INTRODUCTION

Background
Kenya is positioned strategically in the Greater Horn of Africa. It is seen as the gateway to the Southern part of the Horn of Africa and East Africa. (Barkan & Cooke 2001:1) Its position in this region has made it a strategic ally to the United States (US) since the Cold War. Both countries have had friendly relations since Kenya’s independence in 1963. The aim of the study is to analyse US foreign policy towards Kenya from 1990 to 2005. The study will mainly examine how the 1998 US embassy attacks in Nairobi and the events of 11 September 2001 in the US have subsequently affected the relations between Kenya and the US.

The study is informed by a series of research questions; it mainly questions to what extend did the decaying of State institutions under President Moi contribute to Kenya’s vulnerability in the terrorism scheme? What has the contribution of the US been to meeting the domestic institutional challenges of Kenya’s vulnerability? It questions if the policies on terrorism meet the interests of both Kenya and the US and whether it brings new sources of bilateral tension? The study will seek to analyse and answer these questions.

The study utilised the vast literature on Kenya-US relations. Qualitative methodology was extensively used in the collection of data and analysis. As stated by Blaikie Norman (1995:208) it is by studying written documents and interviewing people that a researcher is able to draw a conclusion of the undertaken study. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used at length in this study. Secondary sources were obtained from documentary evidence ranging from books, journals, official reports, along with internet and newspaper articles. Official Kenyan and US government websites were used especially to identify the governments various positions towards each other and the various issues affecting their relations. Current legislation, governments’ reports and press releases from both governments were also studied.

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1 The Greater Horn of Africa is an area that includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia Tanzania and Uganda. It mainly encompasses countries in the Horn and East Africa.
Policy documents like the *Suppression of Terrorism Bill (SOT)* 2002 of Kenya, UN resolutions like the S/RES/1373 (2001) and the US *National Security Strategy* (NSS) 2002 the blueprint of America’s war on terror that identifies Kenya as a partner on the war provides important official information for the study. These documents were analysed and helped identify Kenya’s role in the war on terror. Interviews with Professor Macharia Munene, Assistant Minister of Justice and Constitution, Robinson Githae and Njoki Ndungu a member of parliament were also conducted. This provided further insight into the various sources of tension and collaboration between Kenya and the US in the war on terrorism.

In order to understand Kenya’s relations with the US and the relative ease with which US interests have come to be dominant in Kenya, it is important to provide a brief background of Kenya-US relations during the Cold War and in the post-Cold War period.

Chapter one provides a background of Kenya-US relations during the Cold War. It also looks at the security concerns that arose during this period in addition to the outcomes and the impact of the Cold War relationship. Extensive literature by Macharia Munene and Korwa Adar (1995), and Peter Schraeder (1992) among others has been written on the relations between these two countries during the Cold War. The study will be mainly informed by the works of John Okumu (1997), who looks at Kenya’s policy choices after independence and during the Cold War period. David Gordon (1994), Michael Clough (1991), and the African Watch (1991) mainly analyse the security concerns of the US in the region and how this in turn influenced its policy towards the region as a whole and Kenya in particular. Largely owing to Kenya’s strategic position and the ideology it favoured it became a major ally and aid beneficiary.

Chapter two mainly looks at US policy towards Kenya in the post-Cold War era, especially the role the US played in Kenya’s democratisation process. The material on the democratisation process in Kenya is extensive and mainly points out that democracy in Africa gave autocratic leaders such as President Moi a platform to continue ruling under the guise of democracy but without changing their repressive regimes. (M. Ruthen

The chapter will also address the theory liberal internationalism in depth as the theory that informs this study. In the study of social sciences the use of theory is important to help explain certain occurrences. As quoted by Stephen Van Evera (1997:7-8) ‘theories are statements that describe and explain the causes or effects of classes of phenomena’. According to Korwa Adar (1998) US foreign policy over the past century has been to foster democracy abroad as a way of ensuring national security, a policy that has been termed as ‘Wilsonianism’. Today Wilsonianism is a term synonymous with liberal internationalism. (Tony Smith 1994:7) Liberal internationalism encourages US international engagements, including military interventions to bring US values as well as political systems, mainly by promoting democracy and free market economics, to the rest of the world.

Chapter three focuses on the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya and their implications on Kenya-US relations. The analysis starts with first defining terrorism by looking at the scholarly works of Michael Stohl (1983), Graham Benton (1982), Walter Lacquer (1987) and Cindy C. Combs (1997) who explain terrorist activities as those that are characterised by the loss of innocent lives, deeds that evoke emotional reaction from the victims and have profound political and social effects. The chapter goes on to look at the warring situation in Somalia and Sudan which border Kenya on the North. The works of Rohan Gunaratna (2003) offer an insight on terrorist activities in the region while that of Robert I. Rotberg (2000) looks at the implications of failed States, as failed States pose a great danger to the international system and to their neighbours. The threat posed by Somalia and Sudan has been of great concern to both Kenya and the US. The chapter further
looks at the actual 1998 attacks and the claims and counter claims that have arisen over the years. It analyses the implications of these claims, if any, on Kenya-US relations.

Chapter four examines US foreign policy towards Kenya following the 11 September 2001 attacks in the US. The literature used in this chapter forms a major core of the study. The literature will briefly look at the core conceptual themes in US foreign policy towards Africa as a whole, before zeroing in on Kenya. It will show some of the major themes of this policy especially as laid down by President Bush’s *National Security Strategy* (NSS), 2002. The NSS primarily focused on the war on terrorism and laid down the US’s policy towards terrorism. This domestic policy projected an outlook vision that included Africa as a whole and identified Kenya as a strategic partner in the war on terrorism in East Africa. The NSS stresses the need to spread democracy in order to fight terrorism. According to John Lewis Gaddis (2002) this is a clear reflection of US domestic and foreign policy reflecting one of the country’s oldest policies as set out by Woodrow Wilson. Walter Lafaber’s (2003) *Bush Doctrine* informs this study on the evolution of President Bush’s policy. It provides a general historical background of US’s policy before explaining how the Bush doctrine, to fight terrorism, adheres to the history of US domestic policy. It also looks at how the Administration has been able to project its domestic policy to the rest of the world, Kenya included. The chapter also analyses the haste in which laws are enacted following events similar to those of 11 September and their implications on the citizens. The Kenyan *Suppression of Terrorism* (SOT) Bill, 2002 will be critically analysed along with the USA Patriot Act of which the SOT is seen to echo.

Compared with the literature written on Kenya-US relations during the Cold War and the post-Cold War era, the literature following 11 September is somewhat limited as most of the events and policies are current. This study hopes to make a contribution in the analysis of the countries relations in the post-11 September.

The main analysis of US foreign policy towards Kenya will be looked at in chapter five. This chapter will provide a critical analysis on Kenya-US relations during the period
under study. It will generally also assess the evolution of US policies towards Kenya from the Cold War to the war on terrorism. US policies during this period have mainly been informed by three domestic policies mainly: containment during the Cold War; promoting democracy in the post-Cold War period and the war on terrorism following the events of 11 September. This chapter will be followed by a conclusion which will give an overall review of the research report and the findings made.