures for bilateral relations and which conduct bilateral diplomacy through non-resident ambassadors (DIPLO Academy website). They may also do so through multilateral centres. This may be maintained through meetings by heads of state or summits for that matter.

In this study therefore, the investigations sought to establish the most viable ways in which Kenya can support the DR Congo in their quest for a peaceful eastern Congo region by way of deployment of the Kenya Defence Forces while at the same time not interfering with their diplomatic relations. Additionally, much of the literature on the restoration of the mediatory role of KENCON appears to be sparse and not deeply thought out as most of it is available on media outlets rather than critically reflective analyses as those found in academic literature or political analyses. This study therefore sought to make reference to all these sources and conduct further reflections on the positions advanced in the media

outlets to provide more critically thought-out strategies of restoring the mediatory role of the KENCON Troops in DRC.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This section presents the theoretical framework of the study showing the theory that guided the study.

This study was guided by the expected utility theory of international conflict. The expected utility theory of international conflict is a framework used in international relations to analyse the behaviour of states during conflicts (Boulding, 1960)). This theory was proposed by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. This theory was introduced as a systematic approach to the study of international conflict from a perspective of self-interested behaviour of national leaders. It's based on the idea that states are rational actors seeking to maximize their utility or interests. In effect, the theory entails the fact that: States will often make rational decisions to maximize their interests, typically defined in terms of national security, economic gain, or political power and that they (states) weigh the potential costs and benefits of different courses of action before deciding on a particular strategy in a conflict situation, a process that involves considerations of the probability of success, potential gains, and possible losses. At the same time, the theory states that states have preferences for certain outcomes in a conflict, but they also face constraints such as limited resources, domestic politics, and international norms that influence their decision-making. Utility theory often employs game theory to analyse interactions between states as strategic interactions where each state's actions depend on the anticipated actions of others. Accordingly, states may have incomplete or imperfect information about the

intentions and capabilities of other states, leading to uncertainty and risk in decision-making processes.

The expected utility theory of international conflict provides a framework for understanding how states assess their options, make decisions, and pursue their interests in conflict situations. It emphasizes rationality, strategic thinking, and the pursuit of objectives that enhance state welfare.

The theory was found relevant to the present study since it appears capable of guiding the investigation and the subsequent understanding of how and why the conflict in the DRC began and escalated. It helps explain how Kenya's decision-makers assessed the costs and benefits of intervention in DRC, by weighing the potential benefits of stabilizing the region and preventing humanitarian crisis against the risks and costs of deploying KENCON peacekeepers. The complexities included the balancing of risks, negotiation with conflicting parties, strategic priorities, while also accounting for domestic political and international pressures and moral considerations.

It is only then that it was possible to systematically understand how Kenya's military intervention and the subsequent exit from the DRC is likely to affect the bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC. Otherwise, what is available in place are mere speculations and fears that are not framed in any systematic and cogent manner. This, in itself, might even jeopardize the otherwise good relations between the two nations.

2.7 Conceptual framework

This section outlines the Conceptual framework which shows how the various dependent variables interact with the dependent variable.

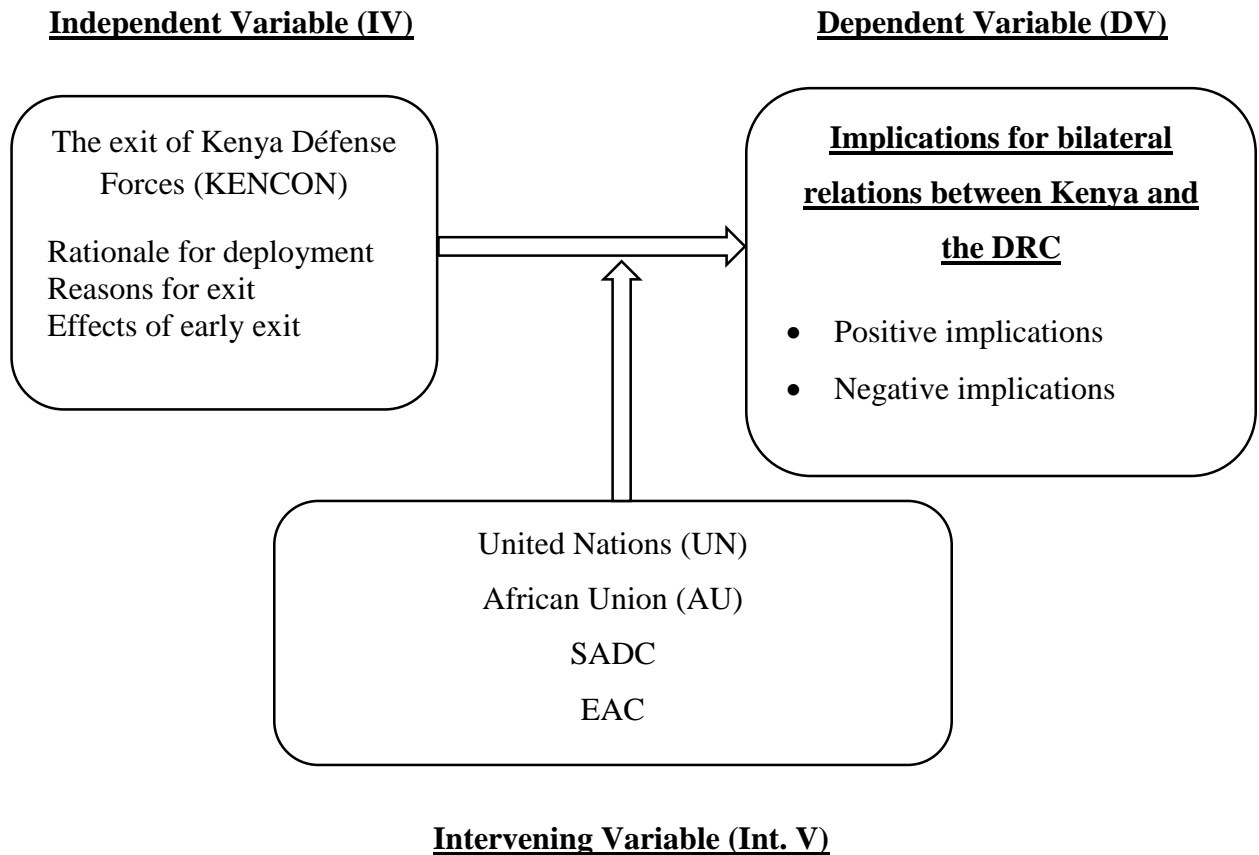


Figure 1.1: Showing the conceptual framework of the study

From figure 1.1 above, the act of exit from the DRC by the KENCON constitutes the independent variable (IV) while bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) constitute the dependent variable (DV). In other words, subsequent bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC, whether positive or negative, whether good, bad or lukewarm, will necessarily depend on how both the DRC and Kenya perceived the exit of the Kenyan contingents from the DRC. However, the true nature of

the resulting bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC following the exit of the KENCON from the DRC in late 2023 is not clear yet but requires deeper scholarly attention. Other regional actors, namely, the Africa Union, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East Africa Community (EAC), constitute the intervening variable.

2.8 Summary

This section has reviewed literature related to the topic of study. To do so, it has been guided by the objectives of the study. In other words, the objectives of this study have formed the themes around which the review has been done. The main purpose of this review was to identify the gaps in existing literature and these are the gaps the study mainly focused in its investigations. In the process of review of existing literature, a few gaps were identified and they include the following: first, while there is a good amount of literature on the causes of conflict in the DR Congo, tension still reigns especially in the eastern part. This makes it possible to assume that the causes that have so far been identified are rather general and not the underlying ones. This study will therefore seek to unearth the underlying causes of conflict in the DR Congo and more so, the eastern part of Congo.

Secondly, literature has documented a number of approaches that have been adopted in addressing and managing conflict in an attempt to bring lasting peace in Democratic Republic Congo. However, the conflict has continued unabated. It is therefore the point of this study that the foregoing approaches have not been quite consistent with the underlying or real causes of the conflict.

Thirdly, as an emerging theme in Kenya's diplomatic relations with the DR Congo, not much reviews and analyses have been done on how the deployment and exit of the KENCON may affect the bilateral relations between the two countries. As such, if it happened that the relations are interfered with, there is a dearth of literature on how the two countries should go about addressing such a situation of diplomatic tension. The section has ended in presenting the theoretical framework that will guide the investigations in the study. In this regard, the conflict theory was identified as the most suitable in guiding this study and hence achieve its objectives. The next chapter addresses the research methodology that the study will adopt.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design adopted in this study and the methodology used. Accordingly, it contains aspects of the study population, research design used, study locale, sampling procedures and sample size, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of data collection tools, data analysis, and ethical issues.

3.2 Research design

The study adopted an exploratory research design. This research design helps to gain insight into a research problem when there is little or no previous work to draw upon. The design aims at generating new ideas and hypotheses that can be explored in future studies. In the present study, the design helped answer the what, when, where, and how questions regarding the research problem rather than the why. The design used qualitative research methods to gather information that the researcher uses to understand a particular problem or hypothesis (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher used the information collected to explain the likely outcomes of the step taken by Kenya to withdraw its troops from the DRC in terms of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

3.3 Study Area

This study mainly focused on Kenya and the DRC in terms of the likely resulting diplomatic relations following the withdrawal of the Kenyan troops from the Eastern part of DRC where they had been deployed to help and provide some military intervention to the conflict in the region. The two countries have always had cordial diplomatic relations

but since the deployment and the subsequent withdrawal of the KENCON, there have been mixed feelings characterizing the relations between the two.

3.4 Target population

The study targeted the staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kenya as well as the Embassy of DRC Congo in Nairobi. It also targeted some political analysts and academicians in the area of International Relations, KDF soldiers, mainly based at the academic institutions of higher learning. Other than these, the researcher also contacted some Kenyans living in the DRC Congo.

3.5 Sampling technique

To manage the situation of existence of the many people who could provide information on this subject, the researcher used purposive sampling to select employees of both the DRC embassy in Nairobi and Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs who in this case formed part of the respondents. The researcher first stratified the population of the Ministry officials into Migration officers and those in top positions such as assistant minister and others near this rank. In any case, a stratified sample is one in which a researcher has divided a population into homogeneous subpopulations based on specific characteristics (e.g., race, gender identity, location, position, etc. (Kombo and Tromp 2006). In this case, the researcher spoke to 18 respondents drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (5 respondents) who were purposively selected, staff of the embassy of DRC (5 respondents) purposively selected, 5 KDF soldiers (who had participated in the mission) selected through snow-balling and 3 political analysts sampled randomly as well as academicians (5 respondents) from any of the academic institutions of higher learning. Finally, 5 Kenyans living in DRC Congo were sampled randomly. For the KDF soldiers,

the researcher knew of one. of the soldiers who had been on this mission, and therefore, this particular soldier not only participated in the interviews but also introduced the researcher to other soldiers who had participated in the mission. This gave us a total of 28 respondents. This sample is thought to be representative enough for the small scope of the study as well as the fact that the sample is representative enough, after all, this was a qualitative study and not a survey that would require high numbers.

3.6 Sample size

As explained in the foregoing section, sampling to get the sample for the study adopted various strategies. The use of these strategies gave rise to the 23 participants for this study. Accordingly, the sample size in this study was distributed as presented in the following table:

Table 3.1: Sample size

Category	Sampling Technique	Sample Size
Ministry of Foreign Affairs staff (in Kenya)	Purposive sampling	5
Staff of the embassy of DRC in Kenya	Purposive sampling	5
Political analysts from Kenya	Random sampling	3
Academicians	Purposive sampling	5
Kenyans living in DRC	Purposive	5
KDF soldiers	Snow-balling	5
Total		28

3.7 Instruments of Data collection

The data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The study utilized various data collection instruments in soliciting data. Therefore, the main data collection instrument utilized in this study was an interview guide. In this regard, interviews were held with Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, Embassy staff, political analysts, KDF soldiers, academicians, and Kenyans living in DRC using an interview guide to provide primary data as already indicated in the foregoing section. According to Kothari (2004), interviews ensure a wide range of responses that allow for a comprehensive factor reduction. Its other strength derives from the fact that it provides a wider scope of responses and follow-up questions in situations where there is a need for more clarity.

The secondary data included the information extracted from existing written sources, including published research papers, newspapers, and other collaborative media reports using a document analysis guide. For that reason, the tools for data collection included an interview guide and a document analysis guide (see appendices).

3.8 Pretesting of Research Instruments

Pretesting research tools usually utilize smaller samples of the target population in what is commonly known as a pilot study. In most cases, participants in such samples are never included in the final study sample. In this regard, the researcher got 2 participants from each category and at least one political analyst to respond to the interview guide that was used to collect the data. The exercise of pretesting the instruments of data collection happened after the successful presentation and approval of the proposal when the researcher was planning to commence data collection. Data collected from this pilot study

was analyzed just the same way that of the main study was, and its findings were studied to see the nature of findings that the researcher is getting and evaluate them against the expected findings.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Research and in particular, its findings, are always meant to be applied to solving a situation. As such, there is a need to ensure the quality of the findings. One of the ways of doing this is by ensuring the validity and reliability of the tools that are used to collect the data.

3.9.1 Validity of the Research Instruments

This is the quality of a research instrument to measure what it is intended to measure. It is therefore the accuracy and truthfulness of a tool in measuring what it sets out to measure. Validity can be established by checking how well the results correspond to established theories and other measures of the same concept. This study is essentially qualitative and while the concept of validity in qualitative research is highly debated, the validity of the findings of this study was related to the careful recording and continual verification of the data that the researcher undertakes during the investigative practice. Other ways of ensuring validity include triangulation and having to sharpen one's skills to collect valid data. Above all, the researcher sought expert judgment and advice from the supervisors.

3.9.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability of a research instrument refers to the ability of a research instrument to yield consistently the same results over repeated testing times. It is therefore about consistency

in repeatability or replicability of a respondent's account as well as the ability of a researcher to collect and record information accurately. Therefore, the researcher used the pilot study findings to determine how replicable they can be. In this study, the reliability of the instruments was tested by the test-retest method by administering the tool to the same group of respondents on two separate occasions and then correlating the scores from both administrations. In this regard, a high correlation was an indication of good reliability.

3.10 Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

The researcher got the proposal approved by the graduate school (Kenyatta University) which also provided a letter of approval of the proposal as well as a letter of introduction to NACOSTI for securing a research permit. The researcher, having acquired a permit from NACOSTI, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Foreign Affairs for a courtesy call and introduction to the study. Upon such visits, the researcher also presented these letters of authorization including the research permit, and went ahead to book appointments with the respondents from the offices visited.

The researcher then identified the respondents of the study through the sampling techniques outlined above and approached them. The researcher booked an appointment with them at a time of their convenience for interview sessions. Data collected were recorded using reliable but agreed-upon methods to increase the reliability of the data. This data collection process followed the procedures as laid down in the ethical considerations section of this proposal. Data collected during the data collection phase was well preserved awaiting analysis.

3.11 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process of organizing, structuring, and interpreting a large amount of information (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). Data collected for this study was of mainly a qualitative nature. Accordingly, the data analysis exercise was guided by qualitative data analysis approaches. These include thematic approaches where responses are seen as presenting certain ideas which, when brought out carefully, constituted some thematic issues. Therefore, data collected from the respondents were analyzed thematically and supplemented by information obtained from the documents that were analyzed. Both data sets were presented in narrative form. Data from interview guides were transcribed and typed to have them in a written format to enable the researcher to analyze it. The researcher then read through the data, coding the emerging themes that were later pulled out, thereby forming the themes under which the information being sought would be categorized. In other words, the analysis was thematic, and the presentation was done in terms of quotes. Therefore, data from the two instruments was used complementarily in bringing out the full picture of the situation under study.

3.12 Ethical considerations

Among the ethical considerations for the research was that respondents to the research were to be respected, and thus their informed consent became vital in this research process. As such, the researcher aimed to work within the confines of this consent. Before engaging any respondent in data collection, the purpose of the study was described to them to allay any fears that the respondent may have. The participant's consent was obtained before the recordings were taken during the interview. Additionally, confidentiality and privacy of the participants also was assured.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered during fieldwork. The analysis of data and the subsequent interpretation processes are done in the context of the study objectives. The objectives of the study were to: The study set out to; analyze the rationale for deploying KENCON troops in the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC; to evaluate the events that led to the early exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC; to assess the implication of the KENCON Troops exit on the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo and to explore strategies for restoring the mediatory role of the KENCON Troops in the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC.

The study was carried out in Kenya and particularly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kenya and the embassy of DRC in Kenya, KDF soldiers, as well as institutions of higher learning where the scholars and political scientists or analysts in international relations will be drawn. Political analysts are not only found at the institutions of higher learning but can also be found in the public sphere since, due to their output on matters of a political nature, they are certainly known.

While some commentaries and collaborative media reports have been conducted on the situation of deployment of the KENCON Troops and early exit of the same from the DRC Congo, it is evident that none of them is adequately exhaustive in the manner intended by

the current study. Besides, a situation like this, where the Kenyan forces are deployed to support a country and then factors interplay to necessitate early exit, has not happened before. This, therefore, makes it clear that there is a need for a more systematic study like the current one that will address the matter adequately by teasing out the implications for bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This would inform the future of similar occurrences as well as decision-making.

The study was guided by some research questions that served as the foundation for the data collection exercise that categorized the findings into main thematic categories. These included the following; first, what rationale was used to the deploy KENCON Troops in DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC?, second; what events led to the exit of the KENCON troops from the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC?, third; what is the implication of the KENCON Troops exit on the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo?, and, fourth; which strategies can be used to restore the mediatory role of the KENCON in the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC?

4.2 Rationale for Deploying KENCON Troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

As already stated, one of the questions guiding this inquiry was about the rationale for deploying of KENCON Troops to the DR Congo. But a quick review of the events leading to the situation indicates that in June 2022, the heads of state in the five East African countries; Burundi, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda called for an immediate ceasefire in the eastern DRC and hence followed this call with a decision to forge a joint

force to fight jointly with the Congolese force to restore calm in the Eastern part of DRC (Institute of Security Studies, (2022). In this arrangement, Ugandan forces would support the fight against the rebel coalition that has aligned with the Islamic State in North Kivu and Ituri area while the Kenyan troops would pursue the other rebels in North Kivu alongside the UN soldiers in the UN force. The troops from Burundi and Tanzania were assigned to operate in south Kivu to deal with the RED-Tabara militia while a relatively small contingent from South Sudan would face the remaining Lord Resistance Army in Haut-Uele (McCreedy 2022, Nelleke van de Walle 2022).

The deployment of Kenyan troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been a complex process influenced by an interplay of a combination of factors (The East African Newspaper: December 05 2023). All the respondents who participated gave some suggestions of what they understood to be some of the threatening events and occurrences that led to EACRF and more so, Kenyan troops to intervene in the conflict in DRC:

4.2.1 Regional Instability

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has, indeed, experienced protracted conflict for decades, characterized by civil wars, rebellions, and ethnic violence plaguing the country. It was been feared that this instability may spill over to neighbouring countries, posing a security threat within the region thereby interfering with relations with such countries. For instance, the instability may exacerbate the humanitarian crisis it causes leading to an influx of refugees from DRC to Kenya and other neighbouring countries. This instability is rooted in the historical context of DRC's colonial legacy marked by the Belgian's arbitrary division of territories as well as the exploitation of resources during

colonialism creating tensions and grievances among different ethnicities (Vlassenroot et., al. 2020). Currently, this trend continues in the form of internal competition for these resources fuelling conflict. All these factors have been worsened by the weak governance of the country manifested in challenges such as deep-seated corruption and political instability thereby creating a power vacuum that has often been exploited by armed militia groups (The Platform Magazine 2022). Unfortunately, there have also been cases of regional interference where some neighbouring countries have intervened in DRC Congo's internal affairs by either supporting their allies or protecting their interests thereby heightening the conflict.

While this may be the case, Denisova and Kostelyanets (2023) have observed that numerous books and articles by Russian and foreign researchers have argued, that instead of working towards stability in this region, some neighbours like Rwanda are part of the forces maintaining permanent instability in the DRC. Accordingly, it becomes rather complicated to rely on the neighbours to enhance regional security (The Platform Magazine, December 2022). On the other hand, there are those sources that have argued that the problem of DRC is merely a problem of a country's size. Indeed, as one of the soldiers noted:

Well, we as a country have good relations with the DRC and if they have a problem, we will always, as a country want to help them resolve it so that we continue keeping our good relations. I mean, we trade with them, they are our neighbours and if things go wrong in their country, we will also be affected (KDF Soldier, December, 2023).

In this argument, larger territories have challenges of the inefficiency of the central government controlling all the corners of the country and instead having the peripheral

areas beginning to feel the control of the neighbouring country more than their own country (Sidorova, 2017). In this regard, the findings on this aspect would be in line with what was discussed in the literature by Global Conflict Tracker (2023) as weak governance.

4.2.2 Rise of Extremist Groups

The emergence of extremist groups like the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in eastern DRC is one of the factors that have, in a significant way, contributed to the instability and insecurity in the East African region. The ADF originated in Uganda in the 1990s as a rebel group to establish an Islamic state in the region and overthrow the governments of Uganda and the DRC. The attacks by these groups are also waged in neighbouring countries, including Uganda and Kenya, thereby compromising regional security.

The ADF's presence in the DRC poses a direct threat to Kenya's security. The group has been known to cross the border into Kenya to carry out attacks, targeting both civilians and security forces. These attacks have caused casualties and instilled fear among the Kenyan population. According to the International CRISIS GROUP:

East African countries have worried about insecurity in the eastern DRC for years, but prior discussions about intervention by a regional force have never led to an actual deployment (CRISIS GROUP website).

To address the threat posed by the ADF and other extremist groups, Kenya became ready to intervene in the situation and support counter-terrorism efforts, working with other countries in the region to improve security and intelligence cooperation. Other East African Countries may as well consider getting involved too as this is in line with the East African Community Protocol on Peace and Security Article 6 on Combating

Terrorism (East African Community Protocol on Peace and Security). Indeed, in talking about the current state of terrorism in Africa at large, the Special Research Report by Amani Africa - Media and Research Service (2022) indicates that there is no longer one region in the African continent that can be considered as completely free from the activities of groups identified as terrorists. In this case, it is noted that while this may be a problem experienced in East Africa, it is a problem borne by the people of Africa as a whole.

4.2.3 Regional Cooperation

Kenya has been a key player in regional peace and security initiatives in East Africa. The country has actively worked with its neighbours to address the challenges facing the region, including conflict, instability, and economic development (Salaun, 2019). The case of DRC Congo was one such case and so it called on Kenya to extend the support it has always given to the other neighbouring countries in the same situation (Kamais, 2019). This is how Kenya found itself getting to intervene in the conflict in the DRC. In any case, the DRC president preferred Kenyan forces as a neutral arbiter to Tanzania, Uganda and Uganda as he claimed that the three other neighbours have some vested interests. It is however notable that the region is expansive and therefore there is need to bring other EAC members on board and work in cooperation if this goal is to be achieved.

4.2.4 The United Nations Mission

The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) is a major peacekeeping operation aimed at supporting stability and security in the DRC (Nibizi, 2018). However, following the 2022 eruption of violent

protests, the United Nations mission in the Congo suffered criticism in the form of a crisis of confidence among local communities as it had failed to protect civilians and improve security in the region, despite having stayed there for more than two decades. This surely exposed persistent problems facing MONUSCO thereby casting doubt on its operational effectiveness (The Conversation, July 2023). In general, therefore, the UN Mission has been criticized on several grounds including; failure to protect civilians, prolonged stay in DRC, operational challenges including violation of human rights and the general local discontent (The Conversation, July 2023).

Kenya has been a significant contributor to this mission, playing a crucial role in maintaining peace and protecting civilians working alongside other forces, including the UN mission (Defis Humanitaires, 2023). These factors, combined with the deteriorating security situation in the DRC, partly led to the decision to deploy Kenyan troops as part of a regional effort to address the challenges facing the region. The deployment aims to contribute to peace, security, and stability in the DRC and the wider region.

In general, this situation in the DRC was seen to have several negative consequences for Kenya including the influx of refugees thereby exerting some undue pressure on Kenya's resources and social services, the disruption of economic activities between the two countries of Kenya and DRC such as trade and Kenyan investments operating in the region and security threats where extremist groups operating in the DRC have been known to carry out attacks in neighbouring countries, including Kenya. This has posed a direct security threat to the country.

It was one of the ways of addressing these challenges, Kenya has been involved in regional peace and security initiatives, including contributing to the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). However, the instability in the DRC remains a significant challenge for Kenya and the wider region. Despite MONUSCO having faced numerous challenges in the DRC including the complex security environment, the vastness of the country, and the presence of armed groups, it still seeks to bring peace to the area. This was evidenced in the several demonstrations in Goma against the presence of UN peace-keepers as well as EACRF yet the atrocities meted on the locals continued unabated thereby making the context of the operation by KENCON and EACRF to be more volatile (McCreedy, 2022). Nevertheless, interviews held with officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nairobi indicated that Kenya's contribution to MONUSCO has been instrumental in these achievements, thus:

Indeed, Kenyan troops have demonstrated their commitment to peace and security, and their presence in DRC, when they were there, surely helped, to a significant extent, to de-escalate violence and protect civilians... (Officer, MOFA, September 2024, Nairobi).

In addition, the literature on this subject indicates that the KENCON's commitment was evident, particularly considering that they were able to get the M23 to agree to a ceasefire that would allow the locals to continue with their economic activities such as growing crops on their farms to ease the biting humanitarian crisis they were in (The Weekly Review, September 2023).

But despite such a notable contribution to the security situation of the DRC Congo, the locals were reportedly critical of KENCON's role decrying its failure to pacify the area (The Weekly Review, September 2023). In the view of the locals, the Kenyan troops

appeared not adequately resourced to meaningfully contribute to the stabilization of the Eastern part of Congo. The perception of ‘mission impossible’ is to be interpreted through the lens of the requirement of EACRF that each troop-contributing country fund their contingents thereby leading to a financial problem. This was exacerbated by the subsequent rapid depreciation of the shilling. Kenyan troops therefore exited the DRC earlier than the popular expectations. However, since the main reasons for such an exit were not made public, this issue has been left for speculation.

4.3 Factors and Events Leading to the Early Exit of the KENCON Troops from the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC)

The deployment of the KENCON under EACRF took place about seven months after DRC formally joined the East African Community (GI-TOC, 2023). At the time of deployment, experts warned that from previous experiences such as that of Somalia, armed interventions have historically proven to lack a strong record of enduring success (The Weekly Review, September 2023). Again, they opined that an approach that involves enlisting countries with strategic and economic interests within the region; such as Uganda and Burundi, could only worsen an already dangerous situation as such forces may well continue pushing their countries’ agenda while operating under such a joint force. Nevertheless, KENCON joined the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) forces and played a significant role in it.

The primary mission was to help bring stability to DRC following the conflicts that had destabilized it. This was to happen by way of providing protection to the civilians as well as ensuring the security of the UN personnel. At the same time, this could also take the

approach of seeking to confront the armed militia to neutralize it. Other roles included supporting peace efforts and the provision of humanitarian assistance. However, in December 2023, the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) which included the KENCON began exiting its troops from the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in December 2023. It was then not clear why the early exit and therefore this section is designed to address this question of why the early exit and the subsequent implications of the exit on the bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC. The investigations carried out revealed the following reasons:

4.3.1 Expiry of the Mandate of KENCON Troops in the DR Congo

Literature on the subject of the EACRF mission indicates that this whole mission was guided by an agreement signed by the heads of states of participating East African Community members. In this agreement was the aspect of timeframe or duration of engagement. Accordingly, the agreement clearly stated the timeframe within which the KENCON would provide their services in the Eastern part of DR Congo (Institute of Security Studies, 2022). Upon the expiry of this timeframe, and in the face of a lack of clauses addressing the aspect of extension, the KENCON would exit. And therefore, the KENCON troops began their exit in early December 2023.

Accordingly, interviews held with both the staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kenya and the Embassy of the DRC in Nairobi commonly alluded to the fact that the KENCON exited because the term for which they were supposed to serve in DRC had come to an end and that it had not been extended. This view was contrary to that of public opinion as well as public expectations that the mandate was certainly going to be extended (Center for Preventive Action, Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2023). The

expectations that this mandate was going to be extended were reinforced by the fact that there was still conflict and violence in the Eastern part of DR Congo and therefore, it was apparent that the mission was not yet complete. This meant that according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by extension, the Ministry of Defense, the exit was in tandem with the agreement about the length of time the KENCON would be in DR Congo. The agreement did not, in any way, have a component of extension.

While there was much speculation concerning the exit of the KENCON, the position that it happened because of the tenure having come to an end has also been shared by other authorities. In their account, such sources maintain that the exit of KENCON troops from the DRC was a gradual process involving careful planning and coordination with the UN, the DRC government, and other regional partners (EACRF and the Kenya Military joint website, December 3, 2023). For instance, the joint online communication from EACRF and the Kenya Military indicated that it was basically due to the expiry of the time of its mandate, thus:

The exit is in line with the directive of the 23rd Ordinary Summit on EAC Heads of State held on 24th November in Arusha, Tanzania. Where the decision not to renew the EACRF mandate beyond 8 December 2023 was made. Accordingly, the Kenyan contingent is affecting the decision by withdrawing KENCON units gradually as it prepares to hand over the area it has been protecting EACRF and the Kenya Military joint website, December 3, 2023).

A similar position to was held by the officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Democratic Republic of Congo embassy offices who opined that:

Remember this was an operation that was a decision of the heads of state of East African countries and it had some timelines. Therefore, the timing given had elapsed and, perhaps, KENCON and many other Kenyans thought that the mandate would be extended or renewed so the issue would now be; why the mandate was not renewed (Officer, Embassy of the DRC in Kenya, September 2024, Nairobi).

From the foregoing views, it would therefore appear that the KENCON undertook their exit from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) due to the expiration and non-renewal of the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) mandate. This mandate had been set for one year hence expired on December 8, 2023, and thus the troops had to commence their exit. Accordingly, despite having been appraised by the CDF upon his visit to DRC in December 2023 as:

... having done an excellent job in protecting civilians in their area of operations and denied armed groups freedom of action to commit atrocities (EACRF and the Kenya Military joint website, December 3, 2023),

KENCON's phased withdrawal began with non-critical units and equipment being moved back to Kenya began as early as December 2023 and came to light in early 2024. To ensure that there was no security vacuum, and as per the plan by EACRF, the whole process and mandate of keeping peace in Eastern DRC were to be subsequently handed over to SADC forces with very clear plans on how to achieve continuity of peaceful climate in the region. The foregoing sentiments were also raised by the soldiers who participated in the interviews held upon their return from the DRC. As one of them asserted:

I: Why did you exit the DRC before the situation calmed down completely?
R: as for the forces, we follow commands. We were told that our stay has come to an end and so we had to exit. But of course, we thought that the mandate was going to be extended but that is not at our level to determine. Once we were told that we have done our part and that the mission is over, there was no way we were going to continue staying there (KDF Soldier, December 2023).

Reflections sustained in this study by the researcher indicate a need for shedding some light on the concept of time as implied in the term ‘early’ in this study. The idea of time, as used in this discourse and as used by those who perceive it as ‘early’, is relative. In this regard, the perception of time is based on, first, the time of exit relative to the time of entry and, second, the fact that the mission appeared not yet accomplished at the time of exit. However, findings presented in this section indicate that the stay of the KENCON was time-bound and that there was no clause in the agreement signed before deployment addressing the issue of extension. As such, the KENCON had to exit at the expiry of the duration as specified in the agreement at the East African Heads of State. Perhaps part of the basis of this perception could be that historically, it has been the case that in a situation of this kind, there would be an extension until the mission is fully accomplished. Seen from this angle, the aspect of time as expressed in the term ‘early’ comes to be interpreted as implying that we address the question of why there was no extension, thereby having KENCON exit at a time when there was a need for an extension. Otherwise, our reflections and analyses on this subject maintain the position that since the operation was time-bound and since the duration of the KENCON operation had expired, this discussion should delve more into the factors that may have played out as not to have the term extended despite the mission not being fully accomplished.

4.3.2 Marked improvement of the security situation

The KENCON troops were deployed to the DRC for a specified mission – to secure the parts of Eastern Congo that were dominated by armed militia. As already mentioned in the foregoing section, this operation was time-bound. In other words, this operation was meant to secure the affected parts thereby improving the security of those areas. And once this is done, and which was to be done within a specified duration, the KENCON troops would exit. Accordingly, in seeking to understand the motivation behind the exit of the KENCON troops at the time they did, the researcher considered the question of accomplishment of the mission.

The guiding question therefore was; had the KENCON troops accomplished the mission by the time of their exit? Accordingly, one other factor that was highlighted in the course of the investigations by the researcher in this study was the apparent accomplishment of the mission that the KENCON set out to go and pursue. In this regard, there was a mixture of reports on the state of the mission as at the time of KENCON troops' exit. While some reports indicated a marked improvement in the security situation in the Eastern part of DR Congo, some have highlighted the reduction of violence due to the weakening of the armed groups within the area by the KENCON troops. For instance, the Ministry of Defence blog post of December 3, 2023, on the subject; KENCON troops under EACRF commence exit from DRC, reported thus:

The EACRF mandate was to conduct joint operations with the Armed Forces of DRC (FARDC) to defeat armed groups, support the forces in disarmament programs, maintenance of law and order as well as provide humanitarian relief. Since its commencement inception one year ago, EACRF forces have recorded significant milestones, among them being the successful withdrawal of armed groups to the designated cantonment areas and the creation of buffer zones in areas that were once dominated by the said groups (Ministry of Défense blog; December 3, 2023).

From the foregoing report, MONUSCO, in collaboration with the government of the DRC, made some remarkable achievements in the stabilization efforts, thereby making the continued stay of the KENCON in DR Congo less and less necessary. The KENCON, being part of these efforts, had their contribution to this. Since they had achieved their stabilization mission, and given the time-bound nature of the agreement they signed before deployment, the KENCON was obligated to abide by the agreement signed by the Summit on EAC Heads of State that was held in November 2023 which had made a clear decision not to renew EACRF mandate beyond the 8th of December 2023 (Nelleke van de Walle, 2022).

In this regard, there was no reason to compel the KENCON to continue staying in the DRC. This was further strengthened by the fact that the KENCON managed to suppress the violent gangs in the area by neutralizing them – and this was their main mission. At Kiwanja, for instance, KENCON had managed to bring the M23 rebels to a ceasefire (The Weekly Review, September 2023). Once this mission was accomplished, the KENCON had to exit. In other words, by so exiting, the Kenyan contingent was affecting this decision by withdrawing KENCON units gradually. Indeed, upon return, the sentiments of the Chief of the mission point to this success, thus:

... they have done an excellent job in protecting civilians in their area of operations and denied armed groups freedom of action to commit atrocities. “I am happy that KENCON troops have undertaken the given EACRF mandate with great responsibility...KENCON has delivered our role professionally with minimal collateral.” (KENCON Blog, December 2023).

The foregoing sentiments reinforce the fact that the KENCON had a successful mission in DRC and thus had to exit as per the agreement. However, some sentiments equally viewed the KENCON as having failed in its mission and that it should have exited. Indeed, the UN estimates that there are 300-500 rebel groups in Eastern Congo fighting one another and against the central government. This could, perhaps, be the main reason behind the reports in the *Weekly Review* (September 2023), that depicted KENCON as a contingent not adequately resourced to meaningfully contribute to the stabilization goal in the DRC. This perception further entrenched the perception of ‘mission impossible’.

Other sources have viewed this whole issue from a historical-comparative perspective. Accordingly, from previous experience, for instance, the Kenyan invasion of Somalia in 2011 following the kidnappings of several tourists by Somali pirates extended occupation of Somalia. However, during this extended stay, there were several accusations against the KENCON in terms of their conduct. For instance, there were allegations that the KENCON was involved in the exportation of Somali charcoal. Similarly, there were fears that Kenya’s military presence in DRC may translate to illicit flows of gold from DRC through Kenya in much the same way as it happened with charcoal exports in Somalia (Liaga & Habib, 2024).

Generally, if the security situation in Eastern DRC had improved, and given that there was no provision for extending the stay of the KENCON, there was every reason for them to exit. After all, the exit had already been sanctioned by the declaration of the East African Heads of State and KENCON being an EAC member state force had to oblige. Whether or not the fears of KENCON getting into illicit trade if their stay was extended were real or otherwise, this is not a valid reason even though it is understandable that certain actions may be informed and inspired by fear and perception.

4.3.3 Change of Approach by the East African Community Regional Force

The Kenyan-led troops were charged with a multiple mandate of containing, defeating, and eventually eliminating the armed rebels in the eastern DRC. Initially, KENCON was meant to operate for up to six months, with the possibility of an extension. However, upon deployment, the mode of operation changed and the troops were to operate under a mandate of diplomacy (The Weekly Review. *Nation Newspaper - online version- September 2023*). This meant that they did not have to use combat approaches but rather, adopt nonviolent means. This was a directive from the EAC heads of state. Accordingly, in this approach, the troops would have to remain neutral and only use violence as a last resort. This approach was perceived as ambiguous and thus was criticised by many, including the DRC president condemning EACRF for its apparent failure to quell the conflict. It has been criticized for lacking the required combat aggression to deal with the armed militia and more particularly, residents of the affected areas feel that the deployment of EACRF which includes KENCON had no impact at all as the suffering under the armed militia continued unabated (The Platform Magazine, December 2022).

Indeed, EACRF has been more concerned with the pursuit of political solutions to the security problem in DR Congo by encouraging dialogue between the government of the DRC and the armed militia groups in the eastern part of DR Congo. Indeed, as one of the political analysts observed:

You see banking on EACRF to suppress the armed militia in the Eastern part of Congo was also a challenge. Ideally, EACRF's mandate is more diplomatic than forceful confrontation. Although EACRF had the mandate to confrontational approach to the problem of DR Congo, it has, of late, been seen to be changing this mandate to a more advisory one. In this regard, it is now more concerned with conflict prevention as well as early warning rather than war (Political Analyst, Nairobi, September 2024).

This change in approach makes it possible to appreciate the exit of the Kenyan Troops, especially considering that to a good extent, much of its mission had been accomplished and that there was a change of focus on the part of EACRF to focus more on diplomacy rather than confrontation. In this context, while the criticism labelled against the KENCON depicts it as a force that performed dismally due to the failure to, forcefully, combat and suppress the armed militia groups, Kenya insists that the mission was a success, arguing from the premise that EACRF's mandate hence KENCON's mandate restricted the troops from taking sides in the conflict they had gone to intervene.

4.3.4 Diplomatic Considerations

Kenya has some fair diplomatic relations with the DRC. For instance, in terms of trade, the DRC is a strategic partner of Kenya where you find a lot of trade between the two countries including some Kenyan banks having branches in the DRC. At the same time, DR Congo has, for quite some time, been a close export partner for Kenya, especially following the protracted conflict in Congo which has hampered economic activity in general and, in particular, agricultural production. In terms of bilateral relations, Kenya

has an embassy in Kinshasa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Nairobi. There are bilateral relations in the area of security.

Well, I think it is in the best interest of Kenya to maintain good bilateral relations with the DRC as we have always had such relations. Remember Kenya exports several agricultural products to the DRC and, recently, there has been the entry of some Kenyan banks into the DRC financial market. Such bilateral ties may not do well if Kenya is perceived to be at war with some parts of DRC (Political Analyst, Nairobi, October 2024)

From these sentiments, we see that there appears to be an economic angle to the deployment of the KENCON in the DRC much the same as the political and diplomatic reasons. For instance, parliamentary discussions that preceded the approval of the deployment of the KENCON depicted it as a beneficial undertaking as Kenya has strategic investment interests to protect the mineral-rich country (The East African Newspaper, November 2022) and that Kenya has a lot to lose if the conflict in the Eastern part of the DRC is not addressed. Members of parliament during the debate on this issue indicated that Kenya's rising business interests in the DRC are a reason enough for Kenya to make a personal investment in the search for peace and that even though it was going to be costly, the long-term local and regional benefits in peace and stability, as well as strategic Kenyan investments in the DRC, outweighs the cost (The East African Newspaper, November 2022). These include Kenyan banks operating in the DRC, many Kenyans in the DRC, bilateral trade with the DRC, and the use of the Mombasa port by the DRC among others.

Despite all the reasons; whether real or speculated, this is a security matter and therefore, specific reasons for the withdrawal may not be publicly disclosed for security or diplomatic reasons. Nonetheless, this exit has drawn mixed reflections about why it

happened earlier than it was generally expected. It is therefore apparent that this was a complex decision influenced by several factors. However, since the real reasons for the withdrawal may not be declared publicly, one could talk about the likely factors that may have influenced this decision.

4.4 Effects of the Early Exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC and its implication on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC

One of the objectives of this study was to examine how the exit of the Kenyan Troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo is likely to affect the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This question was posed to the respondents who participated in this study as well as a review of opinions in the various media outlets or even media or even scholarly writings and talks. At the onset, it should be remembered that this exit was as per the directive of the 23rd Ordinary Summit on EAC Heads of State that was held in Tanzania in November 2023. This is where the decision not to renew the mandate of EACRF beyond December 2023 was taken.

In this regard, the exit of the KENCON Troops was not just Kenya's decision but an act of effecting a decision taken by the EAC heads of state. It is also important to remember that the DRC is also a member of the East African Community and therefore, this is a decision they partly participated in making. This section presents the findings on the issue of how this exit from the DRC may affect bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC. One feature that stands out from these findings is that this exit could have both positive and negative effects on the bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC.

4.4.1 Positive Effects of the Exit of KENCON Troops from the DRC

In discussing these effects, it is important to remember that these are effects that are likely to occur because the exit just happened early this year. They are, therefore, potential effects. Accordingly, there were some positive effects summarized from the interviews held with the respondents and which that were filtered out of the responses from the respondents. These effects were mostly generated from data collected from the KDF soldiers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Political Analysts that the researcher spoke to. These included the following:

i. Strengthened economic ties

Already there is active bilateral trade between Kenya and the DR Congo. Kenya exports some Agricultural products to the DRC and has some service industries such as banks in the DRC. At the same time, Kenya has signed crucial agreements on transport, security, and trade with the DRC. These agreements aim to improve business between the two countries including handling cargo from the port of Mombasa. Again, Kenyan banks, including KCB Group and Equity Bank invested in the DRC thereby making it a lucrative market for Kenyan banks.

Of the respondents that participated in this study, 80% indicated that since the KENCON troops had managed to suppress and secure the areas formerly under the control of armed militia in Eastern Congo, even if the KENCON exists, there will continue to be good bilateral relations between the two countries. The minority who felt that the exit was likely to compromise the bilateral relations between the two countries thought so because the troops withdrew ‘prematurely’, probably, leaving the situation not fully addressed. This view, however, fails to recognize the fact that the KENCON did not just exit on their

own volition but rather, they were following the decision made by their respective Heads of State (East African Heads of State) and that the DRC head of state is a member. Generally, available literature coupled with the views of the majority of the respondents point to the fact that the exit was not contentious and as such, this could expand the possibilities for further economic cooperation between Kenya and the DRC (The Weekly Review. *Nation Newspaper, September 2023*). In this regard, Kenya could leverage this success in peacekeeping in DRC to secure preferential access to more markets including mining and transport.

ii. Strengthened relations

Contrary to the popular feeling amongst bloggers and newspaper reports that the exit of the KENCON Troops would weaken the bilateral relations between the two countries; Kenya and the DRC, more than half of the respondent's exuded confidence that this was going to strengthen the relations. Indeed, as one Political analyst pointed out:

...the DRC has every reason to thank Kenya despite the exit. For this exit to have happened at the time it did was not by KENCON Troops' choice, but a decision taken at a higher level. For sure, the KENCON secured that part of the country and left. They did not stick around forever. This was an indication that the Kenyan troops did not have selfish interests in DRC but had faith in the locals – the faith that they could continue managing their affairs since there was security (Political Analyst C, Nairobi, October 2024).

From the opinion of this political analyst, it is notable that despite the perceptions of there going to be bad diplomatic relations between Kenya and the DRC following the deployment and later the perceived early exit of Kenyan troops, this does not necessarily lead to broken bilateral relations. Rather, the fact that KENCON exited following the directives of EACRF, which by extension, was the demand of the president of the DRC, would indicate respect by KENCON for the interests of the DRC and the locals at large.

If KENCON insisted on extending the stay, then this would as have been perceived as a lack of respect for the locals. In this regard, the exit of KENCON from the DRC could therefore lead to improved relations between the two countries, since it may be perceived as an indicator of trust and the confidence that Kenya has in the DRC's ability to maintain security affairs on its own. This is a sign of recognition of DRC's sovereignty on the part of Kenya.

iii. Exit as an indicator of lack of interference in DRC's matter

Throughout the discourse on the instability of the DRC, there has been this perception that neighbouring countries may come to DRC's aid yet with hidden motives of self-interest. Such discourse has tended to flag Burundi and Uganda as DRC's neighbours who, despite outwardly supporting DRC, seem to be pursuing their self-interests. This fear has also been raised in the Kenyan situation. In this regard, the fear has been that the entry of another East African Community into the conflict in DRC may end up interfering with the internal affairs of the DRC. Indeed, as one of the officers at the DRC Embassy in Nairobi observed:

Although East African Community countries have contributed their forces to help pacify the Eastern part of DRC, there has been the lingering feeling that these countries are meddling in the internal affairs of the DRC. However, it is a good sign that at the end of their agreed-upon period, they have exited, of course, having brought some reprieve in Eastern Congo (Officer, DRC Embassy, Nairobi, October 2024).

The exit of the KENCON as one of the EACRF at the time they were asked to exit, having accomplished their mission in Eastern Congo was a step in the right direction, as it serves to reduce that feeling, amongst the Congolese people, that there is foreign interference in the internal matters of the DRC and this may help improve stability back in the DRC, a condition that favours good bilateral relations.

iv. *Enhanced Political and Diplomatic Relations*

Contrary to the view that the perceived early exit of the KENCON was early and abrupt, available literature from the Ministry of Defense blog earlier helped to clarify that this was, first; a planned and well-coordinated exercise and that, even after the exit, SADC forces would take over from EACRF and in this case, KENCON troops, and second; the exit was as a result of the agreement reached at the Summit of EAC Heads of State which includes the president of DRC. In this regard, the exit should not be seen as one that will cause diplomatic tension but rather, one that both nations should celebrate as a success coming out of the joint effort or collaboration in Peacekeeping to achieve regional security. This should strengthen the two countries' diplomatic relations rather than weaken them.

v. *Future regional and international partnerships*

Kenya is just one of the countries that came in to support the alleviation of the conflict in DRC. It is just one of the seven East African countries that contributed their troops. Nonetheless, the KENCON provided the leadership of the EACRF. The presence of Kenya in DRC through the KENCON should therefore be seen through the lens of Kenya as just one of the cog wheels in the entire peacekeeping project in DRC Congo. Other parts include the UN as well as the African Union. As one of the respondents pointed out:

...why would DRC want to isolate Kenya and judge it in isolation while Kenya was just one of the countries that contributed to the EACRF forces? It should be remembered that even as Kenya was participating in this mission, the decision was not solely Kenyan but an EAC decision. (Political Analyst A, Nairobi, October 2024).

From the foregoing views, it is apparent that Kenya's exit from DRC was not sanctioned by the Kenyan government but by the entire EAC leadership. Therefore, since Kenya's exit was an act of obedience to the decision of the summit, this exit is likely to enhance Kenya's standing amongst these other partners. In other words, an exit that is consistent with international agreements will strengthen Kenya's reputation in global peace efforts rather than compromising its relations with the DRC. However, this will only happen if Kenya and the DRC also look at this matter through the same lens. In brief, the bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC and even the other countries involved in this mission will be shaped by how the exit is managed and whether it aligns with broader security, political, and economic goals shared by both nations.

vi. Public perception and domestic politics

An issue of this magnitude where a country's forces go into another country to support peacekeeping is not immune to varying political interpretations. This has happened before in the case of the Kenyan peacekeeping mission in Somalia and even Kenya's diplomatic interventions in the conflict in (South) Sudan (Weekly Review, September 2023). There have been perceptions of success or lack of it in the mission by KENCON Troops. In the earlier sections of this chapter, the study highlighted sentiments about how the president of DRC was not happy with the way EACRF (which includes KENCON Troops) was carrying out its mandate by not using force on the armed militia thereby dismissing the EACRF as not effective. There were also views of the locals who felt that the KENCON had not achieved much since there was not much difference, in their view, between when the KENCON came in and when leaving.

It is apparent that while the DRC president and the locals were dismissing the success of the KENCON based on how they were conducting the mission (not using enough force), the KENCON executed the exercise under the limits set out in their mandate. As such, they did not use as much force as expected since the EACRF under which they were serving was moving from pure use of force to more use of diplomacy. Therefore, depending on how Kenya's efforts are perceived by the DRC, they will determine the bilateral relations between the two countries. In this regard, it is more how these perceptions will be handled and managed that will ultimately determine the nature of bilateral relations between the two countries.

4.4.2 Negative Effects of the Exit of KENCON from the DRC

Despite the foregoing positive effects of the exit of the KENCON from the DRC in early 2024, there could also be some negative effects associated with this exit. Through the interviews held with the various respondents and the available literature, the study was able to bring forth the following potential negative effects of this exit from the DRC:

i. Increased or continued instability

When the Kenyan troops went into the DRC, there were armed militia taking control of the Eastern regions. During their stay, several reports indicated that the militia were suppressed. However, after the exit, there were reports that there was beginning to be observed some resurgence of the militia. What this means is that despite the plan that SADC would take over from the KENCON, the exit appears to have left a power vacuum in certain areas which later led to instability and violence. This would then be interpreted

by some critics as carelessness on the part of KENCON thereby constraining the bilateral relations between Kenya and the DR Congo.

ii. Implications on regional security

Generally, DRC is a major player in the East African region. Therefore, the exit of KENCON from the DRC may have broader implications for the security of the region. Depending on the nature of these implications, this may compromise bilateral ties between Kenya and the DRC as well as relations with the region. For instance, if the withdrawal leaves the DRC in a compromised situation where it is not able to maintain stability, then this may promote poor bilateral relations between the two countries.

Generally, while it is clear that the exit of the KENCON from the DRC will certainly have some implications on the bilateral relations between the two countries, it is notable that such implications will be both positive and negative. It will have implications that have both positive and negative consequences on their bilateral relationship. But since this exit has already happened, and not so long ago, it will be important to monitor the situation closely and continuously and carefully assess the long-term effects of this decision.

4.5 Strategies for the restoration of the mediatory role of KENCON Troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Notably, Kenya is a key supporter of UN peacekeeping efforts internationally. Kenya has over the years remained receptive to requests to contribute to peace operations based on the consent of the parties in the host state. Kenya has however remained cautious of involvement in peace operations that have had an enforcement element – the notable

exception remains the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which Kenyan forces joined in 2012 (Ministry of Défense). But in the case of Kenya and DRC, Kenya could restore its mediatory role using various approaches under the framework of KENCON, Kenya could adopt a multifaceted approach that involves diplomacy and practical action.

i. Leveraging regional and international partnerships

Kenya has been involved in peacekeeping missions before. Examples here include Sudan and even Somalia. In these missions, Kenya has gathered adequate experience. At the same time, it has earned the trust of other neighbours in the region. Kenya has also forged several partnerships both regionally and internationally. Accordingly, one of the ways in which Kenya could restore its mediatory role of KENCON in the DRC is work with other like-minded neighbouring countries to and organs such as AU, UN and EAC to ensure that the peace-keeping efforts are supported regionally and internationally. In this regard, since UN reports have documented that the perpetuation of conflict in the Kivu and Ituri regions is a strategic aim of both Uganda and Rwanda, which are competing to maximize influence in eastern Congo and plunder its natural resources, Kenya could intervene in such a way of engaging with these countries – through the auspices of, say, AU to chart more acceptable and ways of legitimately getting to acquire such resources in more sustainable ways. This could be through bilateral trade arrangements or through signing of peace packs. Given its position of neutrality, Kenya could position itself as an arbiter in these matters (Adunimay, 2022).

This will not only smoothen the bilateral relations between the DRC and such neighbouring countries but will also enhance Kenya's image in the peace-keeping equation. This is likely to enhance the legitimacy of Kenya's involvement in the whole arrangement of regional peacekeeping efforts. This will not only be a regional legitimacy but also a multilateral one. In other words, there is a need to coordinate and align the mediation process to the international peace processes and not to duplicate such initiatives as carried out at the international level.

ii. Strengthening diplomatic channels and building trust

At the moment, Kenya is already actively participating in the East African Community (EAC)-led process on the restoration of peace in the eastern DRC with its retired President Uhuru Kenyatta as the Facilitator of the process. Notably, one of the strategies being applied but which still poses a challenge in resolving the DRC conflict is the one of building trust between the various fighting elements and governments, as well as the affected communities. In other words, Kenya must be seen to be actively collaborating on conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts can build trust and stability in the region. In this regard, it is encouraging that Kenya's involvement in the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) and the Nairobi Process is a clear demonstration of its commitment to peace in the DRC.

Accordingly, given the strategic position of Kenya in this process, it can take advantage of this to intensify the Nairobi Process that leads to confidence-building. To yield better results, this process should harness ideas from both the political and the military tracks. However, this will only succeed if the East African Regional Force (EAC-RF) continues

to enjoy the confidence of all parties and therefore, its role as an inter-positional army must be re-emphasized and accepted by all parties.

Besides such diplomatic processes, Kenya could also maintain and sustain regular high-level visits and discussions with DRC leaders in ways that can foster mutual understanding and cooperation. A good example is the recent visit to the DRC by Kenya's Prime Cabinet Secretary; Hon. Musalia Mudavadi as a Special Envoy of Kenya's President and which resulted in key agreements aimed at enhancing bilateral relations.

In all these, however, Kenya must try and maintain its position as a neutral mediator in the affairs of the DRC without any vested interests. In this way, Kenya will earn the trust of all parties that are involved in this conflict including the DRC and any other stakeholders. On another level, Kenya could even organize some informal meetings and invite the warring factions in Congo to air their grievances. This could be coupled with humanitarian support as well as public declarations of solidarity with DRC.

iii. Capacity building for peace and security

In the foregoing discussions, it was noted that the DRC does not seem to have the capacity to keep the country peaceful. This is partly because of the size of the country relative to the ability of the central government to exert control in all its parts. Secondly, there is the problem of inter-ethnic animosity and conflict in the affected areas. Of course, there was also the issue of the neighbours interfering with the internal affairs of the DRC as well as coming in under the disguise of supporting the DRC in security matters yet pursuing their interests. However, assuming that such would not apply to the situation of Kenya and the DRC, and given the problem of inter-community conflicts in the DRC, Kenya could offer

technical assistance in areas such as intelligence gathering, logistics, and communication. This can help improve the operational capabilities of Congolese security forces.

Other areas of support include Kenya facilitating community engagement initiatives that promote dialogue and reconciliation among different communities in the DRC. This can help address the root causes of conflict and build trust among communities. As this is happening, it will paint Kenya in a good light in terms of involvement in peace efforts thereby fostering long-term good relations. In general, Kenya can restore its mediatory role by supporting efforts to de-escalate current tensions and to support dialogue processes among countries of the region, notably the Nairobi process and the Angolan mediation process that are already underway but seem far from implementation.

iv. Offering humanitarian support

By enhancing its focus on humanitarian support to the DRC, Kenya can significantly contribute to peace-building in the DRC while reinforcing its reputation as a neutral and stabilizing force. This approach would not only address immediate needs but also lay a foundation for lasting peace and stability. This could take the approach of providing humanitarian aid to the internally displaced persons in the affected regions of DRC. Other than demonstrating solidarity with DRC, it will help build goodwill and create conditions conducive to further negotiations for a peaceful existence. Practically, given the high number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in eastern DRC, Kenya can work with regional and international humanitarian organizations to facilitate the safe relocation and reintegration of displaced individuals. Providing secure supply routes for aid distribution, as KENCON has done by opening main supply routes like RN2, can ensure that essential

resources reach affected communities. This logistical support builds trust among civilians, who may otherwise feel abandoned by international forces.

Alternatively, Kenya could undertake building partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the DRC to enhance Kenya's effectiveness in addressing urgent needs on the ground. Local organizations often have better insights into community-specific needs and cultural sensitivities, which are crucial for targeted aid delivery. This would include the provision of medical services to address both physical and psychological trauma among civilians, who have faced violence from various armed groups but who are now in IDP camps. By collaborating with these agencies, Kenya can ensure aid is culturally appropriate and locally relevant, strengthening its mediator role and credibility.

4.6 Summary

This chapter has presented the analysis of data collected during the data collection phase of the study. This data analysis and interpretation has been done as guided by the four objectives that the study sought to achieve. In reporting these findings, an attempt has been made to also present some of the voices from the respondents that were approached during data collection as well as some quotations from sources, both primary and secondary, that provide some information related to the subject of this study. All these have been used complementarily in getting a fuller picture concerning the subject of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations made in this study. The first aspect- the summary is guided by the objectives that the study sought to achieve. The objectives formed the themes of investigation and subsequently, the substance of the summary. And finally, the recommendations which are in two sets; one, those drawn from the study findings and two, those that identify the potential areas for further research.

5.2 Summary

This study was informed by the position that the Kenyan troops (KENCON) but exited rather earlier and unexpectedly. This rather early and expected exit will certainly have some implications on the bilateral relations between Kenya and the DRC. Accordingly, the first objective had to do with analyzing the rationale for deploying the KENCON Troops of the to the Democratic Republic of Congo and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and DRC. The reasons that were identified and reported in the findings include the threat to regional stability, the rise of several extremist groups such as the M-23, the need for regional cooperation on matters of peace and security and the UN mission which required other EACRF forces to be on board alongside the UN humanitarian personnel in the affected areas. The second objective had to do with the events that may have led to the early exit that led to the early exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC and their implications on bilateral relations between Kenya and the. To this end, the study established several factors and events including; the expiry of the mandate of the KENCON in the DR Congo; which marked improvement in the security

situation; a change of approach to conflict resolution by the EACRF and finally, diplomatic considerations.

The third objective was about how the exit of the KENCON Troops from the Democratic Republic of Congo would affect the bilateral relations between Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These effects were both positive and negative. Among the positive ones include; strengthened economic ties, improved relations; the exit served as an indicator of a lack of interference in the DRC matter; enhanced political and diplomatic relations; future regional and international partnerships and finally; public perception and domestic politics. On the other hand, the negative effects included increased or continued instability in Eastern Congo and the perceived negative implications on regional security. The final objective was about the strategies that could restore the mediatory role of Kenya KENCON Troops in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These included the following; Leveraging regional and international partnerships; Strengthening diplomatic channels and trust; Capacity building for peace and security and finally; offering humanitarian support.

5.3 Conclusions

In light of the objectives that the study sought to achieve, the study made the following conclusions as derived from the findings.

Firstly, concerning the question of justifying the deployment of KENCON Troops to the DRC, the study concluded that given the tenets of the expected utility theory of international conflict that was used as a lens through which to interpret the data collected, even though Kenya may have appeared to act in a manner to safeguard the interests of

the DRC, there are streams of evidence that besides, Kenya was also equally acting in her best interest as well. This is so especially considering that instability in DRC also means instability in the region where Kenya is also located. When there is peace and security in the region, and considering that Kenya has some good bilateral ties with DRC, Kenya is bound to benefit in many ways including economically, politically and diplomatically.

Secondly, while the popular discourse had it that the KENCON Troops exited rather early, there are enough grounds to support the exit that KENCON Troops did at the time it did so. These have to do with the fact that the decision to exit was made at a level higher than KENCON and that ultimately, KENCON Troops had surely achieved its objective of securing the Eastern region from the control of armed militia.

In the third place, and considering the issue of the way the exit would shape the bilateral relations between the two countries, the study has concluded that while the implications of the exit are both positive and negative, the positive ones outweigh the negative ones in number, it will generally depend on how Kenya handles the implications if and when they occur.

5.4 Recommendations

This section presents the recommendations that emerge from the study. The section, however, breaks these recommendations into two: recommendations for the study and recommendations for further research.

5.4.1 Recommendations for the study

One of the findings related to the nature of bilateral relations between the two countries, Kenya and the DRC, was that while the exit of the KENCON Troops from the DRC may have sent mixed signals, it will all depend on how Kenya will handle the matter. It is recommended that the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs pronounces itself on this matter, making it clear the government position regarding the perceived early 'exit' from the DRC by Kenyan troops to curb these extended speculations.

Secondly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as Ministry of Defence must move in to clarify to the populace why and how they found it necessary to join other forces to intervene in the conflict in the DRC, otherwise, it might be misunderstood that Kenya was doing so to further its interests and this may only sour the bilateral and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Third, considering that the implications for the exit that has been perceived as having occurred 'earlier' than expected are both positive and negative, it is recommended that Kenya, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs finds a way of maximizing on the positive effects as well as clarifying their (Kenyan) position as far as the perceived negative effects are concerned so as to maintain sound bilateral relations.

5.4.2 Recommendations for further research

The study recommends that further studies be carried out to find out how the situation was in DRC after the exit of KENCON Troops and particularly, after the SADC took over the security of the areas exited by the KENCON Troops.

Secondly, this study was carried out in Kenya with the respondents mainly drawn from Kenya. It however was not possible to get a sample of people from the affected areas where the KENCON Troops was operating from and listen to their narrative of experiences. It is therefore recommended that similar studies be carried out with a view of including larger samples of respondents from the affected areas where the KENCON Troops was carrying out its operations.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Data Collection Tools

1. Interview guide Questions

1. What was the rationale that led to the deployment of the KENCON troops to the DRC?
 - i. What were the political threats
 - ii. What were the diplomatic threats
 - iii. What were the economic threats
2. Explain some of the events leading to the deployment of the KENCON troops in DRC
3. How was the exit of KENCON influenced by these events?
4. Explain some of the events that led to the exit of the KENCON troops in DRC
 - i. Political events
 - ii. Economic events
 - iii. Diplomatic events
5. What kind of bilateral relationship did the exit of the KENCON troops trigger between the two states?
6. In your view, what influence does the exit of KENCON from DRC have on the bilateral relations of the two countries?
 - i. Political influence
 - ii. Economic influence
 - iii. Diplomatic influence
7. What are some strategies for restoring the mediatory role of the KENCON in the DRC?

Document analysis Guide

1. What issues have been documented as those that led to deployment of KENCON to the DRC?
2. What necessitated the KENCON to withdraw and exit the mission in DRC?
3. The effects of the exit of the KENCON from DRC and what this means on the bilateral relations of the two countries.
4. Strategies for restoring the mediatory role of the Kenya Defense Forces in the DRC and its implication on bilateral relations between the two countries.

Appendix II: Research Approval



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

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P.O. Box 43844, 00100
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Internal Memo

FROM: Executive Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 26th September, 2024

TO: Esther Wangui
C/o Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies Dept.

REF: S205/OL/CTY/21064/2022

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

We acknowledge receipt of your revised Research Proposal as per our recommendations raised by the Graduate School Board of 14th August, 2024 entitled “Early Exit Implications on Bilateral Relations of Troop Contributing Country and Host Nation: A Case of Kenya Military Contingents in Congo.”

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking and progress report forms per semester. The forms are available at the University’s Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Also, please ensure that you publish article(s) from your thesis before submitting it to Graduate School for examination as per the Commission for University Education and Kenyatta University guidelines.

Thank you.

JACKSON LUVUSI
FOR: EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

C.c. Chairman, Department of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Xavier Ichani
C/o Department of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies
Kenyatta University

JL/mo

Appendix III: Research Authorization



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
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Our Ref: S205/OL/CTY/21064/2022

DATE: 26th September, 2024

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology
and Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTHER WANGUI – REG.
S205/OL/CTY/21064/2022**

I write to introduce **Esther Wangui** who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. The student is registered for M.A degree programme in the **Department of Security, Diplomacy & Peace Studies**.

Esther intends to conduct research for a M.A Project Proposal entitled, “**Early Exit Implications on Bilateral Relations of Troop Contributing Country and Host Nation: A Case of Kenya Military Contingents in Congo.**”

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.


Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E. Njagi', written over a horizontal line.

**PROF. ELIUD NJAGI
EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

JL/mo

Appendix IV: NACOSTI Research License


REPUBLIC OF KENYA
Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

Ref No: 9d203d **Date of Issue: 07/October/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss: ESTHER WANGUI of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in on the topic: EARLY EXIT IMPLICATIONS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS OF TROOP CONTRIBUTING COUNTRY AND HOST NATION: A CASE OF KENYA MILITARY CONTINGENTS IN CONGO for the period ending : 07/October/2025.

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