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Diaspora, Home-State Governance and Transnational Political Mobilisation: A Comparative Case Analysis of Ethiopia and Kenya's State Policy Towards their Diaspora

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Abstract

Aligned to studies that have established that state-diaspora engagement policies consist of a diversity of measures associated with different aims, this study provides a novel approach to such research. It involves investigating how leadership (through diaspora policies) is structured using language to ensure that the objectives of state-diaspora policies are persuasive enough to draw consensual support from the diaspora. Adopting a rhetorical analysis of multi-case data, this paper compares how the notion of diaspora is used within Ethiopia and Kenya's state-diaspora policy documents and how their understanding of their diaspora shapes the actual political mobilisation of it. The paper demonstrates that by selecting certain themes and by treating diaspora as a powerful strategy, either by segregating it from or including it in the political activities of a nation, domestic governments can strongly influence the political narrative. Results further show that when the diaspora faces state power not all categories of it are equally accepted or offered the same political rights.

Keywords: state and diaspora; policies; citizenship; political participation.

Introduction

Today, the question of power struggles within nation-states still exists and continues to unfold through different forms of social relationships (e.g., equality, inclusiveness, representation and fairness). The implications of such a perilous struggle mean that the state will continue to face difficulties in overcoming problems caused by postmodern ideas (Yilmaz, 2010) and power wielding mechanisms from external pressures. An example of such an undermined societal transformation nowadays is the growing influence of migrant (diaspora) associations that are increasingly becoming active political, ideological, cultural and symbolic sites of struggles towards the formation of modern social groups (Siisiäinen, 2015, p. 266).

The presence of these transnational social formations means that governing nation-states are challenged by them to adopt policy frameworks² that re-think national identity and at the same time protect the sovereignty of the nation. Moreover, the growing influence of different diaspora groups, including those from African countries with homeland attachments (e.g. Kleist, 2008; Beyene, 2015; Bernal, 2017; Leblang, 2017) demand a different consensual kind of state leadership to

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² As research with such focus is growing, the literature alternates between the following: how and why states mobilise their diaspora? (Levitt & de la Dehesa, 2014); diaspora institutions and governance (Gamlen, 2014; Kuschminder & Siegel, 2016); diaspora policies (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Gamlen, 2006); citizenship and extra-territorial rights (Smith, 2003; Leblang 2017); directly elected representation (Collyer, 2013); and diaspora perceptions towards state-diaspora policies (Kuschminder & Siegel, 2016).



determine new roles (e.g. political) and structural reforms at all levels of state-relationships when compared to the traditional understanding of the sovereignty of nation-states (nation and citizenship).

While diaspora research has expanded, there has been less study on how these diaspora policies are designed and structured to ensure that policy objectives are persuasive enough for the diaspora audience. This paper contributes to this research area by rhetorically analysing the diaspora policies of Ethiopia and Kenya. How these governments in their efforts to design a diaspora policy employed rhetorical strategies to draw support for their diaspora populations is examined. With this premise, in this paper, we examine both how the notion of the diaspora is used within the state diaspora policies of Ethiopia and Kenya and how these meanings shape the actual political mobilisation of their diaspora based on analysis of their policy documents.

The study of Ethiopia and Kenya's state relationship with their diaspora through their policies is relatively new and relevant in three ways. Firstly, these countries have close political and economic connections at the state level with their diaspora communities. In the past 18 years, both governments have been enthusiastically designing and executing policy frameworks with the main goals of connecting and engaging their diaspora communities with developmental and national building projects (Beyene, 2015). At the individual state level, these engagement practices have been harmonised at policy level through the design and enactment of a diaspora policy document.³ Secondly, while both Kenya and Ethiopia have state departments in charge of diaspora affairs, the two states operate differently in regard to their diaspora population, both in political and legal terms. For example, while Kenya allows dual-citizenship, Ethiopia does not. Its government, in contrast, offers extra-territorial rights to certain diaspora groups through a policy known as the 'Yellow Card'.⁴ Thirdly, research not only shows that the Ethiopian and Kenyan diasporas are valuable developmental and political actors towards their countries of origin (Beyene, 2015), for it also demonstrates that both countries connect⁵ at the state level with the European Union and some of its member states.

However, just as it is meaningful for the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya to engage with their diaspora, the question as to whether or not diasporic engagement policies and the practices of the countries of origin enhance legitimate participation can be found in state-diaspora relationships.

³ Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Diaspora Policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). <http://ethiopiandiasporaassociation.org/1158-2/>.

Republic of Kenya Diaspora Policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). <http://kenya.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Final-National-Diaspora-Policy-Revised-13.06.2014.pdf>

⁴ Politically, whilst the Ethiopian constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, does not allow for dual-nationality, efforts have been taken by the Ethiopian government to extend certain rights to foreign Ethiopians in a proclamation in 2002 known as the 'Ethiopian Origin Identity Card' (Yellow Card). Even though the debate for legislation change is ongoing, the government reason for not permitting dual-nationality is that "*granting dual nationality is considered problematic due to issues concerning border populations*" (citing Hussen, 2010 in Kuschminder & Siegel, 2016). The Yellow Card has been described as allowing for all the rights of citizenship, except the right to vote or to be elected to public office. The card presents a compelling case for extending rights to the degree that it is beneficial for the Ethiopia government.

⁵ As an example, while Ethiopia and the EU share a common vision for a peaceful, safe and stable Horn of Africa region, economically the EU is Kenya's largest trading partner (Kiamba & Bachmann 2015). In addition, according to the European Business Forum in Ethiopia report, the EU has been the second most important trade partner for Ethiopia since 2016. At the diaspora level, fresh data by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) shows that the diaspora's remittances hit an all-time high of \$1.95 billion in 2017, which is more than the revenue from the export of tea. In Ethiopia, despite a World Bank Review on Remittance Inflow to GDP depicting a fall from 2014 to 2017 (3.23 to 1.01), the government in 2017, through the deputy minister, acknowledged an increase in remittances from \$1.9 billion in 2010 to \$2.4 billion in 2013 and \$4 billion in 2016.



This is because there is a presumed assumption of harmony between the state and the diaspora, which in reality is not always the case, for they can be in opposition to one another (see e.g. Orjuela, 2008). In this paper, we address this issue, arguing that by expanding the political functions of state-diaspora policies and practices towards understanding how engagement ideologies are communicated using language, constitutes the fundamental scope of the contemporary state-diaspora relationship.

Methods

An empirical case study, which was based on a comparative rhetorical analysis of the diaspora policy of Ethiopia and Kenya, was undertaken. The corpus for analysis was the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Diaspora Policy 2013 in the case of Ethiopia and in the case of Kenya, the Republic of Kenya Diaspora Policy of 2014⁶ was utilised. The choice of research data was founded on the premise that policy documents have governmental significance and form a basis for present and future governance within their real-world context. On this basis, employing rhetorical analysis on these contemporary documents provided an opportunity to discover the means of persuasion (Rapp, 2010) in the relationship between the state and diaspora groups. Furthermore, the case-study method is appropriate for reviewing policy documents (Yin, 2015). In this study, the case study approach will enable us understand the different alternative means by which leadership through government policy influences the choices of the diaspora through arguments. With this in mind, three common themes (exclusion and inclusion, decision-making and pursuit of excellent) relevant to transnational political participation are adopted to guide data analysis. Within each theme, how agreements or disagreements were established through argument in the two case studies is investigated. Employing the stasis theory of rhetorical analysis⁷ made it possible to aggregate the characteristics of the persuasive strategy of each case study and then render findings. The goal at this point was to enable the establishment of an analytic generalisation based on the case studies, which could be extended to engender broader significance (Burawoy, 1991, pp. 271–280) in the state-diaspora relationship.

Critical Assessment of the Current Diaspora Policies of Ethiopia and Kenya

When attempting to address a modern-day call from its diaspora population, the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya are presented with a difficult question: What makes a diaspora policy efficient and productive towards the realisation of its political agenda, while simultaneously addressing the needs of their diaspora communities? Through their diaspora policies, the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya have sidestepped answering comprehensively this question.

⁶ Due to space limitations, data for analysis could not be extended to the separate diaspora policies and directives of Ethiopia and Kenya, respectively. Emphasis was given to the current harmonised state-diaspora policies: in the case of Ethiopia, The Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Diaspora Policy 2013 and in the case of Kenya, the Republic of Kenya Diaspora Policy document of 2014.

⁷ “Stasis theory” outlines the four points of argument in Roman rhetorical theory. Firstly, whether the argument is “conjecture”, that is, if it concern facts. Secondly, if the argument is “definition” (category), centred on the naming of things. Thirdly, if the argument is “quality,” concerning the nature of an act. Lastly, if an argument is “place” (policy), suggesting that the question is relevant or no longer important (Finlayson, 2007, pp. 554-555). This four arguments are employed to understand the nature of the diasporas’ political actions related to these policy documents. The first interpretation relates to the conjecture of these documents, examining why the policy? The second application, the ‘category’, raises the question how each government employs the term diaspora. Such analysis will direct us to arrive at specific analytical claims deduced from the conceptual similarities and differences of each policy document. The third application is centred around the value of these policies in regards to diaspora political mobilisation. For example, questions of “inclusive verse exclusive” representation and “legitimate verse illegitimate” participation are examined. Lastly, the argument for policy in line with the study research question guides the drawing of its conclusions. What demands are likely to be raised as a result of the policy documents?

Given the abundance of skilled, knowledgeable and patriotic nationals outside their borders, it is now a matter of the utmost priority to integrate the diaspora into their national agenda. These policies stimulate passionate views that their diaspora is, in fact, a constituent part of their country, and they try to convince it to mobilise towards the socio-economic and democratisation process of their respective country of origin. While reflecting upon the challenging historical past and the glories of Ethiopia and Kenya's diaspora, these policies incorporate soft language choices as in the following to emphasise how relevant and fair their respective policies are, including: positive connotations; definition; absolutes; undertone statements; forced teaming; bold logical appeals; and figurative statements.

a. Inclusiveness and Exclusion

Both governments acknowledge that when designing a productive diaspora policy, references should not be given to a particular people, but rather, to a relationship of many kinds, linking groups of diversified people across boundaries on a global basis. In so doing, both focal documents have selected themes and a definition of "diaspora" that powerfully persuade the intended reader. While there were deliberate attempts in Kenya's diaspora policy to use themes, such as citizenship and citizens, for example "the constitution provides for ... right to dual citizenship for all Kenyan citizens", there were conscious attempts to limit the use of citizenship in favour of 'citizens' in the policy document of Ethiopia. In its attempt to connect in special terms to the growing discourse on the transnational state-diaspora relationship, the policy documents of Kenya consciously employ the theme 'citizenship' on many occasions when talking of its diaspora. In contrast, the use of 'citizens' for patronage by the Ethiopian government is strategically aimed at constructing carefully its argument against talking about dual-citizenship, while at the same time cautiously building support from its broader diaspora groups. The approaches of using 'citizenship' in the case of Kenya and 'citizen' in the case of Ethiopia have been reinforced by a subtle shift in tone through the successful use of the definition of diaspora. For example, using a parallel structure in its definition, Kenya's diaspora policy defines a Kenyan abroad as:

Consisting of persons of Kenyan origin (PKO) and non-resident Kenyan status for Kenyan citizens holding a Kenyan passport or having dual citizenship and residing outside the country... (Line 19-24, p. 11)

The strategy in this definition is to appeal to terminological uniformity and the logical flow between citizenship and nationality, thereby engaging all Kenyans overseas in the sustainable development of the country's vision 2030 flagship project.

Being aware of the growing demands for dual-citizenship from its diaspora, the government of Ethiopia employed the use of definition for the term diaspora in its policy documents: "Ethiopian and foreign nationals of Ethiopian origins" (line 10, p. 8). The strategy was not to accuse their diaspora of being wrong for having such a feeling of exclusion through their demands. With this categorisation in its definition, the government of Ethiopia broke down the notion of the diaspora and citizenship into two aspects. That is, diaspora as an Ethiopian citizen and diaspora as a foreign citizen of Ethiopian origin with a sense of belonging. While obvious in intent and meaning, the indirect connection of citizenship to a 'foreign' sense of belonging and hope allows the government of Ethiopia the opportunity to engage those in the Ethiopian diaspora with foreign citizenship more tactfully than, if the policy directly stated the government's denial of dual-citizenship. Furthermore, this approach of categorising the diaspora in the policy was a conscious attempt by the leadership to implement the Yellow Card directives, which was an easier political sell than granting dual



nationality. It also permits members of the Yellow Card diaspora to make the connection and accept their role as a cardholder, rather than assigning blame on the government for their inability to exercise certain rights. This strategy provides an opportunity for the government of Ethiopia to maintain control, as it helps the leadership to be able to distance itself from the inability of certain categories of the diaspora to take part actively in a specific process of political participation, for example, voting.

Notwithstanding this, the presence of a politically determined Kenyan and Ethiopian diaspora community with homeland attachment overtime has called into being the need for a different consensual kind of state determined diaspora roles and structural reforms. Even though they are in the position of power, both governments, through their policies, have struggled to be integral, failing to impose its demand that its diaspora to be politically active. By appealing to the national ethos through positive connotations in both policies, the strategy has been aimed at explicitly refuting the assumption that their diaspora is supposed to be apolitical towards its country of origin. This was demonstrated when the policies of Ethiopia and Kenya employed connotations that openly demonstrated support towards the diaspora's political participation. This was achieved by appealing to the national ethos by using positive epithets that favour political mobilisation at the beginning of the policy documents. For example, the policy document of Ethiopia clearly states that the "diaspora policy ensure[s] active diaspora participation in political activities of their country" (line 11, p. 2) and the same can be seen in Kenya's policy. It upholds that "the constitution also provides for the right to vote... as well to dual citizenship for all Kenya citizens living abroad" (line 19, p. 5). Using direct language with strong connotations allows these policy responses to stand out among those voices both at home and abroad that criticise the political inclusion of the diaspora. This is aimed at showing resilient support for the diasporas' inclusion in regard to the political activities of their country of origin. By emphasising the position that the state is in pursuit of excellency through democratic political participation, the states of Ethiopia and Kenya force their respective diaspora to recognise their political roles in the sustainability of current democratic processes, i.e. not just cultural attachment to the country of origin.

Furthermore, the desire of Ethiopia and Kenya's government to re-emphasise the state position towards the diaspora's political participation has been authenticated using absolutes in their policy documents. The aim is to make the diaspora accept that their rights to political participation are non-negotiable. For example, Ethiopia's policy document states that "the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is issuing a proclamation to provide foreign nationals of Ethiopia origin with certain rights to be exercised in their country of origin..." (Line 20, p. 7). Whilst Ethiopia's diaspora policy clearly outlines the right to participate in the broad sense for Ethiopian citizens, the appellation 'certain rights' aligned to a certain category of diaspora challenges the provision of political rights for all diaspora groups. In contrast, Kenya's diaspora policy maintains that "the constitution of Kenya laid a firm foundation by entrenching diaspora fundamental rights to vote during national elections" (Line 2-4, p. 23). The use of these statements in both the policy documents challenges those who argue that the government does not allow its diaspora political rights and opportunities to engage politically. Such absolute statements give a straightforward and serious tone to the policies. Because they are written from such an undeniable stance, they become fact and not disputed arguments. The strategy here is to play to the thought processes of diaspora communities and to produce illogical counter-arguments while ensuring the diaspora population believe leadership assurances. For example, despite the ability of the Kenyan diaspora to exercise their voting rights overseas during the 2013 presidential election due to logistical and financial

constraints on the part of the government,⁸ Kenya's policy document reaffirmed government positions by providing voting statistics of Kenyan's living in four East African communities during the 2013 general elections. This strategy provides evidence to capitalise on and pull in some of their diaspora to publicly agree in theory and practice with the question of rights and political inclusion.

b. Pursuit of Excellence

Secondly, both governments in their policy frameworks acknowledge that, for a diaspora policy to be efficient and productive towards the realisation of its political agenda, it should appeal to the emotions of the diaspora communities. While both policies appeal to the sense of empowerment by involving them in decisions toward the realisation of these, the diaspora policy of Kenya adopts simile as an effective strategy to appeal to the diaspora's sense of recognition. In contrast, Ethiopia's diaspora policy employs metaphor to induce sympathy from its diaspora and to draw support toward this initiative. In their efforts to appeal to recognition from their diaspora, the Kenyan policy explicitly specifies, "the Government of Kenya recognizes the key role that Kenyans abroad play in the development of our nation and is willing to harness this potential" (Line 1-4, p. 8). Furthermore, it states diaspora diplomacy is now one of the pillars of Kenyan foreign policy. The purpose of this strategy was not just to draw its diaspora's attention to the broader millennium dream of the government of Kenya, for by stating, for example, that diaspora are 'one of the pillars', also shows honest governmental support for the much more talked about architectural and structural heroism of their diaspora community. Its effect on the diaspora based on this policy document is that it produces powerful imagery of a sense of political and economic belonging in the mind of the diaspora; a desire to connect with the country of origin through voting and a positive reinforcement towards government policy efforts,⁹ more legitimate participation of all diaspora groups in their use of social media space and more significant economic mobilisation through remittances and investments.

Today, despite the finalisation of the Kenya Diaspora Policy, which became effective in June 2014, Kenyans in the diaspora continue to urge the government to create the Ministry of Diaspora Affairs or to rename the current Foreign Affairs badge to Foreign and Diaspora Affairs.¹⁰ Also, the government of Kenya is not just benefiting from remittances and economic investment initiatives from its diaspora communities as a result of this policy,¹¹ for the right of dual-nationality has provided a platform for those with foreign nationality to be elected into office. Nonetheless, as the desire to participate legitimately in politics increases, the government is facing confrontation

⁸ Diaspora Kenyans mull over dual citizenship (Capital News published on July 11, 2012), <https://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2012/07/diaspora-kenyans-mull-over-dual-citizenship/>

⁹ Before this period, the government of Kenya made some false starts in its efforts to engage the Kenyan diaspora. The government, in 2004, did not just form the National Diaspora Council of Kenya, which was not that much active, in 2007, the government created a diaspora technical team, which was then tasked with preparing reports on how best to get the most out of the capabilities of the Kenyan diaspora. This organ was designed to enlighten and shape diaspora legislation (e.g. The Kenya Immigration Act, and The Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act) even though its expected bills did not materialise (Ratha et al. 2011).

¹⁰ Kenyans in Diaspora Demand Formation of Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, (Kenyans.co.ke publish on August 21, 2018), <https://www.kenyans.co.ke/news/21707-kenyans-diaspora-demand-formation-ministry-diaspora-affairs>

¹¹ According to a World Bank unit, known as the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development, in its report released on April 2019, there was a 39 per cent year-on-year growth in Kenyan remittances between 2017 and 2018. In the first five months of 2019, remittances stood at Sh118.9 billion, a 3.8 per cent increase on the same period in 2018: <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/datahub/Kenya-diaspora-remittances-top-in-East-Africa/3815418-5187522-vyrsde/index.html>



continuously from its diaspora population for more resources to aid its registration for voting purposes.¹²

Contrariwise, Ethiopia's diaspora policy has engaged the strategy of metaphor to draw on feelings of sympathy when talking of those difficulties this category of their population goes through in their efforts to participate politically in regard to the sustainable development of their country of origin. The policy accepts that "in order to make them actively participate in their country's development, it has become necessary to adopt a national diaspora policy to protect their rights abroad and to solve domestic bottlenecks confronting them" (line 5-7, p. 8). The metaphor 'bottlenecks' in this statement is an attempt to emphasise the much more talked about abstract barrier of diaspora pains and hindrances in regard to homeland mobilisation. It appeals to the mind of the diaspora as a form of apology, because the metaphor acknowledges these difficulties, which thereby destroys any fear in the thoughts of the diaspora and the international communities that the political leadership of Ethiopia is unaware of those challenges that it faces in its attempts to engage with Ethiopia politically. Besides this, the strategy appeals to the diaspora's feelings, whereby it engenders a degree of understanding and sympathy towards those government attempts to mitigate diaspora concerns. At the same time, it allows the leadership to cherry pick those concerns that it desires to resolve at a certain point in time.

Whilst studies show that the Ethiopian diaspora continues to contribute in nation building, as they engage politically, especially in lobbying for or against their government abroad and in peace-building initiatives at home (Lyons 2014), nonetheless, research by Kuschminder and Siegel (2016) has reported that their knowledge of government policies towards their communities is much higher than their actual participation in these nation building activities such as voting. Even so, the inability of the government of Ethiopia to amend the citizenship law and allow dual-nationality in this current policy, is a controversial and widely debated issue in Ethiopia and amongst its diaspora population today.¹³ The much attention given to the socio-economic relationship in this policy document demonstrates why the Ethiopian government is highly interested in its diaspora communities.¹⁴ This explains why in 2018, the Prime Minister, in a statement before the house of people representatives, challenged all Ethiopians in the diaspora to make a dollar-a-day contribution for vital developmental and social projects. Even though the global Ethiopian diaspora has enthusiastically accepted this challenge and is willingly mobilising and coordinating resources into this Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund,¹⁵ there has been inability to create a favourable atmosphere for equal and legitimate participation and irrespective of the diaspora group. This failure on the part of the government

¹² Aligned to numerous online media platforms and an influential online diaspora community, in 2017, prior to the elections in Kenya, The Kenya Diaspora Alliance (a federation of more than 37 diaspora organisations with a nominal membership of 250,000 Kenyan across the globe) took the government of Kenya to court and the court judgment meant all Kenyans in the diaspora were allowed to be fully involved in all future Kenya elections without going back home to vote. <https://kenyadiasporaalliance.org/the-kenya-diaspora-alliance-kda-has-now-set-a-good-example-2/>

¹³ *Ethiopia's Diaspora, issue of dual citizenship. News Publication by: Ethio DailyPost. Publish on December 6, 2018. Available on: <https://ethiodailypost.com/2018/12/06/ethiopias-diaspora-issue-of-dual-citizenship/>*

¹⁴ Section two of the document identifies the following objective of the policy: Encouraging foreign currency inflows and strengthening diaspora participation; improving diaspora engagement in investment trade and tourism; enhancing knowledge and technology transfer; supporting philanthropic and development associations; and advancing diaspora participation in good governance and democracy.

¹⁵ The Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund is a non-profit organisation working in coordination with the Ethiopian government to involve directly diaspora Ethiopians from all walks of life in improving the lives of the Ethiopian people by raising funds for vital socio-economic projects in Ethiopia. As per the fund website on the 16/09/2019, a total of 4.891m dollars had been contributed by 25,530 donors from 77 countries.

continue to draw criticism toward government initiatives at home and its diaspora population. For example, unlike NGOs or political parties in Ethiopia, diaspora political participation and contribution is not incorporated into considerations of state-society relations nor is it reinforced in legal frameworks. This complexity and diversity of the relationship the government has with its different diaspora groups have not just resulted to a powerful Ethiopian online community,¹⁶ for it has also resulted in a confrontational relationship, one in which the two parties often interpret each other's goals and strategies as being hostile to their own and the welfare of the nation in general.¹⁷

Conclusion

Both the Kenyan and Ethiopian policy documents that deal with diaspora participation blend many rhetorical strategies in their definition of the diaspora in the context of the contemporary Ethiopian and Kenyan societies. The fact that many institutions of their diaspora groups are actively mobilising themselves to be politically active towards their country of origin means that the governments of these nation-states are having to shape sustainably the political capacity of their diaspora towards the good of the nation and their democratic processes. As the diaspora policy documents show, it is a perilously fundamental moment in both countries. However, both nation-states are striving towards a sustainable political democratic system. They are aware that the process of democratisation also brings with it calls for greater inclusion from many groups within and outside of the country. In the current dispensation in the Ethiopia state-diaspora relationship, the dynamics are to expand, permit and encourage dual-citizenship rights that will allow enhanced political participation to all the diaspora population. This is because the notion of dual-citizenship is gradually becoming popular in some democracies in Africa, including Kenya and therefore, there is pressure in other countries, such as Ethiopia, to adopt policy frameworks that will permit access to legitimate political participation by the diaspora. The current inclusion and exclusion practices in Ethiopia are not working and have resulted in illegitimate online social-media participation.

Nevertheless, time will tell to what extent the government of Kenya is willing to translate its dual-citizenship policy framework and persuasive rhetoric in its diaspora policy into real-life active and inclusive political participation through resource mobilisation, which will enhance diaspora voting at polling stations abroad. Thus far, the idea of having a politically active Ethiopian diaspora remains highly contested and questionable. From the policy framework perspective, the vision is somewhat divisive rather than genuinely inclusive. This can be traced to the definition of the diaspora in the policy document, which divides its population into categories. Whilst not being overtly exclusive, the operationalisation of the concept of diaspora in the policy of Ethiopia, in contrast to that of Kenya, shows a conscious attempt at the leadership level in Ethiopia to exclude certain diaspora groups from domestic politics. The label 'foreign' ascribed to some of these groups

¹⁶With highly politicised online diaspora communities through websites and different online media space, their participation displays a marked critical attitude towards the Ethiopian government through an activist approach. The online initiatives of the Ethiopian diaspora have been found to prolong media contestations in the homeland as well as reinforcing their ideas (Skjerdal, 2011). Being outside the homeland gives unique advantages to these diaspora to see problems from different perspectives. Through these online spaces, these diaspora are able to communicate their knowledge and experience acquired abroad and help in effectively promoting democratic values and practices. However, not all participation through these spaces is legitimate. Studying Ethiopia, Lyons (2007:529) explained this extraterritorial prolonging of conflict is by means of traits of so-called 'conflict-generated diasporas', who in his opinion, 'tend to be less willing to compromise and therefore reinforce and exacerbate the protractedness of homeland conflicts'.

¹⁷In January 2018, a group of Ethiopian diaspora known as The Worldwide Ethiopian Joint Taskforce made a declaration calling for a worldwide remittance embargo against the brutal TPLF regime. For this group crippling the regime's economic backbone is a necessary form of struggle to shorten its political lifespan and depriving the regime access to foreign currencies plays a critical role in this respect. In this regard, they recognise that diaspora Ethiopians have a unique opportunity and capacity to undermine the regime's economic and political power. <https://ecadforum.com/2017/12/28/ethiopia-a-call-for-worldwide-remittance-embargo/>



gives the leadership legitimacy to exclude and segregate this category from political privileges (e.g. the right to vote or be elected). Besides this, in contrast to the inclusive nature of the diaspora policy design of Kenya, the separation of diaspora groups under the Ethiopian policy provides an avenue for power struggles. Not only will it create friction between certain diaspora groups and the state of Ethiopia, but also, there is the likelihood of tension between its diaspora groups.

Regardless, policy documents in both countries leave their diaspora communities with a sense of belonging and patriotism, at least when it comes to those who believe in state practices. However, it also shames those who would instead choose to be unpatriotic towards the image of the nation, if they decide not to accept the existing political status quo provided to them in the policy documents. These categories include, critics and activists who the government consider are mobilising illegitimately through different social media platforms. Nevertheless, the government vision is to persuade the diaspora to become more socio-economically active and to rediscover its passion, nobility and dignity as traditional Ethiopians or Kenyans, whilst also engaging in politics democratically. Notwithstanding this, what these two policies bring to the discourse of the state-diaspora relationship is that when the diaspora faces state power, not all categories are equally accepted and offered the same political rights. In conclusion, it is beyond all reasonable doubt that the central idea behind the formulation of these two diaspora policies is to emasculate certain categories of diaspora groups politically in a broad sense, while at the same time orienting all diaspora groups socio-economically towards the benefit of their countries of origin. When we talk of the role of the Kenyan and Ethiopian diaspora in the democratisation processes towards homeland politics, the emphasis is put on voting, propagating information, calls for elections transparency and fairness being at the centre of the fundamental aspects of modern diasporic political participation.

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