

For an update see [Exercise Haruka Storm back on for the autumn](#). We previously reported that:

A British Army training exercise in Kenya has been cancelled amid a dispute between the UK and Kenyan governments over the future terms under which British troops operate in the country.

The exercise, due to begin in September and involving **1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment**, will instead be conducted elsewhere after the Kenyan authorities did not provide the necessary licences for training in Laikipia.

British troops have trained in Kenya for decades. The country provides demanding terrain and conditions which are difficult to reproduce in the UK, while the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK), based near Nanyuki, also supports joint training with the Kenya Defence Forces.

The present disagreement appears to go considerably further than the issue of training licences. Negotiations over the defence agreement have included questions about funding and, more significantly, **jurisdiction over criminal offences allegedly committed by British personnel in Kenya**. Kenyan parliamentarians have called for stronger local powers in relation to serious offences and greater protection for communities around British training areas.

The long-running case concerning the 2012 death of Kenyan woman Agnes Wanjiru has inevitably influenced the debate, although separate criminal and extradition proceedings are now under way and must be allowed to take their course.

For the Army, meanwhile, losing access even temporarily to established Kenyan training areas is regrettable. Exercises of this scale take considerable planning, and finding an alternative location at relatively short notice might not be straightforward.

Both governments are stressing that the wider UK-Kenya defence relationship continues. Kenya has rejected suggestions that the BATUK arrangement itself has ended, while the MOD says it hopes training in Kenya can resume at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

The MOD also says it recognises "the disappointment this decision will cause for those who would have benefited from the economic activity generated by the exercise."

This is therefore better seen, at least for now, as a serious interruption rather than the end of British Army training in Kenya. But it is also a reminder that valuable overseas training arrangements depend ultimately upon the continuing consent and confidence of the host country.

Further reading:

[The Guardian: MoD cancels Army training in Kenya](#)

[MOD Army: BATUK](#)