



SECOND SUPPLEMENT

TO

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WEDNESDAY, 17 JANUARY, 1917.

War Office,  
17th January, 1917.

The following Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for War from Lieutenant-General the Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C., Commander-in-Chief, East African Force:—

*General Headquarters,  
East Africa,  
27th October, 1916.*

Sir,

In my last despatch I described the brief but important operations which ended on 21st March in the occupation of the Kilimanjaro-Aruscha area.

The strategy involved in those operations was determined for me by the military situation I found existing on my arrival in British East Africa in February. The opposing armies had massed on the Taveta and Longido fronts; the rainy season was expected in a few weeks, and there was no time or necessity for radical alteration in the plans on which my predecessor had been working. When the operations came to an end it was necessary without delay to dispose my forces most advantageously with a view to their health and comfort during the approaching rainy season, and

it became necessary to study the important question of the strategy to be followed in the future operations.

*Reorganisation of Forces.*

(2) Preliminary to both matters, however, was the question of reorganisation of the East African forces, which I deemed necessary not only for the vigorous prosecution of the coming campaign, but also to secure the smooth and harmonious working of a most heterogeneous army, drawn from almost all continents, and speaking a babel of languages. I decided to abolish the two Divisions formed by my predecessor and to organise my forces into three Divisions, two of which were to consist of the contingents from the Union of South Africa, and the third was to include the Indian and other British forces. The Union Divisions were again so organised that each should eventually contain a mounted and an infantry brigade, so as to secure the necessary mobility to enable us to cope more expeditiously with the enemy *askari* army of fleet-footed Africans. In these alterations, as well as in all other important matters which I have had from time to time to submit for the sanction of the War Office, I have found the uniform and prompt support of the latter, for which I cannot be