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REPUBLIC OF KENYA
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT – FIFTH SESSION – 2026
DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE, AND FOREIGN
RELATIONS

REPORT ON PARTICIPATION AT THE 39TH AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT HELD IN ADDIS
ABABA, ETHIOPIA FROM 11TH TO 15TH FEBRUARY 2026

 THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID	
DATE: 02 JUL 2026 DAY: Thursday	
TABLED BY:	Chairperson DC Defence Intelligence Foreign Relations
CLERK-AT THE-TABLE:	Halima Ahmed



CLERK'S CHAMBERS
DIRECTORATE OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
NAIROBI

JUNE, 2026

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ABBREVIATIONS

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA	African Union Development Agency
EAC	East African Community
EC	Executive Council
ExCom	Executive Committee
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PRC	Permanent Representatives Committee
PSC	Peace and Security Council
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RM	Regional Mechanisms
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WDM-K	Wiper Democratic Movement - Kenya
UDA	United Democratic Alliance
UDM	United Democratic Movement

1.0 PREFACE

1.1 Committee Establishment and Mandate

1. The Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations is one of the Departmental Committees of the National Assembly established under Standing Order 216 whose mandates pursuant to the Standing Order 216 (5) includes to:
 - a) To investigate, inquire into, and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities, administration, operations and estimates of the assigned ministries and departments;
 - b) To study the programme and policy objectives of Ministries and departments and the effectiveness of the implementation.
 - c) On a quarterly basis, monitor and report on the implementation of the national budget in respect of its mandate.
 - d) To study and review all legislation referred to it;
 - e) To study, assess and analyze the relative success of the Ministries and departments as measured by the results obtained as compared with their stated objectives;
 - f) To investigate and inquire into all matters relating to the assigned Ministries and departments as they may deem necessary, and as may be referred to them by the House;
 - g) Vet and report on all appointments where the Constitution or any other law requires the National Assembly to approve, except those under Standing Order 204 (*Committee on Appointments*);
 - h) To examine treaties, agreements, and conventions;
 - i) To make reports and recommendations to the House as often as possible, including recommendations of proposed legislation;
 - j) To consider reports of Commissions and Independent Offices submitted to the House pursuant to the provisions of Article 254 of the Constitution; and

1.2 Committee Subjects

2. The subject matter of the Committee is stated in the Second Schedule of the National Assembly Standing Orders and includes: *defence, intelligence, foreign relations, diplomatic and consular*

services, international boundaries including territorial waters, international relations, and veteran affairs.

3. In executing its mandate, the Committee oversees the following government Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs):
- a) The Ministry of Defence,
 - b) The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs
 - c) The State Department for East African Community Affairs (EAC).
 - d) The National Intelligence Service

1.3 Committee Membership

4. The Committee was initially constituted by the House on **27th October 2022** and further reconstituted on **6th March 2025** comprising the following Members:

Chairperson

Hon. Koech Nelson, M.P.

Belgut Constituency

UDA Party

Vice-Chairperson

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

Mandera North Constituency

UDM Party

Members

Hon. Wanjira Martha Wangari, M.P.,

Gilgil Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Joshua Kandie, MP

Baringo Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Hassan Abdi Yusuf, MP

Kamkunji Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Kwenya Thuku Zachary, MP

Kinangop Constituency

Jubilee Party

Hon. Odhiambo Millie G. Akoth, MP

Suba North Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Logova Sloya Clement, MP

Sabatia Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Kanchory Elijah Memusi, MP

Kajiado Central Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Ikana Fredrick Lusuli, MP

Shinyalu Constituency

ANC Party

Hon. (Dr.) Kasalu Irene Muthoni, MP

Kitui County

WDM-K

Hon. Mohamed A. Hussein, MP

Lagdera Constituency

ODM Party

Hon. Kirima Moses Nguchine, MP

Imenti Central Constituency

UDA Party

Hon. Anne Wanjiku Muratha, M.P.

Kiambu County

UDA Party

Hon. Luyai Caleb Amisi, MP

Saboti Constituency

ODM Party

1.4 Secretariat

5. The Committee is facilitated by the following staff:

Mr. Emmanuel Muyodi
First Clerk Assistant/Head of Secretariat

Mr. Lenny Muchangi
Legal Counsel II

Mr. Bernard Njeru
Clerk Assistant III

Martin Sigei
Research Officer III

Mr. Edwin Machuki
Fiscal Analyst II

Mr. Salat Ali
Principal Serjeant-at-Arms

Ms. Noelle Chelagat
Media Relations Officer I

1.5 Delegation

6. The delegation that participated in the Assembly was comprised of:

1) **Hon. Hassan Abdi Yusuf, MP**

-Chairperson/Leader of the Delegation

2) Mr. Martin Sigei

-Delegation Secretary

1.6 Acknowledgement

7. The Delegation is thankful to the Offices of the Speaker and the Clerk of the National Assembly for the logistical and technical support given to it during its preparation and actual participation in the Conference.
8. It is, therefore my pleasant duty and privilege, on behalf of the delegation and by extension the Departmental Committee on Defence, Intelligence, and Foreign Relations, to present to the House the Report on the Participation at the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14th to 15th February 2025.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Establishment of the African Union (AU)

9. The African Union (AU) was officially launched in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, following a decision in September 1999 by its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to create a new continental organization to build on its work. All 55 African countries are Member States of the African Union.
10. The OAU was formed in 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, by the 32 African states that had achieved independence at the time. A further 21 members joined gradually, reaching a total of 53 by the time of the AU's launch in 2002.
11. In 2011, South Sudan became the 54th Member State, and in 2017, Morocco became the 55th Member State.
12. The OAU's main objectives were to: promote the unity and solidarity of African states; coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States; rid the continent of colonization and apartheid; promote international cooperation within the United Nations framework; and harmonize members' political, diplomatic, economic, educational, cultural, health, welfare, scientific, technical and defence policies.
13. The OAU operated on the basis of its Charter and the 1991 Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (known as the Abuja Treaty). Through the 1990s, leaders debated the need to amend the OAU's structures to reflect the challenges of a changing world. The creation of the AU shifted focus from supporting liberation from colonialism and apartheid to spearheading Africa's development and integration.
14. The vision for the Union included accelerating the process of integration in Africa; supporting the empowerment of African states in the global economy; addressing the multifaceted social, economic, and political problems facing the continent; and promoting peace, security, stability, democracy, good governance and human rights.

15. The Commission is the AU's Secretariat: It is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and is composed of an elected chairperson, deputy chairperson, six commissioners, and staff.
16. The AU vision is: An integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.
17. Agenda 2063, officially adopted by the AU Assembly in 2015, provides a collective vision and roadmap to build a peaceful, prosperous, and united Africa, based on shared values and a common destiny.
18. Under Article 3 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000) and the Protocol to the Act (2003), the Union's objectives are to:
- a) Achieve greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa.
 - b) Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States.
 - c) Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent.
 - d) Promote and defend African Common Positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples.
 - e) Encourage international cooperation, taking due account the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
 - f) Promote peace, security and stability on the continent.
 - g) Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance.
 - h) Promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments.
 - i) Establish the necessary conditions that enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations.
 - j) Promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies.
 - k) Promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples.

- l) Coordinate and harmonize policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union.
- m) Advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology.
- n) Work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.
- o) Ensure the effective participation of women in decision-making, particularly in the political, economic, and socio-cultural areas.
- p) Develop and promote common policies on trade, defence, and foreign relations to ensure the defence of the continent and the strengthening of its negotiating positions.
- q) Invite and encourage the full participation of the African diaspora, as an important part of the continent, in the building of the Union.

2.2 The Assembly of the African Union

19. The Assembly is the African Union's (AU's) supreme organ and comprises Heads of State and Government from all **55** Member States. It determines the AU's policies, establishes its priorities, adopts its annual programme, and monitors the implementation of its policies and decisions.

20. In addition, the Assembly:

- a) Elects the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC).
- b) Appoints the AUC Commissioners and determine their functions and terms of office.
- c) Admits new members to the AU.
- d) Adopts the AU budget.
- e) Takes decisions on important AU matters.
- f) Amends the Constitutive Act in conformity with the laid-down procedures.
- g) Interprets the Constitutive Act.
- h) Approves the structure, functions, and regulations of the AU Commission.
- i) Determines the structure, functions, powers, composition, and organization of the Executive Council.

21. The Assembly can create any committee, working group or commission as it deems necessary. It can also delegate its powers and functions to other AU organs, as appropriate.
22. On peace and security matters, the Assembly delegated its powers to the Peace and Security Council (PSC) when the Council became operational in 2004. The Council was established in 2003 to be the standing decision-making organ for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts (Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act, article 9).
23. Provisions governing the Assembly's composition, functions and powers, voting, and procedures are contained in Articles 6 to 9 of the Constitutive Act and the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act. Section 1, rule 4 of the Assembly Rules of Procedure, as amended in 2021, elaborates on the Assembly's functions and powers.

2.3 Meetings

24. Article 6 of the AU Constitutive Act provides for the Assembly to meet in ordinary session at least once a year and in extraordinary session on request by a Member State and approved by a two-thirds majority of Member States.
25. In 2004, the Assembly decided it would meet in Assembly ordinary session twice a year. Sessions usually take place in late January or early February at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and in June or July hosted by a Member State.
26. In January 2018, the Assembly decided that ordinary sessions would be held once a year from 2019, and they have since been held in February each year.
27. In place of the June/July session, the Assembly Bureau holds a coordination meeting with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), with the participation of the Chairpersons of the RECs, Regional Mechanisms (RMs), and the Commission.
28. Under rule 8 of the Assembly Rules of Procedure, as amended in 2021, the Assembly adopts its own agenda at the opening of each session. The provisional agenda and

working documents for an ordinary session are prepared by the Commission 60 days before the opening session and submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) and Executive Council.

3.0 KEY OUTCOMES OF THE AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT 39TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

29. The 39th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union was held on 11th –15th February 2026 in Addis Ababa at the AU Headquarters. The Summit was convened under the AU Theme of the Year 2026: *“Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063.”* This theme aligns with continental priorities under Agenda 2063, particularly Goal 1 on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

30. The Assembly deliberated on a wide range of political, governance, and socio-economic issues. It considered key reports, including:

- a. Institutional reforms of the AU aimed at enhancing efficiency and financial sustainability;
- b. The state of peace and security in Africa, based on reports of the Peace and Security Council;
- c. Africa’s participation in the G20 following its admission as a permanent member in 2023;
- d. Governance issues through the African Peer Review Mechanism;
- e. Development coordination and implementation progress under AUDA-NEPAD;
- f. Africa’s Common Position on the reform of the United Nations Security Council as presented by the Committee of Ten (C-10), consistent with the Ezulwini Consensus;
- g. Climate change response under the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change;
- h. Implementation of the 2024 AU Theme on Education;
- i. International geopolitical issues including Palestine and Haiti;
- j. Adoption of draft legal instruments and policy frameworks;
- k. The annual report of the Chairperson of the AU Commission;
- l. Continental initiatives on clean cooking energy access; and

m. Adoption of outcomes from the 6th Mid-Year Coordination Meeting (Accra, July 2024) and preparations for the 7th meeting.

31. The Assembly reaffirmed commitment to accelerating implementation of Agenda 2063, with emphasis on water security, sanitation, infrastructure, and climate resilience as critical enablers of socio-economic transformation.
32. On peace and security, the Assembly underscored the principle of “African solutions to African problems” and called for strengthened coordination between the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and international partners. It also reiterated the need for sustainable financing of AU-led peace support operations, including through UN assessed contributions
33. The Assembly emphasized governance reforms and institutional strengthening, noting progress in AU reform implementation while calling for enhanced accountability, transparency, and efficiency. The role of the African Peer Review Mechanism in promoting democratic governance and peer accountability was reaffirmed.
34. On climate action, the Assembly urged Member States to scale up adaptation and mitigation strategies, enhance access to climate finance, and prioritize sustainable water resource management in line with the 2026 theme.
35. The Assembly further stressed economic transformation through regional integration and trade, particularly under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), to boost intra-African trade and industrialization.
36. Overall, the 39th AU Summit reaffirmed Africa’s commitment to continental integration, multilateral engagement, and sustainable development, with strong emphasis on water security, governance reform, peacebuilding, and Africa’s evolving role in global governance.

37. Trade between Kenya and Ethiopia remains constrained by structural and regulatory barriers that limit full market access. Despite growing bilateral relations, trade flows are not fully liberalized, with Ethiopian domestic policies maintaining significant controls over imports, logistics, and foreign participation in key sectors.
38. These restrictions have particularly affected the seamless movement of goods originating from Kenyan infrastructure projects such as the Lamu Port, which is a critical node under the LAPSSET Corridor initiative. As a result, trade efficiency and competitiveness between the two countries remain below potential.
39. A major operational challenge affecting trade is the incompatibility in axle load regulations between Kenya and Ethiopia. Ethiopian transport regulations permit higher axle load limits compared to Kenya's standards. Consequently, trucks from Kenya transporting goods, primarily fertilizer shipments through Lamu Port, are unable to proceed beyond the Ethiopian border. These goods must be offloaded at designated border points and transferred to Ethiopian trucks.
40. This situation is further complicated by a reciprocal policy stance by the Ethiopian Government, which restricts Ethiopian trucks from entering Kenyan territory under similar conditions. The result is a costly and inefficient transshipment process at the border, leading to delays, increased logistics costs, and reduced competitiveness of Kenyan exports into the Ethiopian market.
41. Efforts by Kenyan financial institutions, including KCB Group and Equity Group Holdings, to establish a presence in Ethiopia have faced significant regulatory hurdles. Ethiopian investment laws require that approximately 60% of shareholding for foreign companies be held by Ethiopian nationals.
42. This requirement effectively limits foreign ownership and control, making it difficult for foreign companies to operate independently or implement their business models. As a result, Kenyan companies are constrained in expanding their regional footprint into Ethiopia, thereby limiting cross-border trade and investment.

43. The Kenyan Embassy in Ethiopia is currently facing infrastructure-related challenges, particularly concerning the condition and maintenance of its facilities. The embassy compound comprises seven residential units, including the Chancery, all of which require renovation and upgrading to meet operational and security standards.
44. Funding for the renovation works has already been disbursed, and the procurement process is underway, with tendering activities in progress. To ensure proper assessment and execution, a team of engineers was dispatched from Nairobi to evaluate the condition of the facilities and guide the renovation process.
45. The Chairperson acknowledged that Kenya has one of the most vibrant political environments on the continent. He particularly noted the high level of youth engagement in governance, public discourse, and civic participation. Kenya. While this vibrancy is a sign of a healthy democracy, it also places pressure on institutions to respond effectively to the aspirations of a young and dynamic population.
46. He emphasized that political and economic stability in the Horn of Africa remains a critical priority for the continent. Given the region's strategic importance and its susceptibility to conflict, instability in one country often has spillover effects across borders, affecting trade and security. He underscored the need for sustained cooperation among member states to promote peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and resilient governance structures as a foundation for long-term development.
47. A major concern highlighted was the persistent challenge of youth unemployment across Africa. The Chairperson observed that a large and growing youth population, if not adequately absorbed into productive sectors, poses socio-economic and political risks. High unemployment levels contribute to frustration, increased vulnerability to radicalization, and social unrest. He stressed that addressing youth unemployment must be treated as a central policy priority by governments across the continent.
48. In response to the unemployment challenge, the Chairperson called on African governments to implement deliberate and scalable job creation strategies targeted at

young people. This includes investing in industrialization, supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), expanding digital economies, and aligning education systems with market needs. He emphasized that inclusive economic growth must be pursued to ensure that young people are not left behind, thereby strengthening social stability and economic resilience.

49. The Chairperson commended Kenya's Affordable Housing Programme as one of the most ambitious housing initiatives currently being implemented on the continent. He noted that the programme not only addresses housing deficits but also serves as a catalyst for job creation, urban development, and economic stimulation. By integrating infrastructure development with employment opportunities, the initiative presents a model that other African countries could adapt in addressing similar challenges related to urbanization and youth unemployment.

4.0 COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

50. The Committee observed that:

- a) Kenya is a committed member of the African Union and was dedicated to preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction across Africa. Kenya continued to maintain the firm position that her prosperity is inextricably linked to peace and stability in the continent and the need to enhance regional peace and security.
- b) The challenges outlined by the Kenyan Ambassador to Ethiopia ranging from trade restrictions and logistical inefficiencies to regulatory barriers highlight the need for enhanced bilateral engagement between Kenya and Ethiopia. Addressing these issues will be critical to unlocking the full potential of trade under regional frameworks such as the LAPSSET Corridor and broader continental initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- c) The Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs did not efficiently discharge its mandate of facilitating the delegation's acquisition of the necessary access passes to the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, resulting in delays and challenges in accessing the premises.

5.0 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

51. The Committee recommends that:

- a) The Ministry of Roads and Transport, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs and relevant Ethiopian authorities, should initiate negotiations on the harmonization of axle-load regulations to facilitate seamless movement of cargo between Kenya and Ethiopia and eliminate costly transshipment requirements at border points.
- b) Kenya and Ethiopia should establish a Joint Bilateral Trade and Logistics Working Group to address non-tariff barriers, harmonize customs procedures, and resolve operational challenges affecting cross-border trade, particularly under the LAPSET Corridor and AfCFTA frameworks. This working group should prioritize the removal of regulatory bottlenecks that impede the free movement of goods and services between the two countries
- c) The participation of the National Assembly (Committee on Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations) in African Union forums should be preceded by structured consultations with the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs to ensure timely briefing on the agenda, Kenya's positions on the various agenda items, and the expected outcomes of the meetings.

SIGNED.....



DATE

01/7/2026

THE HON. NELSON KOECH, CBS, M.P.

CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE, INTELLIGENCE AND
FOREIGN RELATIONS

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