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**KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**NINTH PARLIAMENT – FOURTH SESSION**

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**DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND  
FOREIGN RELATIONS**

**REPORT OF THE STUDY VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF  
DJIBOUTI  
SEPTEMBER 6 – 8, 2005**

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*National Assembly  
Parliament Buildings*  
**NAIROBI**

**SEPTEMBER 2005**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Mr Speaker Sir,**

1. The Departmental Committee on Defence and Foreign Relations was constituted at the commencement of the Ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) Parliament pursuant to provisions of standing orders 151. The Committee has executed its mandate in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 151 (4), which in part states thus:-
  - i. investigate, inquire into and report on all matters relating to the mandate, management, activities, administration, operations and estimates of assigned Ministries and Departments;
  - ii. study the programme and policy objectives of the Ministries and Departments and the effectiveness of the implementation;
  - iii. study and review all legislation after First Reading subject to the exceptions under Standing Order 101 A(4);
  - iv. study, assess and analyse the relative success of the Ministries and Departments as measured by the results obtained as compared with its stated objectives;
  - v. investigate and inquire into all matters relating to the assigned Ministries and Departments as they deem necessary as may be referred to them by the House or a Minister; and
  - vi. make report reports and recommendations to the House as often as possible including recommendations of proposed legislation.
  
2. The Committee oversees the following Ministries and Departments:-
  - i. Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
  - ii. Ministry for East Africa and Regional Cooperation; and
  - iii. Departmental of Defence.

3. The Committee comprise the following Members:-

The Hon. G. G. Kariuki, M.P. – **Chairperson**  
The Hon. Njoki S. Ndung'u, M.P.  
The Hon. Nyiva L. Mwendwa, M.P.  
The Hon. Gen. (Rtd.) Joseph Nkaissery, M.P.  
The Hon. Major (Rtd.) Marsden H. Madoka, M.P.  
The Hon. Mwandawiro Mghanga, M.P.  
The Hon. Daniel L. Khamasi, M.P.  
The Hon. Kirugi M'Mukindia, M.P.  
The Hon. Samuel Poghiso, M.P.  
The Hon. Abdallah J. Ngozi, M.P.  
The Hon. (Capt.) Davies Nakitare, M.P.

#### 4. **BACKGROUND FOR THE VISIT TO DJIBOUTI**

The visit to the Republic of Djibouti by the Departmental Committee on Defence and Foreign Relations was a beginning of a series of visits to countries within the Greater Horn of Africa namely Djibouti, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

These visits were anticipated to take place immediately after the visits to the Countries within the Great Lakes Region namely Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.), Tanzania and Uganda in 2004 but this did not happen owing to logistic arrangements.

During the visits to the Great Lakes Region in June 2004, the Committee and its counterparts in the respective host Parliaments observed that, as people's representatives who better understand their electorates' needs, aspirations and the challenges they face as they are with the electorates most of the time, they are in better positions to persuade the electorate to abandon unworthy causes such as conflicts, cattle rustling, acquisition of illegitimate arms et cetera compared with their counterparts in the Executive.

This led to the establishment of an Inter-Parliamentary Forum within the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region whose objectives includes, among others to;

- complement the Executive's efforts in conflict resolution mechanisms in pursuit of peace and security;

- establish a permanent framework for discussing challenges facing the region through inter-parliamentary diplomacy;
- enhance inter-parliamentary relations and diplomacy between countries in the region;
- explore and foster opportunities for political economic and cultural cooperation between the countries;
- harmonize views in international fora; and encourage taking of joint positions for the benefit of the peoples in the region; and
- set up regional inter-parliamentary verification mechanisms especially in matters/areas of cross boarder tensions and other issues of common interest from a structured parliamentary point of view after which they would make recommendations to the respective Parliaments for possible adoption by the respective Parliaments and implementation by the various Governments.

The Inter-parliamentary forum for Great Lakes and Horn of Africa was launched in Mombasa, Kenya in October 2004 with its first formal meeting taking place in March 15-17, 2005 in Kigali, Rwanda, where Kenya was formally elected to chair meetings of the Forum. However, delegates from Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.) and were unable to attend.

It is for this reason that Committee undertook to visit those countries that did not attend the first meeting in Kigali, Rwanda to explain the content of the meeting and modalities for the way forward.

Consequently, the Committee paid a quick visit to Djibouti between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2005. While in Djibouti, the delegation held fruitful deliberations with:-

- (i) The Hon. S.E.M. Ali Dini Abdoukader, The first Deputy Speaker of Parliament;
- (ii) The Hon. S.E.M. Mohamoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs;
- (iii) The Hon. S.E.M Ouggoureh Kifleh Ahmed, Minister for Defence; and
- (iv) the Committees for Foreign Affairs and Defence.

## 5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE DELEGATION

The delegation to Djibouti consisted of five (5) Members of the Committee and one Member of staff namely:-

The Hon. Kirugi M'Mukindia, M.P.-

**Leader of the  
Delegation, NARC**

The Hon. Samuel Poghiso, M.P.

KANU

The Hon. Mwandawiro Mghanga, M.P.

FORD People

The Hon. (Rtd.) Capt. Davies Nakitare, M.P.

NARC

The Hon. Abdallah J. Ngozi, M.P.

NARC

Ms. Rachel N. Kairu -

Secretary to the Delegation

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Committee is grateful to the Hon. Speaker and the Liaison Committee for entrusting them with the responsibility of representing Kenya and for facilitating the visit, and the office of the Clerk for availing the necessary logistical and technical support. The Committee also wishes to thank the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters and the staff of the Kenya Embassy in Ethiopia for all the support and technical assistance prior to and during the visit.

## 7. MEETING WITH THE HON. S.E.M ALI DINI ABDOULKADER, THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT

The deputy Speaker welcomed the delegation to Djibouti and to the National Assembly and underscored the cordial relations between Kenya and Djibouti adding that apart from being in the same region, the two had a lot in common. He regretted that it was not possible for the Committee to meet the Speaker, Hon. Idriss Arnaoud Ali as he was away in New York to attend the UN General Assembly Summit and explained that he was there to represent him.

He hoped that the visit would be a step towards strengthening the cordial relations that exist between the governments and the peoples of the two Countries.

In his remarks, the leader of the delegation lauded the important role played by Djibouti in IGAD mainly in the Somali and Sudan Peace processes adding

that a lot still remained to be done to ensure that peace prevailed in the two Countries.

He thereafter briefed the deputy Speaker on the purpose of the visit, which he said was meant to urge Djibouti to join the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region Inter-Parliamentary Forum. He explained the Committee's mission of regional visits from June 2004 that culminated in the formation of the Forum with its official launch in October 2004 in Mombasa, Kenya and gave an account of the progress made since including the Forum's first Conference in Kigali, Rwanda in March 2005 adding that the next meeting of the Forum was scheduled for November 2005 and expressed concern that Djibouti had not been represented in the Forum's meetings in Mombasa and Kigali.

He said that the forum was meant to foster cooperation at parliamentary level for the purpose of adopting a common approach in tackling challenges facing the region in a bid to create a stable, peaceful and economically prosperous region.

The Committee observed that being the people's representatives and the one's on the ground, Members of Parliament could deal with each other on one on one basis and speak freely about the issues affecting their people.

The Committee went on to say that the need for Inter-Parliamentary diplomacy had led to the establishment of an Inter-Parliamentary Forum within the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region to look into the challenges facing the region from a structured parliamentary point of view after which they would make recommendations to the respective Parliaments for possible adoption and implementation by the various Governments.

The Committee further said that the initiative came from the realisation that increasingly, Parliaments had left diplomacy to the Executive with Legislators playing a very minor role. The Committee cited conflicts in neighbouring countries, barriers to free movement of people and goods within the region, cross boarder problems such as cattle rustling and proliferation of small arms as issues/challenges that required a common approach in tackling.

The deputy Speaker observed that Parliamentarians could play a key role in ironing out issues, which the Executive may be unable to tackle owing to bureaucratic and diplomatic hurdles adding that it is out of the need for parliamentary diplomacy that institutions such as the African Parliament were formed.

He said that dialogue was key in conflicts resolution citing the example of Djibouti that in the past has had many crisis and which were resolved only through dialogue and now were a thing of the past. He also said that peace and stability were very valuable and therefore it was up to the leaders to ensure that peace prevails in the region.

He expressed optimism that the railway line proposed to run from Djibouti to South Africa through East Africa, would facilitate increased trade between the two countries citing lack of infrastructure and poor communication linkages as the main trade barrier.

The deputy Speaker termed the initiative by the committee as noble and worthy adding that it would assist in bringing peace and, in turn, sustainable development in the region. He assured the Committee of Djibouti's support for the initiative.

#### **8. MEETING WITH HON. S.E.M. MOHAMOUD ALI YOUSOUF, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

The Minister welcomed the delegation to Djibouti and highlighted the cordial relations between the two Countries.

The leader of the delegation commended Djibouti for the just concluded successful elections in April 2005 and also for its role in IGAD. He also apologised for the manner in which the visit had been postponed severally owing to logistic arrangements.

He thereafter briefed the Minister on the purpose of the visit as pertains to the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Forum, citing the Committees regional visits in June 2004 and the subsequent meetings in Mombasa and Kigali in October 2004 and March 2005, respectively. He explained that with the absence of Djibouti, Kenya had undertaken to visit the Country to explain the content of the meetings and modalities for the way forward.

He noted that time had come for the Countries in the region to tackle issues affecting the region jointly using home grown approach rather than waiting for help from Countries outside the region.

The delegation said that the Forum was meant to foster cooperation at Parliamentary level for the purpose of adopting a common approach of tackling challenges facing the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region.



The initiative was also meant to complement Governments efforts in tackling challenges facing the region citing the conflicts in neighbouring countries such as Somalia and Southern Sudan, cross boarder problems such as cattle rustling and proliferation of small arms.

The Minister observed that the initiative was timely noting that even the European countries have such forums for Parliamentarians aimed at promoting issues of common interests. He said that such a forum would be a positive step towards more cooperation between Countries in the region.

The delegation thereafter extended an invitation to their counterparts in Djibouti to visit Kenya, which they said would provide an opportunity for the two countries to learn more from each other especially in areas of development.

The Minister also called on more Kenyans to invest or do business in/with Djibouti.

In his closing remarks, the Minister thanked the Committee for visiting Djibouti and expressed confidence that Djibouti would join the Forum and actively engage in its future activities and meetings.

**9. MEETING WITH THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE, THE HON. S. E. M. OUGGOUREH KIFLEH AHMED**

The leader of the delegation briefed the Minister on the mandate and operations of the Committee.

He thereafter briefed the Minister on the purpose of the visit adding that Forum was mainly meant to promote cooperation and integration between Countries in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa region especially in matters of Defence and Foreign relations.

The Committee said that the initiative was as a result of the observation that, mainly due to bureaucracy the Executive took too long to restore conflicts while Parliamentarians have not been playing any major role though they represent people directly and having been given the mandate.

In his remarks, the Minister thanked the Committee for the visit which he termed as a sign of high regard in which Kenya held Djibouti. He said that Djibouti Government was well aware of the many problems that the people

were experiencing such as internal tension and poverty but added that his Government like many of the Governments in the region lacked proper mechanisms to resolve these problems.

He said that his Government was currently holding yearly security meetings with the neighbouring countries due the many conflicts the region had experienced in the last decade resulting from social and political conflicts after which, Djibouti realised that instability in regional countries adversely affects the neighbouring countries as witnessed by rising insecurity, violent crimes and proliferation of small arms as well as influx of refugees.

The Minister observed it was very commendable that Africa was moving forward towards integration which he said was very crucial in development adding that Parliaments had a big role to play in consolidating peace and security within the region.

The Minister lauded the Inter Parliamentary Forum initiative and expressed optimism that Djibouti would participate in the programmes and activities of the Forum which he said would contribute to a secure, prosperous and peaceful region.

#### **10. MEETING WITH THE COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE**

The delegation held a joint meeting with the Committees on Defence and Foreign Affairs.

The Hon. M. M. Moussa Baragoita Daoud, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs upon welcoming the delegation to Djibouti noted that the two Parliaments had a lot in common adding that Parliamentarians had a big role to play in regional matters.

He regretted that the visit to Djibouti coincided with the U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York and therefore it was not possible for the delegation to meet the Chairman of the Defence Committee, Hon. M.M. Ali Mohamed Awad Roubah as he was away in New York to attend the meeting.

The leader of the delegation explained the Committee's mandate as dictated by the Kenya Constitution, which they noted was similar to that of the Committees of Defence and Foreign Affairs in Djibouti.

The delegation thereafter briefed the Committee on the purpose of their visit regarding the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Region Inter-Parliamentary Forum and observed that time had come for Parliamentarians to adopt objective and joint approaches in considering challenges facing the region and also solve their problems without apportioning blame. He reiterated that as people's representatives, Parliamentarians could not afford to watch and wait for the Executive to act as the region gets engulfed in conflicts.

He said that the need for the forum had risen out of need for democracy and diplomacy and to have a forum whereby members can discuss challenges facing them openly adding that it was time parliamentarians played a more active role in diplomacy instead of leaving all the work to the Executive.

It was jointly observed that the forum offers a unique platform where Parliamentarians can share ideas and issues affecting the region unhindered by protocol etiquettes as expected of diplomats and other senior officials in executive positions adding that with globalisation, Nations have to come together for their welfare.

The delegation informed the Committee that for the past ten years, Parliament in Kenya through the various departmental committees had managed to compliment other organs of Government which they said had been enhanced mainly by the Parliamentary Service Commission (P.S.C.) which is autonomous of the Executive unlike in the past when Parliament relied on the Executive.

Further, the delegation said that Commission has enhanced Parliament's independence, accountability and also strengthened its role with Parliament now having various departments, Constituency offices and staff to run these offices.

The delegation informed the Committee that Kenya was also in the process of reviewing the constitution with the proposed draft constitution ensuring that Government more accountable to the people.

The Djibouti Committee informed the Kenya delegation that it was the first time they were hearing of the forum. However, they observed that it was a major step towards more cooperation within the region and ultimately building a stronger African Union. They expressed support for the forum but pointed out that the proposal would be discussed further when their Parliament reopens as they await the official invitation to join the forum.

The delegation extended an invitation to their counterparts in Djibouti to visit Kenya in January 2006 an issue the host Committee said would be discussed further after which, a date convenient to the both Parliaments would be sought.

The delegation also proposed that Djibouti and Kenya should form a joint Parliamentary Friendship Association a proposal that though also accepted in principal, the Committee said would also be discussed with the rest of their colleagues adding that already they had joint Parliamentary Friendship Groups with the Arab world including Sudan and the idea of having the same with Kenya was welcome.

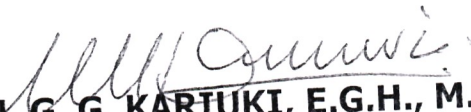
The leader of the delegation thereafter presented to the Committee the report of the first conference of the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Inter-Parliamentary Forum that was held in March 2005 in Kigali, Rwanda. However, the Committee was not in a position to comment on the issues raised in Kigali conference until they read the report.

## **11. COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The Committee observed that it was the first time Djibouti was hearing of the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Inter-parliamentary Forum but like the other Countries in the Great Lakes Region, it is very supportive regarding the forum that brings together representatives of Parliaments in the Countries within the Great lakes and Horn of Africa Region to address issues of common interest and hence recommends that Djibouti be officially invited to join the forum;
- The Committee noted that Djibouti has potential economic benefits to Kenya and recommends that in this era of economic and commercial diplomacy, the Government should put in place mechanisms to ensure that Kenya exploits the available economic and commercial opportunities, especially the in export market of fruits and vegetables. The Committee therefore recommends, that the Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs and Trade respectively should consider sending a high level team to Djibouti to explore opportunities for cooperation in various economic and commercial sectors;

- The Committee noted that the Kenya's presence in Djibouti should be felt more and therefore the should Government devise ways of ensuring that that happens and recommends the Government should consider supporting Djibouti students to study in Kenyan institutions of higher learning and other middle level colleges such as Kenya Utalii College; and
- The Committee noted with concern that poor infrastructure and communication linkages is a major trade barrier between the two Countries which makes Kenya an unfavourable trade destination and recommends that the Government should address the issue in a bid to improve trade between the two Countries.

It is now my humble duty to present and commend this report to the House.

  
**HON. G. G. KARIUKI, E.G.H., M.P.**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON**  
**DEFENCE AND FOREIGN RELATIONS**

**SEPTEMBER 2005**

