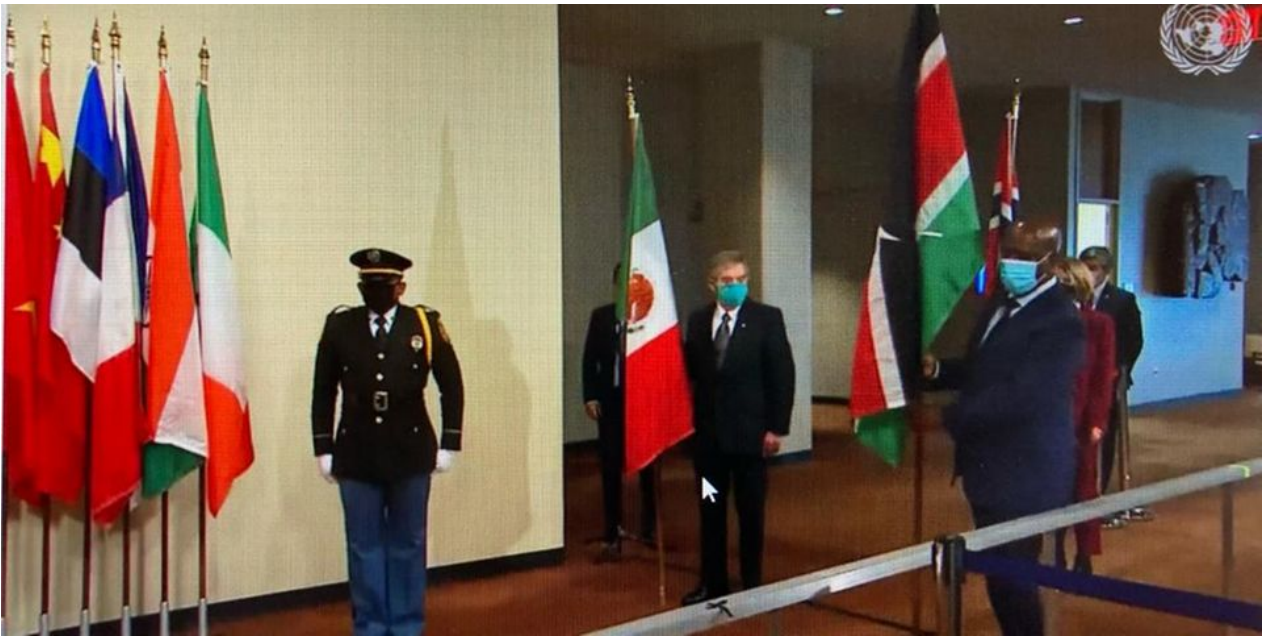


UNSC seat is good for Kenya, Africa and the Global South

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Martin Kimani, Kenya's Permanent Representative to the UN in New York (right) carries the country's flag before it was hoisted at the UN headquarters alongside those of nine other holder of non-permanent seats. Photo credit: Courtesy



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What you need to know:

- Countries get into relationships with others to fulfil certain policy ends that add value to its national interests.

On January 4, Permanent Representative to the United Nations Martin Kimani represented Kenya at the Flag Installation

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The UNSC is the highest organ vested with the authoritative, decisional and executive latitude in as far as international peace and security is concerned. This is the third time the world has bestowed the honour on Kenya, which brings with it immense experience, knowledge and expertise in prosecuting issues of international security in a manner that will not only add value to its foreign policy orientation but also engrain an African and Global South place on the international security agenda.

This was underscored by Kazakstan's Permanent Representative, who graced the occasion with the UNSC president: "We acknowledge that these five incoming members, because of their prior longstanding experience with the Council, will bring much depth and focus to the issues of peace and security."

Against this premise, therefore, Kenya is not at the UNSC for purposes of blindly pursuing narrow, self-conceited ends as settling a maritime boundary dispute, pursuing sub-regional hegemonic dominance or weighing the end gains from bilateral infrastructural engagements with its many development partners. Rather, it is to foster peaceful, stable, mutually gainful and sustainable foreign relations through economic diplomacy and positive geostrategic engagements with all friendly states.

Fulfil policy ends

Multilateral institutional platforms are a critical ingredient in any recipe for international peace, security and stability in a highly integrated and globalised 21st-Century international system. This is a cardinal point to consider in a discourse on whether or not a UNSC seat will benefit a holding country.

Countries get into relationships with others to fulfil certain policy ends that add value to its national interests. Yet today's world, no nation can live in isolation, let alone claim total and self-guaranteed sufficiency.

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operations (PSOs), for which Kenya is respected world over, for more than three decades.

On the whole, Kenya enjoys healthy relations with its immediate neighbours. One or two temporary circumstantial displeasures — say over sections of territory and procedural bottlenecks in the screening of truck drivers for Covid-19 — cannot, and do not, merit as deserving points of reference on which to anchor a discussion touching on a global platform of the nature and stature of the UNSC.

To do so is to belittle critical peace and security matters of international importance — including the hard military-strategic ones like the global fight against and prevention of violent extremism and terrorism, climate change, food and energy security, governance, human rights and other human security concerns such as public health amid a pandemic.

Sound, actionable and sustainable solutions to these real and imminent threats to international peace and security will, indeed, help not only Kenya but also, in the words of Ambassador Kimani, “Africa, small island developing states, the global south and all countries, great and small”.

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