



**THE FOREIGN POLICY OF
THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI**

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1.0 PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Malawi became an independent state on 6th July, 1964, and attained republican status on 6th July, 1966.
- 1.2 During the first republic, the government amended the Constitution to embrace one-party rule. Malawi's foreign policy during that time was largely based on the preferences and decrees of the leadership.
- 1.3 Following the advent of a democratically elected government under a multi-party system, there was a provisional entry into force of a new constitution, with an enshrined Bill of Rights on 18th May, 1994. The Constitution came into force definitively on 18th May, 1995.
- 1.4 The Constitution is based on a number of fundamental principles. Some of these are that:
- a) Malawi is a sovereign state with rights and obligations under the law of nations;
 - b) a constitutional order shall be created in Malawi based on the need for an open and democratic government.
 - c) the constitution is the supreme law of the land and no institution or person shall be above the law;

d) the authority to govern derives from the people of sovereign Malawi as expressed through universal and equal suffrage; and

e) human rights and fundamental freedoms shall be promoted and upheld.

1.5 It is against this background that the foreign policy of the Republic of Malawi is formulated.

2.0 **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

2.1 Considering that political stability and tolerance, security, promotion of trade, investment and tourism, among others, are prerequisites for economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, Malawi's foreign policy shall be guided by the following basic principles:

a) belief in the sovereign equality of states, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms which are the essential requirements for socio-economic development and the well-being of all peoples;

b) support of efforts towards the promotion of equal rights and justice for all and the right of all peoples to self-determination;

c) re-affirmation of its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

- d) adherence to commonly-avowed fundamental political values, guided by the principles of good governance, transparency and accountability;
- e) subscription to, and continued guidance by, the principles and ideals of the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) in the conduct of international affairs;
- f) belief in the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security, and in the pursuit of good neighbourly relations with all countries;
- g) belief in the reform of the international economic order, support and promotion of efforts towards a fair and equitable international trading system;
- h) commitment to the promotion of economic co-operation and regional integration, particularly among countries of the Southern Africa region;
- i) belief in the importance of the African Union and African Economic Community for accelerated development and maintenance of peace and security.
- j) belief in the promotion and attainment of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development as spelt out in its domestic policy.

3.0 **OBJECTIVES**

3.1 In order to attain, promote, and safeguard the interests of Malawi, the foreign policy seeks to achieve the following objectives;

- a) the maintenance of Malawi's territorial integrity, security and sovereignty;
- b) the pursuit of socio-economic development, prosperity and the well-being of all the people of Malawi;
- c) the achievement of economic growth and sustainable development through the promotion of trade, investment and tourism;
- d) the protection of human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms;
- e) the protection and sound management of the environment for posterity; and
- f) the enhancement of economic cooperation and integration.

4.0 **STRATEGIES**

4.1 To attain these objectives, Malawi shall pursue the following strategies:

4.2 **Trade, Investment and Tourism**

4.2.1 Malawi shall promote trade, investment and tourism through active participation in bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation agreements or arrangements. In this regard, the

country's diplomatic missions abroad shall give priority to the promotion of the country's interests in trade, foreign direct investment and tourism.

4.3 Aid Mobilization

- 4.3.1 Recognising the importance of foreign aid in development, Malawi's foreign policy shall seek to play a role in support of, and in close collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and Cooperation, the mobilization of financial aid and technical assistance.

4.4 Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy

- 4.4.1. The constitution, founded on the dignity and worth of every human being, expressly stipulates that Malawi shall be governed in accordance with the law of nations and the rule of law, and shall support further developments thereof in regional and international affairs
- 4.4.2 In this connection, Malawi shall participate in all relevant multilateral fora concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- 4.4.3 Malawi shall participate in the activities of treaty bodies established under international human rights instruments to which she is a party. She shall also endeavour to become party to those human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party.
- 4.4.4 Malawi shall also endeavour to strengthen regional mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard, Malawi shall lend its support to efforts

aimed at promoting the discourse of human rights in sub-regional groupings.

- 4.4.5 Complementary to these sub-regional, regional and multilateral aspirations, Malawi shall endeavour to assert its commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms by raising, as appropriate, human rights concerns in its multilateral and bilateral relations and exchanges.
- 4.4.6 Malawi re-affirms the indivisibility, interdependence and universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It believes that economic, social and cultural rights merit equal importance and attention as civil and political rights. Malawi shall, therefore, continue to lend support to efforts aimed at the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.

4.5 Multilateralism

- 4.5.1 Malawi believes in multilateralism and shall maintain its membership to international organizations such as the African Union, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the UN as well as its specialized agencies, and shall seek to make them more efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of all the peoples and to the many challenges that face the world today.
- 4.5.2. Malawi shall seek the successful realization of the outcome of major international conferences as well as their complementary initiatives within regional and sub-regional groupings.
- 4.5.3 Malawi shall also continue with its membership of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Group of 77 (G-77), and the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) arrangements; and, through them, shall work towards the establishment of a stable international economic order including a fair and equitable international trading system that is conducive to economic growth and sustainable development.

4.5.4 Malawi shall seek openness in international trade and investment and a review of all policies that cause adverse terms of trade against developing countries.

4.5.5. Malawi shall openly participate in the debate on debt relief and debt cancellation in various multinational fora or in bilateral interactions.

4.6 Southern Africa

4.6.1. Malawi shall work closely with other countries in their efforts to build a regional identity, understanding and a sense of common destiny among the peoples of Southern Africa.

4.6.2. Malawi shall promote closer co-operation among countries of the region in order to achieve economic integration, encourage trade, cross-border tourism, foreign direct investment, and sound environmental management.

4.6.3 Malawi shall seek to promote a harmonious social and political order with other countries of the region based on democracy and respect of the rule of law, and shall also work towards the strengthening of regional mechanism for peace

and security as well as conflict prevention, management and resolution.

4.7 Africa

- 4.7.1. Malawi believes that only when Africa manages to create peaceful, stable and secure conditions for its peoples will it be able to fully harness its vast human material resources and redirect them to sustainable socio-economic and political development. Malawi, therefore, supports the efforts of the AU to enhance the capacity for conflict prevention, management, and resolution and shall endeavour to participate in peace-keeping operations and peace-building efforts in Africa.
- 4.7.2. Malawi shall promote closer cooperation among Africa countries in order to attain economic integration, encourage trade and attract foreign direct investment.
- 4.7.3 Malawi re-affirms its commitment to the Africa Union and the African Economic Community (AEC) as well as the Cairo Agenda for Action for Economic Recovery, and other initiatives that have given particular attention to addressing Africa's socio-economic problems.
- 4.7.4. Malawi also believes that the sustainability of the transformation taking place in Africa requires the promotion of popular participation in government and in development activities.
- 4.7.5. Malawi shall work with other countries of the African Union in strengthening foundations for human-centred development based on justice and collective self-reliance.
- 4.7.6. Malawi also believes in the establishment of a political and

economic culture in Africa based on the respect for human rights and the observance of the rule of law as well as one conditioned on high standards of probity and accountability on the part of public office-holders.

4.8 Western Europe

- 4.8.1. Malawi shall continue to promote and strengthen economic co-operation as well as political and cultural relations with the countries of Western Europe. In particular, Malawi shall seek more opportunities for foreign investment, transfer of technology and official development aid from the countries of the region.
- 4.8.2. Malawi shall seek to strengthen its trade links with the countries of Western Europe. It shall also seek to open up new markets in the region.
- 4.8.3. Malawi shall adopt a coherent and co-ordinated approach to matters related to the European Union and its member states.
- 4.8.4 Malawi shall seek to derive maximum benefits from its co-operation with the European Union and its member states by playing an active role in the ACP-EU arrangements.

4.9 Central and Eastern Europe

- 4.9.1. The political transformation that has taken place in Central and Eastern Europe offers new challenges and opportunities for co-operation between Malawi, on one hand, and the countries of the region, on the other. Malawi shall, therefore, seek to establish diplomatic relations with countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

4.9.2. Malawi shall also seek to strengthen political, socio-economic, cultural, investment, tourism and trade ties with the countries of that region.

4.10 North America

4.10.1. Malawi shall seek to promote and strengthen economic co-operation with the countries of North America particularly with regards to foreign investment, trade, tourism and official development aid from the countries of the region.

4.10.2 Malawi shall also endeavour to promote political, social and cultural relations with the countries of the region.

4.11 South and Central America

4.11.1 Malawi shall seek to enhance its presence in South and Central America including the Caribbean, with a view to benefitting economically through trade and investment. Malawi shall, therefore, establish diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with the countries of those regions.

4.12. Asia and the Pacific

4.12.1. Malawi shall seek to enhance its presence in the Asia-Pacific region with a view to benefiting from its fast-development experience. In this regard, Malawi shall establish diplomatic, political, economic and cultural relations with the countries of the region.

4.12.2. Malawi shall endeavour to strengthen its economic co-operation with the region in all areas including foreign investment, transfer of technology, trade, entrepreneurship development and agricultural production

4.13. Middle East and the Gulf Region

- 4.13.1. Malawi shall seek to promote and strengthen diplomatic, socio-economic, cultural and trade ties with countries of the Middle East and the Gulf Region. In addition, Malawi shall encourage foreign direct investment from the region.
- 4.13.2. With regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Malawi believes that lasting peace in the Middle East can only be brought about through a negotiated settlement.

4.14 International Peace and Security

4.14.1.0. Disarmament

- 4.14.1. Malawi re-affirms its commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and its belief that international peace and security can be guaranteed through the achievement of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control.
- 4.14.1.2 Malawi calls for the universal acceptance of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- 4.14.1.3 Malawi joins other countries in calling for the prohibition of the manufacture, production, stockpiling as well as the threat or use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.
- 4.14.1.4 In addition, Malawi calls for the prohibition of the production stock-pilling and use of anti-personnel land-mines.

4.14.1.5. Malawi supports the declaration of Africa as a nuclear weapons-free zone and supports any declarations by other regions as nuclear weapons free zones.

4.14.1.6. Malawi supports efforts by the international community to address problems arising from the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

4.14.2.0 **Peace-keeping Activities**

4.14.2.1 In its quest to promote international peace and security, Malawi shall support conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanisms at bilateral, sub-regional and multilateral levels. It shall also be involved in peace-keeping and peace-building activities.

4.14.3.0 **Recognition of Foreign States**

4.14.3.1 Malawi shall recognize all independent states which have legitimate governments. In this regard, it shall not recognise any government that comes to power through unconstitutional means.

5.0 **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOREIGN POLICY**

5.1 The formulation of the foreign policy objectives does not in itself guarantee the attainment of such objectives. The success or failure of a particular foreign policy depends on many factors, including the foreign policy aspirations of other states; and the international situation obtaining at a particular time.

5.2 Of the known instruments for implementation of foreign policy, Malawi will largely use diplomacy. This will be

conducted mainly, but not exclusively, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its network of diplomatic missions abroad.

- 5.3 Apart from performing the traditional or routine functions, the Malawi missions abroad will facilitate the promotion of foreign direct investment, trade, tourism and foreign aid to Malawi.
- 5.4 For effective implementation of Malawi's foreign policy objectives, the Government will ensure that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic missions abroad are equipped with adequate human, financial and material resources that are necessary for the discharge of the responsibilities.
- 5.5 The foreign policy of Malawi shall be reviewed periodically, in keeping with the changing domestic and international environment.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The foreign policy espouses a shift of emphasis from "traditional diplomacy" to "development diplomacy." In this respect, in addition to promoting good political relations with other countries and promoting a good image of the country internationally, the emphasis shall be on the promotion of foreign direct investment, trade tourism and foreign aid to Malawi.
- 6.2 The foreign policy also recognizes, among other things, the importance of international peace and security and the role that good governance plays in the economic development of a country. It recognises the inevitability of globalization and

the need to work collaboratively with the international community.

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NOTE: THE FOREIGN POLICY IS CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW