

## AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

### Kenya Monthly Briefing March 2026

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#### Kenya Summary 18 March 2026

*Prime cabinet secretary (CS) Musalia Mudavadi holds talks with Russia's foreign minister Sergey Lavrov during a state visit from 15 to 18 March, securing a limited diplomatic concession that Russia's defence ministry will no longer recruit Kenyans. This occurs amid mounting concern over Kenyan citizens already deployed in Ukraine. Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC) begins trading on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) on 9 March after a government-led IPO raises KSh 106.3 billion (\$814.69m), giving President William Ruto's (2022-present) administration a major non-debt funding source and marking Kenya's first major listing since 2008. As of 17 March, Kenya's nationwide flood death toll has reached 71, exposing vulnerability to seasonal rains despite repeated disaster cycles and highlighting structural weaknesses.*

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#### Mudavadi wins recruitment halt in Moscow

Prime cabinet secretary (CS) and foreign and diaspora affairs CS **Musalia Mudavadi** held bilateral talks in **Moscow** with **Russia's** foreign minister **Sergey Lavrov** during a state visit from 15 to 18 March, with an immediate goal of addressing Kenya's escalating [concern](#) over the [reported](#) recruitment of more than 1,000 Kenyans into Russia's war in **Ukraine**. The **National Intelligence Service** submitted a parliamentary [report](#) in February, indicating that 89 Kenyan citizens were on the front line, 39 hospitalised, and 28 remained missing. The visit also included **Belgut** member of parliament (MP) **Nelson Koech**, who serves as chair of the **National Assembly's** Defence, Intelligence and Foreign Relations Committee.

The clearest deliverable for Nairobi was Mudavadi's [announcement](#) following talks with Lavrov that Kenyans would "no longer be eligible to be enlisted" through Russia's defence ministry. This is likely to be presented domestically as a diplomatic success for Kenya and for Mudavadi personally after weeks of [pressure](#) from families, parliament and local media. However, as veteran **United States (US)**-headquartered **CNN** journalist **Larry Madowo** noted on social media, Kenya and Russia "failed to agree on the fate of hundreds of men 'lured' to the war in Ukraine". This underlines that the gain was limited to future recruitment rather than a full settlement on repatriation, liability, or costs for those already deployed.

Russia's public tone remained notably restrictive with Lavrov [stating](#) "we are not recruiting; we are responding to requests." He elaborated that Kenyan recruits had signed up voluntarily, their contracts contained no repatriation provision, and that any exit would depend on formal contract termination through the defence ministry. This [signals](#) that Russia is unlikely to fully meet the costs and logistics of repatriation and will largely depend on Kenyan consular coordination and family support.

The difference in media coverage was also clear. Kenyan official and domestic reporting focused on recruitment, repatriation, compensation, and the legal and political problem of Kenyans serving in a foreign military. Russia's official [coverage](#) focused much more on bilateral relations, trade, humanitarian ties, coordination at the **United Nations (UN)**, and plans to advance an intergovernmental economic commission. Russian state owned media agency **TASS** [identified](#) energy, telecommunications, geological prospecting, mining, and high technology as priority areas, suggesting that Moscow sought to frame the visit as part of a wider push to expand bilateral cooperation. Mudavadi [noted](#) that according to 2024 data the countries' trade stood at \$638m. While Kenya's exports to Russia remained "modest" he [cited](#) growth opportunities in tea, coffee, flowers, avocado, and other horticultural produce

Lavrov publicly [identified](#) nuclear energy as a promising area for future cooperation, aligning with Kenya's existing [policy](#) interest in building a 1,000MW nuclear power plant by 2034 at an estimated cost of KSh500 billion (\$3.9 billion). The **World Nuclear Industry 2024** status [report](#) shows that in May 2016 the Kenyan government signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Russian state nuclear company **Rosatom** on general collaboration in nuclear technology, including “*practical implementation of...the first ever nuclear power generating plant.*” Rosatom already has a practical footprint in **East Africa**: Tanzania signed a 2016 agreement with **Rosatom** to build a nuclear research reactor, with the longer-term aim of introducing larger-scale nuclear power. Rosatom's commercial presence has deepened through its [subsidiary Mantra Tanzania Ltd](#), which commissioned a pilot uranium processing plant in southern Tanzania in July 2025.

While any future Russian role in Kenya's nuclear sector would not be without regional precedent, it would carry political and sanctions-related sensitivities for Western partners and investors. The potential involvement of Koech also raises concerns. An ARC Briefing source stated that in private conversations, Koech has expressed sentiments echoing the **Kremlin's** position on the Russia-Ukraine war, rather than upholding the Kenyan government's [stance](#) of supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity,

On return to Kenya, Mudavadi faces upholding the challenging task of implementing his diplomatic 'win'. It is likely that the media and invested citizens will closely monitor government's actions on locating missing Kenyans, securing the return of those still under contract, repatriating remains, and disrupting the recruitment networks operating in Kenya.

### Kenya Pipeline IPO advances fiscal reset

The **Kenya Pipeline Company (KPC)** began trading on the **Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE)** on 9 March after the government [sold](#) 65% of the company at KSh9.00 (\$0.069) per share, raising KSh106.3 billion (\$814.69m) in Kenya's [first](#) major Initial Public Offering (IPO) since leading African telecommunications provider **Safaricom's** 2008 listing. This [transaction](#) is also Kenya's first government-led IPO under the **Privatisation Act 2025** and comes as President **William Ruto's** (2022–present) administration [looks](#) for non-debt financing amid fiscal pressure, a heavy debt-service burden, and political limits on further tax increases.

At the 19 January launch of the IPO, treasury CS **John Mbadi** [said](#):

*“We must turn to innovative financing mechanisms to fund our infrastructure and public service projects...The traditional methods of financing our budget, taxation and debt, there is no longer any space.”*

Ruto [stated](#) on 9 March that between KSh15 and KSh20 billion (\$116m-\$155m) from the proceeds will provide seed capital for expansion of **Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA)** under the **National Infrastructure Fund**.

KPC [operates](#) a 1,342km pipeline network from **Mombasa County** through Nairobi to western Kenya, with eight storage depots and service links to **Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi**, Tanzania, **South Sudan**, and eastern **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**. IPO offer documents [state](#) that KPC recorded revenue of KSh 38.59 billion (\$299.4m) and after-tax profit of KSh7.49 billion (\$58.1m) for the year ending 30 June 2025, and that it intends to distribute 50% of net earnings as dividends, subject to financial and regulatory considerations. Mbadi [argued](#) these fundamentals, alongside KPC's transport and storage monopoly and foreign-currency income, justified the offer price despite analyst [concerns](#) over valuation.

KPC and the **National Treasury** [announced](#) on 4 March that the offer had attracted applications for 12.49 billion shares, or 105.7% of the 11.81 billion shares on sale. The allocation [demonstrates](#) that institutional demand underpinned the offer - Kenyan institutions received 7.45 billion shares, **East African** investors 3.86 billion, and Kenyan individuals 464.8 million. **Uganda National Oil Company (UNOC)** separately [announced](#) that it had secured a strategic 20.15% stake (Uganda depends on the

Kenyan route for about 95% of its petroleum imports). Mbadi [confirmed](#) that Rwanda had also bought shares. That regional anchor is commercially rational for both sides but it also pushes KPC's post-listing governance closer to regional energy policy than a conventional domestic privatisation would.

Uganda had also [secured](#) two board seats and veto rights over future appointment or removal of the managing director. Ugandan officials also [said](#) Kenya granted protections over tariff changes, dividend policy, business plans, and amendments to constitutional documents. Although Kenyan authorities have publicly confirmed Uganda's stake and the regional logic of the deal, they have not published the full governance package in equivalent detail. Going forwards, tariff-setting, board independence, minority-shareholder protections, and regional coordination along the Mombasa-Nairobi-western corridor are likely to remain critical watchpoints.

### Recurring floods exposes risks in Kenya's urban planning

Flash floods following overnight rain [killed](#) 23 people in Nairobi and disrupted flights at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport on 7 March, highlighting the impacts of climate change on Kenya. Ruto [announced](#) on 14 March that a multi-agency response team consisting of emergency services, security agencies, humanitarian teams, and technical departments were "*fully mobilised*" to manage the situation across the country. By 17 March the **National Police Service (NPS)** [said](#) the death toll from flooding across Kenya had risen to 71, with Nairobi the hardest-hit area at 36 deaths, followed by the **Eastern** region with 19, **Rift Valley** with eight, **Nyanza** with four, the **Coast** with three and the **Central** region with one. NPS spokesperson **Muchiri Nyaga** said police and partner agencies were continuing search and rescue operations as [approximately](#) 2,622 families had been displaced. With heavy rains [forecasted](#) and rescue operations ongoing, these numbers are likely to increase before the end of the rainy season.

The crisis reflects a recurring structural problem rather than a one-off weather shock. Water, sanitation, and irrigation ministry director of water storage and flood control **Martin Ngaa**, [said](#) that flooding was a recurring issue in Nairobi due to 20% of the city being on low-lying land and the loss of nearly 10% of green space in the last five years. Every year the country endures fatalities due to flooding; in 2024 floods killed [228](#) people and displaced 212,630 while in 2020, floods and landslides [killed](#) nearly 200 and displaced about 100,000. International scientific initiative **World Weather Attribution** [reported](#) in May 2024 that rainfall of that kind in East Africa had become about "*twice as likely and around 5% more intense*" in today's climate, with increased exposure exacerbated by poor urban planning.

Kenya's immediate policy response has so far focused on reconstruction, enforcement, and increasing preparedness. Sakaja [announced](#) on 16 March that the government directed **Kenya National Highways Authority (KeNHA)** and **Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA)** to begin immediate restoration works on the **Nairobi Expressway** corridor, **Mombasa Road**, **Uhuru Highway**, and other damaged roads. The **Nairobi Rivers Commission**, **Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company** and county mobility officials were ordered to submit a "*comprehensive joint assessment and costed plan within 48 hours*" covering Nairobi's 17 sub-counties.

Sakaja further said the county would [use](#) satellite and GIS mapping data covering all river corridors and begin [demolitions](#) along waterways to restore river flow. These measures could improve resilience, but demolitions on established residential land alongside rivers would carry social and political sensitivities, particularly in Nairobi's densely populated estates.

Flood after-effects also extend beyond physical damage and raises the risk of cholera, typhoid and malaria, with public health principal secretary (PS) **Mary Muthoni Muriuki** [warning](#):

*"Heavy rainfall and flooding can lead to contamination of water sources, increased breeding of disease vectors such as mosquitoes, displacement of communities, and disruptions to sanitation systems."*

This comes as Kenya absorbs the restructuring of US aid programmes; [Devex reported](#) that between 2020 and 2025 the **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** committed roughly KSh323 billion (\$2.5 billion) to Kenya with 80% allocated to health. However, due to US President **Donald Trump's** (2024-present) funding cuts to foreign aid Kenyan counties and clinics are under increasing [strain](#) to meet citizens' demands, exacerbating the outfall of climate-related events.

### Planner

25 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** Kenya International Investment Conference (KIICO 2026)  
 27-29 Apr 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** World Health Summit Regional Meeting 2026  
 11-12 May 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** Africa-France Summit 2026  
 8-10 Jul 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** MINEXPO Kenya 2026  
 29-31 Jul 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** Power & Energy Africa – Kenya 2026  
 10 Aug 2027 **(Kenya)** General election

### Chronology

18 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Streamline*. Kenya concludes its role in the **United Nations (UN)**-backed **Multinational Security Support (MSS)** mission in **Haiti** to restore security and safeguard civilians, with 215 police officers returning to Kenya;

17 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *The Star*. Opposition leaders allied to **Edwin Sifuna's** 'Linda Mwananchi' faction of the **Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)** call for renewed nationwide mobilisation against the government, citing cost-of-living pressures and governance concerns;

16 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. Parliament scrutinises the **Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)** over Sh4.2 billion (\$32m) in unpaid legal fees, with acting CEO **Moses Sunkuli** appearing before the **National Assembly Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs, and Human Rights** to explain the delays;

16 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Nairobi Leo*. The **Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Union (KMPDU)** threatens to instruct doctors to strike following the 13 March arrest of 83-year-old obstetrician **Job Obwaka**, charged with failing to lodge the Nairobi Hospital's 2022 and 2023 financial statements with the registrar;

15 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Tuko*. Auditor general **Nancy Gathungu's** recent audit establishes that some top political parties lack functional offices across the 47 counties as required by the law, naming **Kalonzo Musyoka's Wiper Democratic Front** and former **Kitui** governor **Charity Ngilu's National Rainbow Coalition (NARC)** among the non-compliant parties;

13 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *The Standard*. A parliamentary committee opens investigations into an alleged procurement scandal involving irregular payments and supply shortages at **Nairobi Hospital**;

12 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. The war involving **Iran** disrupts Kenya's meat exports to the **Middle East**, which normally amount to about Sh300m (\$2.3m) per week;

12 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Reuters*. Authorities arrest a **Chinese** national carrying over 2,200 live garden ants in his luggage at Nairobi's **Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA)** amid a rise in cases of smuggling of the insects in Kenya;

12 Mar 2026 **Garissa (Kenya)** *Reuters*. Security forces conduct counterterrorism operations near the **Somalia** border following suspected **al-Shabaab** movements, underscoring persistent cross-border security risks;

10 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Streamline*. **Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission** arrests former high court judge **Joseph Mutava** and three accomplices over allegations of soliciting a KSh 10.4m (\$80,600) bribe to influence a high-stakes legal dispute;

9 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. President **William Ruto** announces that proceeds from the **Kenya Pipeline** Initial Public Offering (IPO) will be allocated to expand **Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA)**;

9 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *KBC*. The **Azimo la Umoja, One Kenya Coalition Party** terminates the membership of several key leaders from its **Coalition Council and National Executive Council**, including mining cabinet secretary (CS) **Hassan Joho**, cooperatives CS **Wycliffe Oparanya**, energy CS, **James Opiyo Wandanyi**, and several members of parliament (MPs);

9 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Logistics Update Africa*. Kenya and **China** conclude a preliminary 'Early Harvest' trade arrangement granting zero-duty access to 98.2% of Kenyan exports entering the Chinese market;

7 Mar 2026 **Meru (Kenya)** *Eastleigh Voice*. **United Opposition** leaders, led by **Wiper Patriotic Front** party leader **Kalonzo Musyoka**, call on the government to investigate illegal passport sales, hold accountable those responsible for recruiting Kenyan youth into foreign conflicts, and ensure the immediate repatriation of citizens stranded abroad;

5 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Interpol*. Kenyan authorities launch a new training initiative designed to equip officers with direct access to **INTERPOL's** global law enforcement systems, with the course developed with technical and financial support from INTERPOL's Project Soteria, funded by the **United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)**;

5 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Reuters*. **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** officials visiting Kenya are holding technical discussions with the government, but finance minister **John Mbadi** says the visit is not expected to result in a new lending programme at this stage;

4 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. Kenya halves its debt of more than KSh 16 billion (\$124m) to the **United States (US)** in one year through accelerated repayment measures;

3 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. **United States (US)**-headquartered **Starlink** is expanding its footprint in Kenya through a partnership with local internet provider **Mawingu Networks** to boost satellite broadband access;

2 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. A planned Kenya tea export deal worth Sh5.6 billion (\$41m) is disrupted due to the escalating conflict involving the **United States (US), Israel** and **Iran**;

26 Feb 2026 **Djibouti (Djibouti)** *Streamline*. The largest multinational military drill, led by **United States (US) Africa Command**, has begun across **Kenya, Tanzania** and Djibouti with over 1,500 personnel participating to strengthen regional security and interoperability against threats like **al-Shabaab** and humanitarian crises;

26 Feb 2026 **Djibouti (Djibouti)** *Streamline*. The largest multinational military drill, led by **United States (US) Africa Command**, has begun across **Kenya, Tanzania** and Djibouti with over 1,500 personnel participating to strengthen regional security and interoperability against threats like **al-Shabaab** and humanitarian crises;

24 Feb 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *People Daily*. National treasury principal secretary (PS) **Chris Kiptoo** says the economy is projected to grow by 5.3% in 2026, up from an estimated 5% in 2025, driven by higher agricultural productivity, expansion in the services sector, and increased remittances from the diaspora;

23 Feb 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. Former deputy president **Rigathi Gachagua** re-emerges as a key mobiliser within the **United Opposition** following his impeachment, but faces growing political resistance across multiple regions, including divisions within his Mt Kenya stronghold;

21 Feb 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. Kenya is seeking to expand tea exports to **Germany** and **Kazakhstan** as alternative markets to replace declining sales to **Iran** and **Sudan**;

### About Africa Risk Consulting:

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