

## **SETTING UP OVERSEAS MILITARY BASES IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The practice of establishing military installations and facilities in foreign countries dates back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the two World Wars as nations sought to exercise influence and domination over others. From a realist point of view, bases have been set up in different countries for some reasons with the most notable being the need to align national and political interests in both the host and the military-providing nation. These bases are of strategic importance and developments seen in various countries attest to this fact. Some countries needed to exercise authority over others, especially after colonization while others needed the help granted to them in the form of security, weaponry, and economic growth. The host countries in return provide good working environments for the installations. Nations should embrace the need to create useful alliances especially in this era of emerging terror attacks and security threats across the world. The terror issue is a global problem. Not even superpowers are being spared with the highest incidences occurring in their countries. Terror networks are growing, and every possibility of an alliance to help curb this menace should be highly welcomed. A strong front against the formation of these terror networks is required. Therefore,

most countries across the globe converge on the importance of establishment of overseas military bases in enhancing security and power distribution. Thus, this research seeks to explore the realists perspective on how the establishment of overseas military bases help to improve international security and streamline distribution of power.

**Keywords:** *Realism, overseas military bases, international security, power distribution*

## ULUSLARARASI GÜVENLİK DOĞRULTUSUNDA DENİZAŞIRI ASKERİ ÜSLERİN KURULMASI

### ÖZ

Yabancı ülkelerde askeri üslerin ve tesislerin kurulması, iki Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra 20. yüzyıla kadar uzanır; çünkü ülkeler, birbirlerini etkilemek ve egemen olmak istemektedir. Realist bir bakış açısına göre, üsler çeşitli nedenlerden dolayı farklı ülkelerde kurulmuştur; en dikkat çeken şey ise, hem üslere ev sahibi hem de askeri-tedarik eden ulus için ulusal ve siyasi çıkarların uyumlu hale getirilmesine ihtiyaç duyulmasıdır. Bu üsler stratejik olarak önemlidir ve çeşitli ülkelerde görülen gelişmeler bu gerçeği ispatlamaktadır. Bazı ülkeler, özellikle sömürgecilikten sonra başkaları üzerinde otoriteyi kullanmaya ihtiyaç duyarlarken, bazıları da diğerlerine güvenlik, silah ve ekonomik büyüme şeklinde verilen yardıma ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Buna mukabil üslere ev sahipliği yapan ülkeler üsler için iyi çalışma ortamı sağlamaktadır. Uluslar, bilhassa dünyada ortaya çıkan terör saldırıları ve güvenlik tehditlerinin olduğu dönemde faydalı ittifaklar yaratma gereğini benimsemelidirler. Terör küresel bir sorundur. Süper güçler bile, ülkelerinde meydana gelen büyük olaylardan kurtulmuş değiller. Bu terör ağlarının oluşumuna karşı güçlü bir cepheye gerek duyulmaktadır. Bu nedenle, dünya genelinde birçok ülke, güvenlik ve güç dağıtımını arttırmak için denizaşırı askeri üslerin kurulmasının önemine katılıyor. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, denizaşırı askeri üslerin kurulmasının uluslararası güvenliğin geliştirilmesini ve güç dağılımını nasıl elverişli duruma getirdiğini realist bir bakış açısıyla incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Realizm, denizaşırı askeri üsler, uluslararası güvenlik, güç dağılımı*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A military base is defined by Glebov (2009, p.56) as a facility installed to support military logistics and operations. Military bases can have different roles such as air, navy, or land bases. Depending on their specific functions, military settlements can act as weaponry stock, posts of intelligence, test-ranges for weaponry, military operations, and as hosts for military corps. Overseas military basing is among the most enduring characteristics of international relations. Therefore, there is no doubt about the significance of foreign military basing to enhancing international security and stability and the need to understand how it influences power balance in the global geopolitics.

Lostumbo et al. (2013) opine that the Cold War brought about changes in security policies which created a great need for cooperation and building confidence among states across the world. When establishing these bases, logic, and interests are the main factors that provide a leeway for these installations to be created (Zanotti 2012). Strategic interest between the host nation and the military country give reasons the establishment of these bases. Bases live on for continued alliances and are used as a hedge against future security uncertainties (Barfield 2010). However, their creation is also largely dominated by the international system structure where big countries have a bigger say.

Military bases were limited to a few aircraft carriers in offshore areas and small bases to accommodate the soldiers in earlier times. Temporary visits by the military and officials from these nations were also some of the uses of these installations (Lostumbo et al., 2013). Today, however, they are extensive areas with state of the art technology, large buildings and more like a permanent settlement (Cordesman 2007: p.66). These areas are extensions of their home countries in the host country. Military personnel is deployed everywhere with countries using diplomacy to create even more bases for “expansion.”

The major controversy concerning these military settlements is regarding their establishment in foreign territories which is a global issue in power distribution and influence. The World Super Powers are not strategically located while they need to exercise their influence over the world. Most of these countries are either at the farthest ends of the continents and therefore create military bases to intensify their great powers and overcome geographical disadvantage. The reasons why these bases are set up include; showing political resolve, protecting their military power, and exhibiting their military commitment across the world to their allies. Strategic alignment and interests have also led to opening up ports

across the world. These bases open up new ports, promote trade and improve the overall security. It even creates power for the host country because once a country is opened up to new possibilities; it ends up being a world leader in a certain niche as well. For instance, the military bases in Asia have opened up the Gulf region to the world regarding the oil trade.

Currently, the Arab countries are the biggest exporters of oil in the world and have big ports and seaways to ensure quick distribution to other parts of the world. These ports were opened up due to interventions from the superpowers to grow the region and invest even in the military. From a liberal point of view, even with the positive interventions, there could be interference with the running of a country due to heavy military control over the host nation. The principle of sovereignty as talked about from the times of Socrates dictates that a country is only sovereign in its territory. No other country should be allowed to impose its jurisdiction on foreign lands. This principle clashes with the establishment of military bases by foreign nations in host countries and the laws regulating these situations should be understood. The laws governing these bases should also be revised to take into consideration different factors affecting the legal system of the foreign country hosting the overseas military.

Barfield (2010) and Sarantakes (2000) both agree that the presence of military bases abroad is beneficial to the host country in different ways. Social, political and economic benefits are some that accrue from hosting these installations. The creation of foreign bases is directly connected to communication lines and economic and political alignments. Routes connect commercial and military units abroad, and these bases are located strategically (Zanotti 2012). It is essential for a country to understand that the willingness of another country to host foreign military should not be taken for granted. Sustainability is important to align the good relations between the hosts and the military country for good co-existence. Several laws have been created to help the military avoid overstepping and the host nation to understand their role in the functioning of these bases (Calder 2007).

A base should not be hurriedly built at a great cost without analyzing its need and the host nation's stable support. Looking for different ways to reduce military effects on host countries to maintain their sovereignty is very important especially today. The UN General Assembly had a conference whose theme was "eliminating foreign military bases in Asia, Africa, and Latin America" (Nye 2016). The conference was to come up with solutions to military interference in host countries

and look for a way of having them shut down. However, Bohdan (2013) argues that closing down military bases would not do a state any good from a political and economic perspective. However, he offers solutions to the reduction of these effects such as reevaluation of operations essential to accomplishing their missions in host countries to be able to preserve the sovereign integrity of a nation while protecting their viability as well. Training and operations management should be put in place to ensure that infrastructure from the host nation and cooperation is well maintained to contribute to the achievement of the base objectives and take the interests of the host nations into consideration (Durukan 2012). Apart from the laws governing these operations, careful consideration should be made to enhance co-operation based on the interests of both sides and security.

According to Rosenfeld, the law is unclear on how to deal with some of the crimes committed by the military of visiting nations. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) was created to redefine the responsibilities and legal rights of military forces abroad. They are international laws agreeable to nations which create obligations on jurisdiction over the civilian (Rosenfeld 2014, p.280).

World peace can be provided by overseas basing in two means. Firstly, an army installation has to be created in a country where the host and the military nation have good relations. This will ensure peace between the two countries. The second way is helping in the defense capabilities of a country. Dufuor (2007) and Rosenfeld (2003) agree that a military base can help end a war by advancing at the host nation's enemies or getting support from the host nations to defeat its enemies. Host nations can provide the strategic location and infrastructure. As said before, most of the superpowers might not be strategically located close to their enemies or close to good navigations points. In case of an emergency, the troops from a military base can be able to come in and support the host nation in the fight or get support as well. They can make use of weaponry in the host country and facilities in such an event.

Furthermore, naval capabilities are also a crucial part of military installations (Harkarvy 2005). They help maintain a global presence adequate to ensure the advancement of the home country interests and world peace. The definition of maritime regarding foreign policy encompasses multiple activities across the waters of the world and their close relationships (Hook and Spanier 2015). These activities include international law and affairs, trade, politics, economics, migration, immigration, and communication. The navy and the military bases on land are one front, and their objectives are always aligned in the face of war.

Mostly the navy is considered as a provider of access and support for land bases, but they are also in their right floating weapons and vessels to create alliances and good relations with host countries (Knorr 2015).

Empirical studies indicate that overseas military basing benefit from adaptability and interoperability skills. Besides, they also have the advantage of cultural awareness with foreign partners from where they access their training. These skills are of utmost significance, especially through temporary and rotational deployments (Lostumbo et al., 2013). Overseas military basing benefits the participating personnel through enhancing their operational ability alongside foreign military personnel. The association assists the foreign forces to gain the capability to understand how to build coalitions to support security and stability and influence adversaries, which require an adequate understanding of the customs and values (Flemes and Wehner 2015). Operating in an international environment away from home ground enable forces stationed in foreign lands to be able to experience and learn cultural and national differences in depth and be able to incorporate them as part of their skill set and thus can improve on their ability and understanding when dealing with international security issues.

### **LIBERALIST APPROACH**

Liberalism refers to the freedom of a nation. Its core ideals are universality, human rights, duty to be treated well and freedom from social actions. It also represents the right to live in home countries without any interference. Several representatives of the government have studied harmony between nations with the consent of free people who should exist in a political order. Liberalism is an approach also being taken up by neo-realism which is the modern realism has separated from the political laws and its characteristics and sees the structures that states exist in are anarchic because of lack of sovereign authority. Neo-realists explain that nation's should serve their interests overseas by following strict codes of self-help because of lack of jurisdiction above them. They should also try and acquire the power to secure themselves when faced with compromising situations. Liberalists have tried to show that hosting troops from foreign nations bring not only lack of sovereignty but also other problems. The Oslo guidelines dictate that countries humanitarian assistance should be provided in line with neutrality and humanity with total respect for the host's sovereignty. The guidelines are very broad, but they ensure that the military does not spread abuse. They also help the military get international support from other international links. The other global actions are the No-Bases Network whose main aim is to resist the formation of military bases from the year 2000. Civil rights Non-Governmental- Groups

(NGOs) have the major aim of uniting all countries to resist the spread of military bases across the world. The movement also helps in rehabilitating the abandoned military sites like in Western Europe (Dufour 2007).

Moreover, liberalists argue that these installations brings some problems include environmental degradation, social erosion, political risks and dangers of civil strife, and economic sabotage. The specific effects are noise, water, and land pollution, violence with the locals, social misgivings and impeding on the sovereignty of these nations. From a social point, their operations can be deemed dangerous example the testing of weaponry since it can cause harm or contamination. For example, uranium residues can pollute oil and water affecting a whole population (Zeijden 2009). From a social point too, the foreign military has been known to be hostile to communities around their bases. They have been known to rape women, grab local land, and even get involved in violent crimes (Zeijden 2009). Thus, all fronts should strive to protect their interests while ensuring regard is maintained for values of the host nations and respect for the military present. The application of military power on state threats is different from the application of power against threats considered non-state. Liberalists argue that controlling this escalation is becoming very difficult and thus military bases should be done away with altogether. Campaigns have been mounted against this, and it is imperative that nations maintain their militaries.

### **REALIST APPROACH**

Realists majorly focus on the acquisition, exercise and maintenance of power by a nation, which in most occasions can be referred to as hard power involving overseas military posturing of personnel, missiles, war planes and tanks among other military regalia. The primary focus of realists is on the political constraints that result due to lack of international government and human nature, thus considering the international relations to be a realm of power and interests. The realists consider nature at its core as egoistic, implying that it is inalterably inclined towards immorality. The realists' perspective also addresses the political necessities, implying that lack of an international prefect automatically ushers in the law of the jungle. Therefore, power politics dominate the realists' illustration of international relations, which in effect fails to provide the difference between foreign policy from other diverse policy areas. The realists often converge with Harold Lasswell's assertion that politics majorly deals with the struggle about who gets what, how and when, and the power struggle pointed out here is an endemic and critical characteristic of human life (Lasswell, 1950, p.86). Nonetheless, according to the realists, power politics conditions differ across

international and internal politics due to lack of legitimate monopoly violence. Joseph Grieco notes that countries understand that anarchy implies the absence of a central authority to prevent other nations from using violence or threats, destroy or dominate others (Grieco, 1990, p.38). Lack of a central power that would protect nations against the threat of violence from other nations makes each nation to focus primarily on their survival and security. They particularly want to focus majorly on the most appropriate means of protecting themselves from the potential threat of violence from other “rogue” states (Rose, 1998). In a situation where countries become dependent on their individual abilities to provide security to themselves, they start to worry about their power relative to other nations (Grieco, 1990, p.41). The lack of a central power to safeguard and protect the interests of states considered as less strong from exploitation by their powerful counterparts, and the fact that no nation can be certain about the intention of other states in the future makes them prefer to establish their foreign policy not on ideational factors but on thorough power calculations to minimise their risk of survival.

Mouritzen and Wivel (2012, p.25) opine that power balance is a critical starting point for foreign policy analysis. It, therefore, indicates that realists’ view on foreign policy contrasts the conventional foreign policy understanding which primarily focuses on human and state-level decision making. Historian and diplomat George F. Kennan, who is considered as among the most influential post-WWII realists, inspired the Cold War containment policy as well as the Truman doctrine through the “Long Telegram” from his office in Moscow. The alignment of nation’s agenda must be taken into consideration by every government first. In the world today where the security risks involved are too high, it is essential that nations align themselves strategically. Realism aligns political interest and the services offered by military bases in their countries. The rise of unipolar dominance when the USSR collapsed provided the United States with incentives for deemphasizing collective responsibility on international security, making it rely heavily on the American military. The stress of realists on unavoidability and steadiness of war and military rivalry between sovereign states becomes more acceptable to because the United States did not reduce its military spending despite the collapse of its primary challenger during the Cold War (Rose 1998). It is also evident that since this period, the United States of America has continued and even opened several networks of military bases across the globe. Rose (1998) state that the absence of central authority or anarchy in international politics creates room for mistrust among nations. Therefore, this compels state policymakers to develop and uphold a particular level of capabilities that will assist in ensuring



national security. Thus, rational behavior in the context of the absence of central authority will inevitably reproduce a condition of insecurity and distrust, which ultimately threatens the existence of all countries (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014, p.76). This, therefore, reinforces the idea that no nation will cease from carrying out politics of control and manipulation. The search for security, the need for power and supremacy of national interests constitute constant motivating factors that drive ambitions of nations in the international geopolitics to maintain (Calder, 2007, p.39). Realism, as a form of problem-solving theory, pursues a fact-finding mission using the existing power and social institutions and relationships that form the primary framework for action.

The primary objective of collective security between the host nations and the militaries located in those countries is the preservation of values that are adhered to and pushing of self-interests for both parties (Hook and Spanier 2015). In line with this development, collective security always put the values first to ensure good relations and alliances (Odell 2014). The legal framework governing these bases is created in a way that protects the interests of the states from each other (Krepinevich 2007). The essential requirements of these bases are:

- Allocation of decision making and threat response to effective and impartial bodies
- Ensuring maximum representation and support for all the participants in decision-making processes on all levels
- Introducing checks between the two parties and providing a balance in the security mechanisms to prevent abuse of power by some quarters at the expense of others.

Foreign military basing offer a critical opportunity for putting the forces in a position where they can conveniently respond to contingencies, strengthen the relations with the host nation, assure allies and deter potential foes, which in effect creates international peace. However, there can be risk involved in posturing military bases abroad. Realists state that overseas military basing is characterized by political risks that arise due to uncertainties underpinning level of access and duration of presence. Nonetheless, the realist scholars state that overseas military posturing especially those placed directly in places considered as hotspot areas with greatest levels of threats can significantly contribute to deterrence and thus in the process lead to prevention of an adversary's quick victory. As a result, the realists stress the need to deploy and establish overseas bases in the affected nations to deter and prevent the likelihood of the spread. In most occasions, the

presence of a foreign military base in another country will emphasize not only the military capability of a nation but also their political will to assist in situations of security misfortune to protect them as well as other countries across the planet. Realists are of the belief that foreign military basing is critical in the process of creating power balance in the international politics. They hold that overseas military posturing is quite important in enhancing the emergence, endurance and proper functioning of an international system that appear as worthy (Navarez, 2016).

### **MILITARY BASING OF UNITED STATES**

The US has the highest number of military bases across the world. It has over 1000 installations in the world in about 130 countries. Thus, the Global Research Institute findings show that the United States has the largest network of international bases. Some of them include eight bases in Britain, twenty-six in Germany, and eight in Japan (Lostumbo et al., 2013). The number of US military bases across the world grew after WWII and after the end of Cold War (Lachowski 2007). After the 9/11 terror attacks were took place the US set up military bases in the Afghanistan.

However, Lostumbo et al. (2013) stress that sustaining a military base in a host country is not a cheap affair as it costs a lot to pay for utilities, feeds the military, and invests in the local communities where these bases are located. For example, the US military bases abroad have an estimated budget of more than \$100 billion a year as it can be seen on table 1.1. With this kind of spending, it is crucial that these bases are kept, and the law is enforced to ensure their survival (Zannotti 2012).

**Table 1.1:** 2016 military expenditure by country and share of global total (McCarthy 2017).

<b>Countries</b>	<b>2016 spending (\$ bn)</b>	<b>% share of total expenditure</b>
United States	611.0	36.0
United Kingdom	48.3	2.9
France	55.7	3.3
Russia	69.2	4.1
Turkey	22.6	1.3

The US bases are classified according to their geo-strategic purposes. It refers to its major facilities as Main Operating Sites, and thus have permanent troops stationed within such facilities. On the other hand, smaller ones are called the Forward Operating Bases which are used or bilateral co-operation. The other classification is the Cooperative Security Locations which are used for security co-operation activities (Peterson J.E 2012).

The first class is the Main Operating Bases which are the largest military facilities which are stationed with permanent U.S. troop, extensive control and command facilities, and reinforced defenses. They have state of the art infrastructure and supplementary social facilities to support the families of these troops. They serve as the main hubs of the US military power and show political commitment to key allies (Lostumbo et al., 2013). They include the Ramstein base in Germany, Camp Humphrey's in South Korea and Kadena in Japan.

Forward Operating Sites are the second class of military bases, and these are smaller facilities. They do not have permanent troops but are attached to the main operating stations which means they can be readily supported during times of critical operations. They are also part of the reinforcement of bilateral alliances between the US and the host nations. Examples include the Soto Cano Air Base located in Honduras and Sembawang dockyards in Singapore.

The Cooperative Security Locations falls within the third class. They have little to no permanent troops stationed and are used as staging fronts for peace and support. They are points of security operations activities between the host nations and the US. These are located in nations with smaller allies like Africa.

The Incirlik air base is an example of US military base in Turkey. Since its establishment in 1955, this base has been a critical security point for the United States and the entire globe. It assisted the US to deter Soviet expansion and has significantly contributed to the on-going anti-IS launch pad. During Cold War, this facility was the most critical NATO's southeast wing air base (Rose 1998). Besides, serving as a deterrent for the Soviet expansion, Incilik air base has also been an essential apparatus for handling Middle East crises.

Furthermore, The United States established Naval Forces Europe (NAVEUR) in Europe to provide the overall command, control operations and coordinate maritime assets. The Naples based U.S Sixth Fleet currently provides this critical command that brings the capability of the United States Maritime capability

into this region. Besides, the U.S Marine also has a considerable number of submarines in the region that helps in gathering intelligence, reconnaissance as well as providing surveillance capacity (Lachowski 2007). According to experts, the capabilities enhanced by the U.S Submarines are quite critical to the security and power distribution in the region considering the scope, pace and sophistication of the Russian submarine.

The United States began to have a significant military presence in Europe since Cold War era to deter Soviet aggression. Most NATO members regard the presence of US military within and around their borders as a component of the alliance activities (Lachowski 2007). The European countries significantly reduced their military expenditure during Cold War period and sacrificed their capability to protect themselves against the Soviet communism in exchange for military protection from the United States. When Cold War ended, governments of Eastern European nations still feel that U.S military presence within their borders will be beneficial in preventing possible Russian aggression. Although it may not appear as if the threat of war is real between Russia and European countries, a look into four previous decades reveals a clear picture of the real conflicted within the continent (Flemes and Wehner 2015). Besides, it is only in 2008 when Russia expressed its aggression towards a country considered as the friend of the United States, Georgia, which was angling to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a member.

### **MILITARY BASING OF TURKEY**

The Republic of Turkey has remained a frontier state since its establishment in the 1920 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Since its inception, territorial integrity and national security issues have dominated the Ankara's foreign policy. The country started to gain geostrategic significance following the United States' led war on terrorism against Iraq. Turkey's central location between Northern Mesopotamia and Southern Caucasus coupled with the fact that it is the United States' ally and a longstanding NATO member since 1953 makes it a critical player in various overlapping regions (Aljazeera 2017). It has a strategic location in the Balkans, western Europe, the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean, the Caucasus-Caspian complex, Middle East region, the Black Sea and Central Asia (Tokyay 2017). Moreover, Turkey also has a strategic proximity to the primary gas and oil deposits in Northern Iraq and the Caspian Sea and participates actively in the pipeline "Great Game" politics within the region.

Turkey has been one of the countries in the forefront, cultivating international relations with other major nations. It has bases in Somalia, Qatar, and Cyprus. The base in Cyprus was established due to dispute that once occurred between Turks and Greeks (Zanotti 2014). To promote peace and international stability as well, Turkey is well aligned with superpowers to protect its interests. The country has helped in the Afghan war leading the International Security Assistance Force with NATO.

At the current period, Turkish military troops have been undertaking critical operations in places such as Afghanistan and Kosovo alongside other international peacekeeping forces. It has been widely affirmed that the contributions of the Turkish military troops to the stability and peace within host countries has been immense. Besides, Turkey also has a military base in northern Iraq, Bashiqa. This has been essential in providing military training to the anti-Daesh soldiers as per the request of the KRG (Kurdistan Regional Government). The government of Turkey has strategically used this base to neutralize the Daesh terrorists' security threats before reaching its borders.

On September 2017, Turkey launched one of its largest global foreign military base in Somalia, a failed state in the horns of East Africa. The primary intention of building the facility was to enhance the development and establishment of a strong and capable army that would readily defend the country from the incessant Al-Shabab attacks (Aljazeera 2017). Somalia has been experiencing sporadic attacks from the Al-Shabab terrorist organization, an affiliate of Al-Qaeda since the early 1990s. Therefore, Turkey's foreign military base in southern Mogadishu will be critical in enhancing the capability and capacity of the government of Somalia to gain stability. Somalia's strategic location and the ongoing impasse within the country have increased its attractiveness to the foreign entities with geopolitical interests in East Africa. Turkey has remained a consistent Somalia ally, and has been conducting numerous activities within the country that aim to restore stability and put the nation in its development path (Erickson 1994 p.48). Nonetheless, it is also seeking for lucrative mutual benefits within the state. The base has been critical in the provision of military training, which forms part of the broader strategy of empowering the government of Somalia socially, economically and politically with the major vision of assisting the government of Somalia to be able to address peace and stability threats, hunger and terrorism. It is estimated that the assistance the government of Somalia has acquired from

Turkey far outweighs those from other nations (Aljazeera 2017). The fact that Somalia government direly requires heavy and well-equipped military to enhance its stability makes the Turkish's military presence in the country to be of strategic benefit.

Turkey and Qatar had initiated talks that were merely awaiting the approval of the Turkish parliament before the Doha crisis. In fact, before the parliament approved the establishment of the foreign base in Doha, Ankara had already sent more than 80 troops into Doha to lay the foundation of the much awaited foreign military base. The government deployed 23 more troops into Doha following the approval of parliament (Aljazeera 2017). Therefore, it is a clear indication that this overseas military base had not only been agreed on several years before the crisis began, it was an already under progress. However, following the parliamentary approval to establish a base in Doha, several Middle Eastern countries presented Qatar with a particular demands such as shutting down Al Jazeera, downgrading the country's relations with the republic of Iran, shutting down the Turkey's military base within the country and severing its support to the Muslim Brotherhood as well as severing its military and foreign relations with Ankara. This implies that Turkish military presence in the Gulf region left quite a number of people and nations unsettled, meaning that the presence of Turkish military is a source of concern to some Middle Eastern nations; thus creating the need to understand why Turkey sent his troops Qatar in the first place.

Turkish military base is located in Qatar, whose efforts began in 2014, aiming to enhance stability and security of the region. The major motivations behind the establishment during the time were the critical situation in Syria and Iranian expansionism (Tokyay 2017). These examples clearly indicate the decision of Turkey to establish its foreign military in Doha was to promote security and stability among friendly nations besides taking pre-emptive measures to address potential threats against the security of its borders. Therefore, the presence of Turkish military in the Middle East does not pose any threat to the nations within the region. Turkey and Gulf Cooperation Council agree on most pertinent issues within the region despite the minor differences of opinion. For instance, the GCC member states agree with Turkish government on the need to topple Bashar Assad's regime. Besides, Turkish military proved helpful to most GCC nations during the Yemen crisis besides sharing similar concerns on Iranian expansionism (Aljazeera 2017). Therefore, all these activities point out to the fact that Turkish foreign military in Doha will strengthen other nation's military instead of threatening their crucial interests. It is thus critical to encourage and

stress the need for other countries within Middle Eastern region to understand that the presence of Turkish military in the region does not pose any threat to the GCC member countries.

Turkish decision to establish a foreign military base in Qatar was informed by both ideological and strategic considerations. First of all, Turkey and Qatar are the only two nations that have been able to support the moderate Muslim Brotherhood forces. Besides, they extended their support and assistance to Egyptian government under the leadership of Mohammed Morsi and also publicly condemned the July 2013's uprising that led to the removal of a democratically elected president from power. The closer association of these two nations with the Muslim Brotherhood made them to even come closer during the Arab Spring where they collaborated to support Islamist groups in Libya, Syria, Iraq and Egypt (Tokyay 2017). Moreover, the strategic ambitions of Turkey within Middle East have seen it recalibrate its foreign policy since 2002 when the Justice and Development Party emerged to power. Since then, Turkey has been propelled to become keen on the Arab affairs' interest. The party is also responsible for tasking the government of Turkey to take up intervention measures after the eruption of violence in Iraq and Syria between 2011 and 2012. Therefore, the decision by the Turkish parliament to fast-track its decision to deploy its military following Qatar crisis forms part of its strategic ambition to become a major player within the Middle Eastern region (Tokyay 2017). The decision makes Ankara a major stakeholder in the Middle Eastern regional issues as well as providing it with a forward military position that gives it the authority to project power in the region.

### **BENEFITS AND ROLE OF OVERSEAS MILITARY BASING**

Overseas military bases are often established where a nation has particular imperial interests; where they want to build an empire either directly or otherwise over foreign policy, laws and political economy of another nation. Besides, foreign military bases are usually associated with strategic, rational purposes (Knorr 2016). Therefore, maintaining overseas military bases outside NATO enables these countries to be able to defend themselves from escalating threats of attacks, supply security to other nations and enhance capture resources and trade. These countries have also pursued the ambition of building overseas military bases with the key aim of protecting the agenda of non-economic factors such as aid workers, political operatives, and missionaries. For instance, the Portuguese, in the sixteenth century, seized lucrative ports along Indian route and applied naval patrols, fortification, and demonstrations bombardment to establish their monopoly in the spice trade (Colangelo 2014). The locals attempting to pass

through the fortified ports were coerced to pay self-passage and duties. On the most recent accounts, overseas military bases have been used critically to control economic and political life within the host countries (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014). For example, the United States overseas military bases in Korea have served commendably in exercising control over Korean foreign policy and their forces during wartime thus enabling the U.S forces to acquire crucial military and political support while undertaking some of its military operations such as in Syria and Vietnam.

Politically, foreign military bases provide the sign and encouragement that other nations endorse a state's foreign policy and military. Besides, these bases not only serve strategic and political objectives but also other non-state actors who continually benefit from the existence of these bases without regard for their strategic or political value such as the foreign multinational companies that benefit through doing business in a peaceful environment created by the presence of a foreign military (Lostumbo et al., 2013). Some elite nations prefer maintaining military bases overseas to reinforce the status quo. These foreign bases are designed to ensure that these countries can access and control strategic resources in the area they occupy. For instance, the United States maintains its military presence in Japan and Europe to maintain the privilege and power hierarchy created during the World War II (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014). In most occasions, the European powers and other nations such as Spain and Turkey establish foreign military bases as a means of competing with each other in securing territory.

The current strategic rationale for keeping foreign military bases has experienced significant changes over periods. The globalization of commerce has turned dubious the need for military bases to secure trade routes as well as enhancing access to trade goods. There is a significant decline in great powers' conquest (The World Tribune 2017). This is partly attributable to the norms of post-WWII of self-determination and territorial integrity. Moreover, the previous modes of aggressive military expansionism exhibited by the old order have been overtaken by the destructive power of the modern military pieces of equipment such as nuclear weapons (Knorr 2016).

Moreover, besides being members of NATO, political and economic interests often prevail when it comes to concerns for establishing military bases abroad. The NATO provides its members with security against numerous perils that currently plague the planet such as money laundering, drug and human trafficking, and the



threat of terrorism that emanate from across the globe. This, therefore, gives these countries the opportunity to pursue political, economic and strategic interests. For instance, Turkey's strategic position provides it with the advantage to effectively exploit oil axis between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The military and political perspective suggest that NATO members have the capability and back up to influence stability across the globe.

Therefore, despite being members of the NATO, the foreign military bases assist these countries by providing them with credibility about their commitment and diplomatic initiatives through developing the perception that they are ready, close and can swiftly respond to any security situation in the area should a crisis occurs. Besides, some governments often ask these countries to establish their military bases not because it will be of significant benefit to the nation setting up the foreign military base but for the host nation in ensuring stability, suppressing terrorism and dealing with massacres such as in Somalia (Keukeleire and Delreux 2014).

#### **ANALYSIS OF RELEVANT LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

The Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) provides the basis for regulating the scope of exempting foreign militaries from local jurisdictions. Thus, SOFA refers to a negotiation between the host and sending state to allow the sending nation to be able to send their troops to carry out military activities within the host nation. On the other hand, the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) refers to an agreement between the sending and the host nation on the legal framework regarding the manner in which the foreign military personnel will be treated while overseas as approved by the host nation. The essence of VFA is to improve the bilateral relations between the sending and the host nations' combined planning, the readiness of the combat for deployment and interoperability while at the same time improving security and stability between the two nations and the surrounding regions as well as protecting the host nation from external aggression (Aljazeera 2017). Further, since the VFA is a legal framework, it offers critical guidelines that define interaction standards between the visiting and host militaries. Besides, defining the legal status of foreign military personnel in a host country, SOFAs outline the rights and responsibilities between the sending and host nations.

SOFA protections are quite significant to the foreign militaries within their host nations. They serve some purposes that are usually of particular benefit to the sending countries. For instance, depending on the terms and conditions of the agreement, SOFA protects the foreign soldiers against being subjected to the

justice system of the host state. This is particularly important to the sending state in upholding the rights of their personnel while operating in overseas military bases as well as indicating the sending nation of its interest to exercise disciplinary authority over their military personnel overseas and enhancing their willingness and commitment to deploy military personnel overseas. Reports also show that the exemptions created under SOFA negotiations usually boost the confidence of the public in the deployment and establishment of overseas military bases to deal with security and issues related to political power distribution (Erickson 1994). It is not a doubtful fact that the public is likely to compromise the process of overseas deployment if they feel that their military personnel are exposed to the risk of trial under systems they consider as unfair.

Besides, SOFA gives the sending militaries the authority while operating in the overseas country as well as providing the predictability in their relations with the host nation. Moreover, the agreement saves the sending nation money through the avoidance of tax liability as well as other charges. It also assists in simplifying administrative procedures.

VFA and SOFA are both laws governing the presence of the military in a foreign country. VFA covers military that is in a country temporarily. SOFA, on the other hand, covers military bases in a host nation (Manson 2012). According to Colangelo (2014), both agreements formalize the authority of civil law on the international jurisdiction (extraterritorial jurisdiction on civil law), which refers to exercising power legally beyond a nation's territorial borders (Lostumbo et al., 2013). This means that states which have military installations abroad can undertake particular operations within such jurisdictions. Therefore, it is important to understand that SOFA and VFA are among the military agreements that comprise international security arrangement.

### **SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

Military facilities assist in interventions, provision of new infrastructure, offering training for local troops, offering surrogate forces, and environmental monitoring. According to Pettyjohn (2013), foreign military bases can help in suppressing political strife in the host country (Lostumbo et al., 2013). Military installations in different countries have helped nations deal with terrorism, act as mediators, and offer training to local troops (Manson 2012). From reinforcing weapons and sending out their troops to fight these wars, these bases are of utmost importance in maintaining peace across the world.

Military installations bring new cultures to the locals. Setting up businesses and towns growing next to these bases can help the locals invest in stores and shops to sell stuff. These people also get to interact with people from different places. Military installations also put these places on the world map. Culture is spread across borders, and some of these troops settle and invest in these countries. Economically, military bases have provided the convenient connections for trade and easy access. Accepting to host a military is a sign of friendship and alignment of interests (Lostumbo et al., 2013). Hansen (2008) notes that Africa is an excellent source of raw materials for France and also serves as a market for its exports. British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) acts as a strategic point for trade and access. The expansion of military bases has assisted in setting up trading posts, warehouses, and stations to secure crucial interests (Haaretz 2012). Besides, the development of technology is a critical factor in the establishment of foreign naval bases. Host countries get training in superior engineering, science and information technology systems to improve the military well-being in the countries these stations are located. The rents also paid for these bases grow the local economies of the areas in which they are located. Promotion of coercive diplomacy is also a product of good military alliances.

Despite the constantly cited problems of foreign military bases, these sites often signify critical economic prosperity within regions where they are located. The construction of these bases often causes millions of dollars. As a result, several people mainly locals usually find full-time employment opportunities with adequate wages and salaries. Similarly, foreign military personnel enlisted in these bases usually spend a substantial amount of dollars in the local business, stores, and restaurants. This usually creates an immense financial impact on the local community hosting the foreign facility (Clark et al. 2014). Since foreign military bases are always constructed in regions whose economic powerhouse have suffered immense damage due to war or threats of external invasion, the establishment and maintenance of a foreign military base usually enhance economic revival in such nations thereby boosting the economy and economic activities undertaken within such countries.

It is quite clear that foreign military bases contribute significant social impact to the sending as well as the countries. For the host nations, the created employment, social amenities such as schools, hospitals, and other facilities enhance the social welfare of the local people. The interaction between the foreign military personnel stationed in overseas military bases also enhance good relations not only between the people but also between nations as well as enhance the perspectives of the

nationals of the host countries about the sending nation. The economic growth, peace, security and stability enhanced by military officers stationed overseas also contribute immensely to social impact within a country. On the other hand, the sending country gets the opportunity to promote their social influence through their militaries abroad (Whitney, 2016). Foreign military basing enables a nation to spread its national culture to overseas nations and change their perspectives as well as win their trust and confidence to become allies. Therefore, given these factors, it is quite clear how foreign military basing contribute to political, social and economic impact across the globe. It is in this way that a country can safeguard, acquire or spread their influence and cultural orientation with other nations and people from the diverse environment within the highly interconnected global environment. This is quite significant in upholding security and stability within a country as well as its surrounding region.

Besides the economic and social implications of foreign military basing, these stations also pose a critical political impact on the host nation. It also provides the means for the country that sends its military troops overseas to establish their geopolitical influence by integrating their economic interests in the area (Hansen, 2008). Once a country sets up its military base in a foreign state, they build a mutual relationship and goodwill which enables the international military force to be able to protect the host country through deterring hostility of external aggressors as well as potential local conflicts, thus assisting in ensuring world security. For instance, the government of Somalia accepted the United Arab Emirates' interest and requested to establish a military base in the country. The move was also lauded by Somalia's neighboring country and long-time partner, Ethiopia as a means that will enhance regional security as well as assist in putting in check the terrorist militia organization that has consistently pose significant security threat in the Eastern African region.

### **IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY**

When states are viewed as interfering with the host nation's people and policies, diplomatic friendships can be fuelled. The case of the US is unique since the country has solid diplomatic skills. In the case of a problem with a military and a host nation, the base should be able to protect itself in case their government cannot be able to hold diplomatic talks with their host countries (Hansen 2008).

Good diplomacy can also spill to other sectors of the economy for example trade agreements and social impact. In case of strife and misunderstanding, the good military standing and reception of the military can play a crucial role in mending

these problems (Nye 2016). Further, military diplomacy assists in enhancing good relations that can extend to non-military issues. It can also extend to the foreign country, for example, the interests of the hosts in the foreign country can also be pushed from this relationship (Haaretz 2012). The world has seen political prisoners being released from other countries on the grounds of maintaining good relations between the two nations (Colangelo 2014).

Diplomacy has played a crucial role in assisting nations to be able to advance their agenda and national interests overseas. In a case where it fails, the military power came in handy to enable the country to achieve its mission and interests. Although the military was often considered as a hard power while diplomacy regarded as soft power in the previous periods, the distinction has become quite thin in the current periods. Foreign military basing has been enabling the countries with the overseas bases to pursue their national interests with minimal conflict of confrontation. Although some quarters regard the foreign military bases as being akin to military intelligence, the practice nonetheless has been able to prove its worth in the consistently complex global security environment.

It might not be clear to many how the military enhances and boosts diplomatic ties between countries. Most people and even governments are likely to wonder how the military can be “ruthless” and rough to be tactful and handle and uphold diplomatic relations between nations. However, empirical studies suggest that military personnel across the globe share a professional approach to issues as well as a common culture of precision, directness and similar experiences. They understand the repercussions of the war and thus are often keen on ensuring that they pursue each step that will enhance security and foster peace to avoid conflict by any means possible. Moreover, foreign military bases play quite a significant role in supporting diplomatic mission in the overseas countries and regions where they are based. They initiate and advance diplomacy through direct participation such as delivering defense cooperation programs, meetings, and negotiations. The foreign military bases also assist host nations with invaluable advice and through the development of the host nations’ military capabilities through training and exchange programs. Similarly, foreign militaries may assist host nations during a period of disaster through carrying out humanitarian assistance operations as well as delivering relief missions. During such times, the foreign militaries also often carry out intervention and evacuation operations which enhance and strengthen diplomatic ties between the sending and the host countries.

## **IMPACTS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POWER**

Overseas bases create networks that help control regional security problems (Peterson 2012). These installations act as military infrastructure for host nations supporting local missions even abroad. This is the reason why for organizations such as NATO and the EU, foreign military bases are their most important machinery in a country (Zeijden 2009). It is therefore critical to understand that foreign military bases either serve a particular security goal or enhance overall general regional stability and power balance. Most of the overseas bases were established during and after conflicts especially those found in Germany, Japan and Italy while the United States acquired some of its foreign bases to show support and solidarity with its allies; some of which include those in South Korea and England. The policymakers consider overseas military base, with its huge political costs as having the ability to fill the power vacuums as well as balancing superior power created through competition and consensus building among different nations with divergent ideologies as well as challenges and goals and the means for achieving such purposes. Several years ago, Nicholas Spykman noted that “attaining political equilibrium does not come from the gods neither is it an inherently stable condition; it emanates from an active human intervention through political operations. It is futile for a nation to wait passively for stability when miraculous power balance leads to peace and security. However, for a nation to survive, it must be cognizant and ready to undertake confrontation with other nations to enable it to preserve power balance against a growing hegemony of its time.” Foreign nations often select military base locations from free flow of commerce, regional stability and emergence of rivals and international adversaries such as terrorist organizations that threaten the modern day international peace, security, and stability. For instance, foreign military bases have assisted in improving security and stability international, especially in areas where they are situated. Piracy off the East African coast is almost non-existent due to the intervention of foreign maritime military off that coast. Many pirates were captured and their networks destroyed by these installations in partnership with the local troops. Terror attacks have also greatly reduced across the world. Therefore, it is evident that overseas military posturing provides security and stability as well as acting as a projection of political influence and power.

## **CONCLUSION**

Military bases are crucial in ensuring keeping in peace throughout international structure. Even though the world has changed over time and *soft* power started to be more effective than *hard* power, it is evident that hard power still effective

enough in inter-state relations. Hence, overseas military bases are representation of hard power in a soft power dominated world. These bases are crucial in maintaining world peace and maintaining good relationships between nations. These stations have so many positive impacts on the hosts as well. They include environmental protection plans, cultural growth and exposure, political support, prevention of civil strife, and economic growth. With the regulations that are set for the operation of these bases, good relations and alliances keep growing serving the interests of both the host and home country. For good relations and continued growth of these bases, more laws should come into place to protect this co-operation between nations. With the large competition for bases in strategic points around the world, the current military situated at different points should strive to maintain these relationships with their hosts lest they lose these posts to other 'friendlier' nations.

With the liberalists being against the whole idea of setting up oversea military bases due to what they call biased policies and laws, they should understand that these regulations created can be renegotiated to include the issues not addressed in the current laws. Every law and regulation has shortcomings, and with globalization and insistence on sovereignty, agreements can easily be altered to meet the requirements of each country to ensure good relations and implementation of security policies. As a result, nations should embrace the need to create useful alliances especially in this era of emerging terror attacks and security threats across the world. Not even superpowers are being spared with the highest incidences occurring in their countries. Terror networks are growing, and every possibility of an alliance to help curb this menace should be highly welcomed.

Although the realists recognise the foreign military bases as a major issue that has raised numerous concerns, it still stress that these stations have contributed immensely to international safety and stability and in distribution of political power across regions. In recognizing this, the realists state that foreign military bases enhance the ability of the sending country's allies and enable them to be able to support each other in combating international terrorism as well as enabling the sending nation to be able to spread their influence to other nations and regions across the globe to deter any potential aggression by other powers. Therefore, realists recognise foreign military bases as a defensive measure that is vital when it comes to maintenance of security and order across the world.

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