

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 704

Recognizing the strategic importance of Kenya to the United States and celebrating the 60-year anniversary of United States-Kenya relations.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2024

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. COONS, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the strategic importance of Kenya to the United States and celebrating the 60-year anniversary of United States-Kenya relations.

Whereas the United States and Kenya established diplomatic relations on May 23, 1964, after Kenya gained independence in 1963, and have since developed a strong and enduring bilateral partnership;

Whereas bilateral engagement between the United States and Kenya expanded after Kenya's historic 2002 general elections, when a coalition of opposition parties won a majority in both the presidential and parliamentary elections, ending decades of dominance by the Kenyan African National Union;

Whereas Kenya took steps to bolster its democratic institutions in 2010, in the wake of the devastating post-election violence following the presidential election held on December 27, 2007, by adopting a transformative new constitution with a bill of rights and new checks and balances, including a more deliberate separation of government powers and the devolution of certain authorities to new county governments;

Whereas Kenya has become one of Sub-Saharan Africa's largest economies, a regional hub for transportation and finance, and a cornerstone of stability and prosperity in East Africa;

Whereas, in August 2018, the United States and Kenya formally elevated their relationship to a strategic partnership and established a corresponding bilateral strategic dialogue, prioritizing 5 pillars of engagement, including—

- (1) economic prosperity, trade, and investment;
- (2) defense cooperation;
- (3) democracy, governance, and civilian security;
- (4) multilateral and regional issues; and
- (5) public health cooperation;

Whereas the United States is a major trading partner with Kenya, which is a leading beneficiary of preferential trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunities Act (19 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.) and a participant in the Prosper Africa initiative;

Whereas the United States and Kenya entered bilateral negotiations on a future free trade agreement on July 8, 2020;

Whereas, on July 14, 2022, the United States and Kenya launched Strategic Trade and Investment Partnership

negotiations to increase bilateral trade and investment cooperation;

Whereas Kenya's dynamic and growing market-based economy offers increased economic opportunities for public and private partnerships that advance United States strategic and economic interests;

Whereas Kenya is at the forefront of improving environmental resilience and is a top tourism destination known for its biodiversity and conservation efforts;

Whereas, on September 25, 2023, the United States and Kenya signed a 5-year framework for defense cooperation to guide mutual defense cooperation, enhance interoperability, and advance shared security interests;

Whereas military-to-military ties between the United States and Kenya have deepened through coordinating and participating in bilateral and multilateral military exercises and Kenya hosting United States forces at Manda Bay;

Whereas the United States and Kenya have worked together to address shared security and counterterrorism concerns in Kenya and the broader region, including in Somalia, where Kenya has contributed forces for over a decade—

(1) to counter Al-Shabaab; and

(2) to support Somalia through the African Union mission;

Whereas Kenya is a key strategic partner in responding to Iranian-backed Houthi attacks against vessels in the Red Sea through its participation in Operation Prosperity Guardian;

Whereas in 2011, Kenya re-established the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights as an autonomous institution to monitor government compliance with internation-

ally recognized human rights and investigate alleged human rights violations;

Whereas Kenya has a flourishing civil society that is supported through constitutional guarantees and a new, more predictable regulatory environment under the Public Benefits Organization Act 2013, which came into effect on May 14, 2024;

Whereas Kenya plays a critical role in supporting regional cooperation and integration as a key member of the East African Community;

Whereas Kenya has volunteered to mediate multiple regional conflicts;

Whereas Kenya has been a leading African voice in multilateral forums, including during its 2021–2022 term on the United Nations Security Council, against Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine, reaffirming its respect for Ukraine’s territorial integrity and standing in defense of multilateralism;

Whereas the United States and Kenya have a long history of partnering to address critical public health crises, including through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (commonly known as “PEPFAR”);

Whereas the United States and Kenya have developed strong people-to-people ties as the foundation for deeper cooperation, as evidenced by—

(1) more than 200 Kenyans participating in United States Government-sponsored exchange programs each year; and

(2) an average of more than 250,000 Americans visiting Kenya annually; and

Whereas the diverse Kenyan American community has made critical contributions to the culture and economy of the United States and forms one of the strongest bonds linking our countries together: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) celebrates 60 years of diplomatic relations
3 between the United States and Kenya;

4 (2) reaffirms the strong partnership between
5 the United States and Kenya, which is rooted in a
6 shared commitment to upholding peace, security,
7 and prosperity;

8 (3) recognizes Kenya’s role in regional security,
9 including maritime security, and its efforts to foster
10 stability in the Horn and East Africa;

11 (4) calls for continued cooperation between the
12 United States and Kenya in promoting, strength-
13 ening, and defending shared democratic values and
14 respect for human rights;

15 (5) encourages the United States and Kenya to
16 continue to expand trade and economic cooperation;

17 (6) encourages Kenya’s efforts to improve its
18 business environment, domestic economic reforms,
19 anti-corruption measures, and counter-money laun-
20 dering efforts;

21 (7) commits to strengthening and deepening
22 diplomatic, economic, commercial, security, and peo-

1 ple-to-people ties between the United States and
2 Kenya;

3 (8) encourages the Department of State to look
4 at all available tools to help address Kenya's debt
5 crisis and counter economic coercion by the People's
6 Republic of China;

7 (9) appreciates the contributions of the Kenyan
8 diaspora community to the United States; and

9 (10) acknowledges the potential of the bilateral
10 relationship—

11 (A) to bring significant benefit to the citi-
12 zens of both nations; and

13 (B) to address security, economic, and en-
14 vironmental challenges across the region and
15 worldwide.

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