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ABSTRACT
In today’s interdependent world, states must perform a constellation of interrelated functions that range from provision of citizenship rights to promotion of an enabling environment for the private sector. This multidimensional role stands in marked contrast to the 19th century when states were one-dimensional security providers. Although globalization of the media means that citizens across the world are aware of and aspire to the higher levels of opportunity afforded to those living in developed countries, the harsh reality is that poverty in the least developed countries is rising rather than falling. Some states fail to provide basic security of persons and property in their own territory or to prevent their territory from being used against other states. It is only through the building of stable and capable states that sustainable progress in poverty reduction can be achieved. The concepts of the nation-state and of state sovereignty are foundational principles in international relations. Nevertheless, a state sometimes falls short in performing its basic functions from the capacity presumed by the de jure sovereignty that it is accorded in international relations. It is therefore debatable on how justified the international community should participate in state-building activities thereby intervening in the domestic affairs of a state. It is on this background that this paper seeks to examine the role of the international community in state building in Kenya by making a particular reference to the US and the UK.