

THE INDIRECT COLD WAR DYNAMICS IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES OF ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE

AS DINÂMICAS INDIRETAS DA GUERRA FRIA NAS POSSESSÕES ULTRAMARINAS DE ANGOLA E MOÇAMBIQUE

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Abstract

This paper aims to demonstrate that Portugal's persistence in maintaining its overseas territories of Angola and Mozambique led to the adoption of an indirect approach by the great powers and, consequently, to an intensification of the Cold War in southern Africa. Using a deductive methodology and a qualitative research strategy, it was concluded, first, that the Cold War was present in Southern Africa from the 1960s onward, and, second, that this presence materialised in an indirect approach at the economic, military, political and diplomatic levels.

Keywords: Cold War, Southern Africa, Indirect Strategy.

Resumo

Este artigo pretende demonstrar que a persistência de Portugal em manter as suas possessões ultramarinas de Angola e Moçambique, levou à adoção uma abordagem indireta das grandes potências e, conseqüentemente, a uma intensificação da Guerra Fria na África Austral. Recorrendo a um raciocínio dedutivo e a uma estratégia de investigação qualitativa,

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conclui-se, em primeiro lugar, que a Guerra Fria foi uma evidência na África Austral a partir da década de 1960 e, em segundo lugar, que esta presença se materializou através de abordagem indireta e ao nível dos instrumentos: económico, militar, político e diplomático.

Palavras-chave: Guerra Fria, Africa Austral, Estratégia Indireta.

Introduction

“A political solution can only be achieved by strengthening African liberation movements in order to create enough pressure on those intransigent governments” (Soiri e Peltola, 1999, p. 22).

This paper aims to demonstrate that Portugal’s persistence in maintaining its overseas territories of Angola and Mozambique led to the adoption of an indirect approach by the great powers and, consequently, to an intensification of the Cold War in southern Africa, which culminated in 1975.

Since the Atlantic Charter¹, there had been a noticeable decolonisation effort that would have two major effects in Africa, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s. First, as Benemelis argues (1986, p. 11), it signalled the end of France’s overseas empire as the country was facing crises in Tunisia, Algeria, and Guinea Conakry; and of an England that had succumbed to the “Maumau” rebellion in Kenya, that had been defeated by the Suez crisis, and that was now dealing with a laborious independence process in Ghana led by Kwame Nkrumah. On the other hand, these countries and their major stakeholders, who had been “frozen” until then, became “active” when it came to supporting the liberation of the African peoples. This poses the question: If empires such as France and England had abandoned Africa, how could Portugal not follow suit?! Minter argues as much in 1973, in the work *Portuguese Africa and the West*, (p. 13), stating that Portugal, a small and underdeveloped country, maintained its overseas territories ten years after the wave of independence processes that had “ousted” their European counterparts, England, France, and Belgium from Africa. Minter’s opinion was shared by many others, both individual and state actors, and especially by the United Nations.

The Cold War that characterised the International System had turned the world into a space without peripheries². R. Aron (1947 and 1948, pp. I. 13-31) refers to the Cold War as a period of “improbable war, given the similar capabilities of each bloc, and of impossible peace due to their different ideologies³”. This “impossible peace” is implicit in the words of K. Waltz

¹ Signed in 1941 by Churchill and Roosevelt. The document was a first step towards the Charter of the United Nations and established, among other principles, the right of people to self-determination. This was an indicator of some stances taken on colonialism after the 1950s, namely by the United Nations and the United States (Teixeira 1993, p. 59).

² Waltz, K, *Teoria das Relações Internacionais*, (2011, p. 236).

³ Hannah Arendt even states that conflict in the Third World was always ideological (1970, p. 21).

(2011, 250), who notes that although bipolarity was immune to war as a direct confrontation between the two powers, it did not prevent indirectly influenced smaller-scale wars such as those that broke out in Africa, specifically in the southern region. This leads us to the strategy of indirect approach and to its fundamental and permanent role in the Cold War through the paralysis that nuclear weapons imposed on direct strategy (Couto, 2014, p. 233). It is, therefore, on Africa, particularly in the Southern region (object), that we will focus our analysis.

It is against this background that we ask what evidence there is of the presence of a strategy of indirect approach by the great powers in response to Portugal's persistence in maintaining its overseas possessions. We argue that Portugal challenged the status quo imposed by the Cold War, which was felt more intensely in the African continent after the Suez crisis⁴ in 1956, and which led to a transfer of power and influence from the European colonial powers to the opposing blocs. France and England understood this. However, the new paradigm of a bipolar International Political System required great caution⁵ with regards to direct action - out of area⁶, in this case - by the opposing blocks. Africa followed the patterns of the Cold War, which spread to the continent through a strategy of indirect approach.

This article is structured into two parts: a conceptual section that discusses the Cold War and Strategy; and an analytical section where elements are presented to validate the arguments. It was concluded that the Cold War was a game played on the African board and that Portugal greatly contributed to it.

1. Cold War and Strategy

This section aims to conceptualise the Cold War, which is essential if we are to explain why strategy was enacted in an indirect manner.

1.1. The Cold War

The term "Cold War" emerged in 1946, although it only became widespread after 1947, for a number of reasons. First, it emerged in discursive acts⁷. Second, that same year the

⁴ This demonstrated the American ascendancy over its allies, France and England, and gave Americans status and prestige in the Third World (McDermott, 1998, pp. 135-136).

⁵ See the impact of the Bay of Pigs invasion and the subsequent installation of Soviet missile launch platforms in Cuba. The crisis that followed is considered one of the most serious Cold War crises.

⁶ "Out of area" refers to a process that takes place outside Europe and the North Atlantic.

⁷ In a speech on 28 February 1946, US Secretary of State James Byrnes indirectly mentioned the Soviet Union and to the climate of mistrust that was beginning to brew, noting that the US would be prepared to prevent any acts of aggression (source: <http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/dean-acheson/speeches/us-soviet-tension-builds?m=52af5724c3c2e&s=undefined&f=1&free=false>). Four years later, Senator Joseph McCarthy, in a speech on 9 February 1950, stated that "Five years after a world war has been won, men's hearts should anticipate a long peace—and men's minds should be free from the heavy weight that comes with war. But this is not such a period—for this is not a period of peace. This is a time of 'the cold war.'" (source: http://wps.prenhall.com/wps/media/objects/108/110880/ch26_a5_d2.pdf).

US approved two key documents dealing with the Cold War, the National Security Act⁸ and the Marshall Plan⁹. Third, the scientific literature put into opposition two theorists, Lippmann and Baruch, who both claimed to have introduced the term. Lippmann (1947) used the term when he expressed his disagreement with Kennan's article (1947), "Mr X", on the Soviet threat and the need to contain communism¹⁰. For Lippmann, this stance reflected a rejection of diplomacy. In a speech in April 1947, Bernard Baruch also used the term "Cold War" to describe the relations between the US and the USSR. The speech had been written by Herbert Swope, who had come up with the term while thinking of the phrase "phony war", which Hitler used from 1939 to 1940. Lippmann responded by stating that he had been inspired by two French expressions from the 1930s, "la guerre froide" and "la guerre blanche".

In fact, before Lippmann and Baruch, George Orwell (1945), in his article "You and the Atom Bomb", published in 1945, alluded to a Cold War when he reflected that possession of nuclear weapons by the great powers had put an end to large-scale wars, indefinitely prolonging a "peace that is no peace". Despite this discussion, the USSR never used the term before Gorbachev (Westad, 2007, p. 2).

Rodrigues (2010, pp. 1-15) mentions three main approaches to the phrase's origin. The first is the orthodox or traditionalist approach in line with Kennan, represented by Rostow (1960) and Schlesinger (1967), in which the former argues that the Cold War was the result of a defensive reaction (containment¹¹) in the face of aggressive Soviet expansionism. Schlesinger believes that the Cold War emerged from the USSR's adherence to communist ideology and to the totalitarian regime headed by a "mad" leader, Stalin. The second, the revisionist approach introduced by Williams (1959), is a reversal of the orthodox approach, that is, it attributes the causes of the Cold War to American imperialism¹². Westad (2007, p. 2) calls this American stance "aggressive containment". Finally, the post-revisionist approach advanced by Gaddis¹³ (1972) identifies internal and external factors from both blocks.

⁸ The National Security Act was devised to assist the US President in integrating national, foreign, and military policies related to national security (USGov, pp. 5 - Sec 2) and (USGov, pp. 7 - Sec 101). See also <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2017/02/09/dont-retire-the-national-security-act/>.

⁹ See https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/marshall/large/index.php.

¹⁰ See <http://www.learner.org/workshops/primarysources/coldwar/docs/lippman.html>.

¹¹ Containment doctrine was created during the Truman administration (1945-1953). The Marshall Plan and the National Security Act in 1947, the Brussels pact in 1948, and the creation of NATO and of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 were counter-reactions.

¹² R. Ojserkis (1998, pp. 302-306) notes that the expansion of American influence can be seen in four respects. The first was the increasing use of the military (means and forces) abroad. The second was the proliferation of treaties that committed US forces in the event of war (NATO - 1949), which included a multilateral command structure, a European allied command, the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR), and four US divisions, in addition to growing involvement by other member states. In other parts of the world, the United States also promoted a number of alliances, such as the Australia, New Zealand and United States Security Pact (ANZUS - 1951), the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO - 1954), the Japanese-American Security arrangement (1951), and the Philippine-American Security Treaty (1951), which were all underpinned by the expansion of the armed forces. The third was the change in US spending on aid programs. The fourth was the increase in noncombat US operations in foreign countries.

¹³ Gaddis (1997) also contributed greatly to the new history of the Cold War.

There are several interpretations of the term's origin. However, regardless of which approach is used, some moments have become milestones of the Cold War. One such moment took place in 1953¹⁴, the year of Stalin's death (and his subsequent replacement with G. Malenkov) and of D. Eisenhower's induction as president of the United States. Eisenhower appointed as his secretary of state J. F. Dulles, a man who would play a preponderant role in the Cold War through his association with the beginnings of nuclear deterrence¹⁵. For the US, investing on nuclear weapons and nuclear superiority could lead to a reduction of investment in conventional armament. This strategy became known as "massive retaliation" (Freedman, 2013, p. 157). This stance was expressed in memorandum NSC 162-2¹⁶ (p. 22) of 30 October 1953, which established that "in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions"¹⁷. However, once the Soviets acquired nuclear capability, this position became untenable. The logic of deterrence was thus beginning to be truly understood and accepted by the blocks (Coutau-Bégarie, 2010, p. 368). Dissuasion in its facet of deterrence brought several challenges to the Cold War. Early on, international relations were faced with the arms race, the exploitation of space and the elevated risk of "irrationality", for which Dulles contributed with the famous brinkmanship¹⁸ and which could lead to mutual destruction.

But this new powerful ingredient in the Cold War equation, deterrence, also posed other challenges, including the scramble for raw materials. In the 1950s, the US consumed more than 50 per cent of the raw materials produced in the non-communist world, which implied that the spread of communism had translated into losses for Americans. Large-scale construction of nuclear weapons led to the need to establish contracts with foreign uranium producers such as Canada, South Africa and the Belgian Congo, which received subsidies for mining (Dobson, 2009, pp. 127-128 and 352). The importance of raw materials was a constant during the Cold War. It was the case of chromium in the period known as Ian Smith's Rhodesia (in the early 1970s), which led to the creation of the so-called Byrd Amendment¹⁹ devised to circumvent/violate the sanctions imposed by the International Community as a reaction to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

¹⁴ Until then, the US had faced a limited number of scenarios, notably because of the rather limited number of nuclear weapons in its arsenal. As a result, until the late 1940s, the US Air Force preferred the concept of commitment to that of deterrence.

¹⁵ Deterrence is the "art of producing in the mind of the enemy... the fear to attack". Peter George In, *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. See <http://genius.com/St Stanley-kubrick-dr-strangelove-the-doomsday-machine-explained-annotated>.

¹⁶ Retrieved from <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-162-2.pdf>.

¹⁷ In a speech in January 1954, J. F. Dulles stated that "... in the future a US response to aggression would be 'at places and with means of our own choosing'" (Freedman, 2013, p. 157).

¹⁸ This strategy consisted in pushing an inherently dangerous situation to the brink of disaster in order to achieve a more advantageous outcome. This balancing on the razor's edge was likely to lead to errors of judgement with potentially catastrophic consequences (Dobson, 2009, pp. 256-257).

¹⁹ Named after Virginia Senator Harry Byrd, who introduced the legislation. See the interview with Ambassador Michael Samuels by Charles Stuart Kennedy on 22 October 1991. Retrieved from the Library of Congress: <https://cdn.loc.gov/service/mss/mfdip/2004/2004sam02/2004sam02.pdf>.

The expansionist power projection logic of the Cold War shaped Third World countries politically, culturally, and socially²⁰. Rodrigues (2010, pp. 1-15) notes the “international” dimension of the conflict, which had repercussions on the European, Asian, and African continents. The author concludes that Cold War analysis must include ideology as a source of motivation for stakeholders and as the projection of their political and economic interests, without forgetting geopolitics, military strategy and diplomacy. Finally, the author emphasises the importance of the domestic dimension, which is ever-present in foreign policy decision-making. That is, the approach must be holistic, since there is a cause and effect, one-to-one relationship between the domestic and the international levels.

The Cold War was conducted without resorting to direct armed conflict, although the military was extremely developed and numerous resources were allocated to it thanks to the security dilemma²¹. On the other hand, it went through several phases and it was a diplomatic, propaganda, economic and ideological war. Its constantly imminent nature made it a “hot war” (Jena, 2014, p. 21). There are several approaches to these phases²². Figure 1 depicts three phases: 1 - confrontation (1947-1962); 2 – from coexistence to détente (1963-1978); and 3 – from renewed confrontation to rapprochement (1979-1991). The same figure shows the evolution of cooperation and conflict relations between powers during the different phases. Until 1979 there was only one period of cooperation by the USSR (between 1973 and 1974) (Kegley & Blanton, 2011, p. 84).

²⁰ The term comes from the French *tiers monde* introduced by A. Sauvy in 1952. The third world is also associated with “subordinate” or colonised states (Greene, 1980, pp. 13-16).

²¹ The security dilemma associated with Herz (1951, 2003) was the main point on the 1950s agenda, and one of the consequences of realist assumptions. The idea that increasing a country’s capabilities implied a reduction of security in other countries led to a rampant arms race. This security paradox culminated in the production of nuclear weapons (Glaser, 2013, p. 18). According to Booth & Wheeler (2008, p. 7), the security dilemma refers to the role that fear can play in shaping attitudes and behaviour. For Herz, the causes of war lay in the defensive stance adopted by states (Kuppevelt, 2012, p. 7). Herz (2003) explains this by noting the anarchic nature of the IS and the exposure of some states to the dangers of the use of force by others.

²² Jena (2014) proposes that the Cold War had eight phases: 1 - dissolution of the alliance (1945-1945); 2 - mutual hostility and latent conflict (1946-1953); 3 - apparent conflict and adjustment (1953-1962); 4 - thaw (1963-1968); 5 - détente (1969-1978); 6 - new Cold War (1979-1987); 7 – détente II (1987-1989); and 8 - end of Cold War (1989-1990). Kegley & Blanton (2011) only outline three phases: 1 - confrontation (1947-1962); 2 - from coexistence to détente (1963-1978); and 3 - from renewed confrontation to renewed rapprochement. For Dockrill & Hopkins (2006), the Cold War went through seven phases: 1 - origins (1917-1945); 2 - emergence (1946-1952); 3 - global stakes (1953-1961); 4 - from crisis to détente (1961-1968); 5 - détente (1969-1976); 6 - new Cold War (1977-1985); and 7 - new détente (1985-1991). The authors emphasise that the Cold War extended to Africa during phase 4, with the Congo crisis, and in phase 5 they mention Angola in the 1974-1976 period, noting that the Soviet Union had projected its interests in Africa in a balance of power manoeuvre with the US vis-a-vis the Middle East.

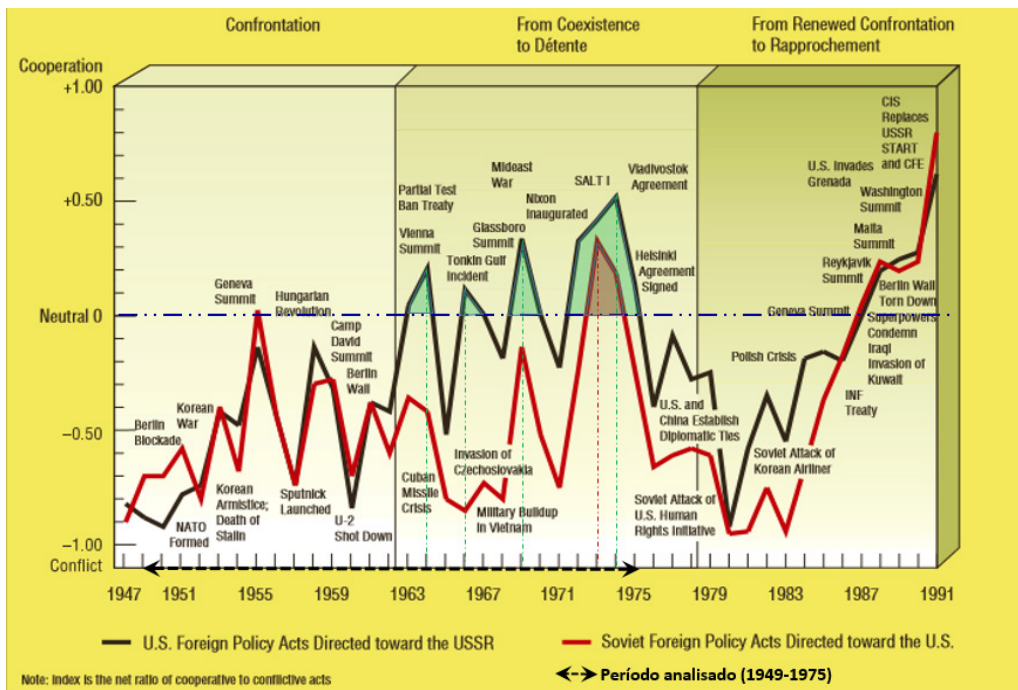


Figure 1- Cooperation and conflict relations between powers in the Cold War period under analysis (1949-1975)

Source: Adapted from Kegley & Blanton (2011, p. 84).

Another theory that can provide a logical basis for the development of the Cold War as a conflict system is games of strategy theory. For T. Schelling (1980, pp. 83-118), the Cold War can be seen as a two-player, nonzero-sum game, since one player will attempt to outdo the other, keeping the game alive or ending it without a decision having been reached, by mutual consent rather than by “winning”. There are two reasons for this. The first is that winning the Cold War could be seen as an intolerable provocation to the opposing power, resulting in a nuclear war in which both would come out defeated, or in some “other type of action”²³ outside the spectrum of Cold War operations, which would be extremely harmful to both sides. The second reason for not wanting to win a Cold War is that it benefits²⁴ the participants merely by existing. Those benefits are, for example, garnering national consensus in the face of a threat against which allies must be acquired (and used to serve

²³ An example of “another type of action” would be the open and irrevocable division and ensuing ousting of a key nation (and its followers) from the global communist movement should there be a winner in the Moscow-Beijing Cold War. This would mean the victor would be weakened against its rivals in the non-communist world, which would be more serious than any weaknesses caused by the continuation of a Sino-Soviet Cold War (Moynihan, 1966, pp. 5-6).

²⁴ The benefits of the Cold War are similar to the past benefits of the “hot” war, or its imminent threat, but with less bloodshed (Moynihan, 1966, pp. 5-6).

a given contender's purposes), as well as the actual ability to express conflicts with other states to satisfy one's citizens. In conclusion, T. Shelling's rationale provides a justification for the indirect approach.

The same rationale can be found in report NSC 68²⁵, which states that the Soviet Union holds "a fanatic faith, antithetical to" that of America, which seeks to "impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world", resorting, to that end, to "violent or non-violent methods" to wage a "cold war". In this global war with extremely high strategic needs, the enemy is relentless and resorts to infiltration and subversion actions. According to the report, a response would have to go beyond containment.

In conclusion, the "weapons" of the Cold War were diplomacy, ideology, propaganda, scientific and economic competition, espionage, and subversion.

1.2. Indirect Strategy

The need for this strategy of indirect approach is made clear in a memorandum on the Sino-Soviet dispute elaborated on 31 January 1963 by the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. This document shows the importance placed by Khrushchev on the economic dispute with the west, as it highlights the need to avoid not only a direct conflict, but also local wars that could escalate to larger ones. Therefore, caution was imperative when encouraging liberation movements²⁶.

The indirect and the direct approach are the two courses of action according to which total strategy can be classified²⁷ (Couto, 1988, p. 228). Total strategy, or "grand Strategy" as the English call it, encompasses a set of instruments at the disposal of a state that enable it to conduct a total war, specifically the political, military and cultural instruments, among others (Beaufre, 1966, pp. 19-23 and 29). It may also be described as the development and use of instruments of power (military, economic, political and psychological) in peacetime or wartime in order to obtain maximum support for state policies, increasing the chances of victory and reducing the chances of defeat (Lutwak, 2002, p. 268). The concept of indirect strategy emerged with John Fuller in 1920 and was developed by Liddell Hart in 1929 and by André Beaufre in the 1960s and 1970s.

It was Fuller, in his article "The Foundations of the Science of War", published in 1920, and, six years later (1926), in his book with the same title, who advanced the modern conception of the strategy of paralysis. Fuller compared an army to a human body divided according to three dimensions: the mind/brain, associated with command, control and planning; the body, represented by tangible means and elements; and the soul/spirit, associated with

²⁵ Report to the National Security Council - NSC 68" on 12 April 1950. President's Secretary's File, Truman Papers. Retrieved from https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar/documents/pdf/10-1.pdf.

²⁶ CAB 129/112: Memorandum former ref.: C (63) 9, *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, 31/01/1963.

²⁷ For Cabral Couto (2014), strategy is the science and art of using the dialectic of opposing wills to attain goals in a complex political and social system.

resilience and intangible elements²⁸. For the author, the synergy between these dimensions is crucial, although “the secret to war does not lie in the legs” of an army, but “entirely in the brain that set the legs in motion”. That is, paralysing the enemy’s brain will cause the body to become unresponsive and have a negative effect on the soul, hence on the will to fight.

Liddell Hart subscribed to Fuller’s notion of indirect strategy and paralysis, first in *The Decisive Wars of History* published in 1929, and twelve years later (1941) with a revised edition entitled *Strategy of Indirect Approach*. L. Hart argues that the indirect approach is the most effective method to throw the enemy off-balance both psychologically and physically, leading to reduced damage and reduced post-war costs²⁹. For the author, this approach should have an effect on the various levels of war, from the tactical to the political, in a one-to-one interdependent relation in which opposing wills affect one another. By considering the various levels of war, L. Hart goes beyond general strategy, which is, as Fuller developed it, tightly focused on the military, and into total strategy. Although this stratification (general and total strategy) only emerged in the 1960s with Beaufre, it has helped us demonstrate L. Hart’s contribution in including the political level as one of the targets of the indirect approach. It broadened the scope to include the use of a range of other instruments, from the military, to the political and diplomatic, to the economic.

In his work, *Introduction to Strategy* (1964), Beaufre describes five models of threat (in the field of strategic options) that cover the strategic field, the first two of which concern direct and indirect threats, respectively. Thus, direct threats are associated with deterrence strategy³⁰, while the indirect pressure model seeks to gain adherence through insidious actions of a diplomatic and economic political nature (Coutau-Bégarie, 2010, p. 269)³¹.

In *Dissuasion et Stratégie* (1964), A. Beaufre reflects that indirect strategy is a consequence of the nuclear deterrence³² that prevented the great powers, namely the US and the Soviet Union, from adopting a direct strategy in the event of conflicts of interest. For Beaufre, indirect strategy was designed to obtain outcomes that do not result from a military victory. Two years later, in *Stratégie de l’action* (1966, pp. 28 and 62), Beaufre states that action is always based on the dialectics between possible gains and losses, or on the balance between the expectation of success and the fear of the risks involved. The strategist divided strategy

²⁸ In: p. 51.

²⁹ L. Hart believed that a strategist must think in terms of paralysis rather than annihilation (Freedman, 2013, p. 134).

³⁰ Deterrence is not only associated with the nuclear component. See Santos (1982, pp. 355-358).

³¹ Beaufre also outlined a successive actions model that combines the first two models with limited actions by forces, a protracted low intensity total war model such as the one waged by Mao Zedong, and a violent model that seeks military victory (Clausewitzian) (Coutau-Bégarie, 2010, pp. 269-270).

³² Deterrence is defined in US military doctrine as “the prevention of action by the existence of a credible threat of unacceptable counteraction and/or the belief that the cost of action outweighs the perceived benefits”. It is a state of mind created by the existence of a credible threat (U.S. DoD, 2013, p. 73). Confusion between deterrence and dissuasion is common, as they are, in fact, interrelated: both focus on the opponent and are devised to influence the opponent’s decisions. The aim of deterrence is to deter the opponent from performing a given act of aggression, while dissuasion essentially aims to discourage the opponent from developing a given capability, and is the preferred course of action before deterrence (Lutes & Bunn, 2008, p. 74).

into five levels of action: total peace; Cold War³³, that is, insidious intervention and open intervention; the levels that involve armed force³⁴, specifically conventional warfare and nuclear war.

Beatrice Hauser (2010, pp. 461-462) notes that Beaufre, like Clausewitz, recommended a systemic approach that began with a diagnosis of the political situation, followed by the definition of political and strategic objectives and of the means to achieve them, contrasting them with the opponent's objectives and means. The final product would be a plan of action for the operation that relied on various instruments³⁵, developed according to phases. These are the instruments that comprise total strategy, which, as we have seen, can be direct or indirect. For Beaufre, the indirect approach represents the minimum use of force and of the military instrument. It is the art of exploiting to the maximum the limited freedom of action in a nuclear deterrence environment.

In conclusion, on the one hand, the indirect approach states that war is constrained by the use of military means and, on the other, that it has no constraints at the psychological and moral levels³⁶. In other words, strategy inspires the conflicts through which a decision is sought, not relying on military means as the main factor, but rather by relying mainly on other forms of coercion (economic, political/diplomatic...), or through which one seeks to obtain a military decision at the minimum cost, even when force of arms is required, usually after an effort to wear down or weaken the opponent physically or psychologically.

Indirect strategy played a permanent role in the Cold War and was of crucial importance due to the paralysis that nuclear deterrence imposed on direct strategy. As a result, domestic wars and the Cold War were the only possible wars (Couto 1988, p. 233). The Third World was a breeding ground for various forms of warfare that reflected the indirect approach analysed here. Expressions such as "revolutionary war", "subversive

³³ Insidious intervention comprises actions that are rather similar to normal "peacetime" diplomatic practices, but which are conducted with a well-defined strategic intent, and therefore also have important political consequences. This level can include: diplomatic actions (declarations, negotiations); domestic policy actions (financial support to personalities, political parties, newspapers, or other means of pressure, with the aim of changing attitudes or replacing a government; introduction of espionage agents and saboteurs, etc.); psychological actions (subversive propaganda); and economic actions (credit restrictions, etc.). Open intervention corresponds to a public stance, which may include granting asylum or recognition to exiled governments, boycotts or economic sanctions, severance of diplomatic relations, provision of weapons, instructors, financial aid, etc. Even in a cold war, military forces play an important role. Thus, for example, the mobilisation of reserves or the deployment of operational forces may dissuade an opponent from resorting to military force or encourage them to negotiate; the mere presence of military forces can stabilise the situation and prevent the outbreak of armed conflict, etc. (Couto, 1988, pp. 154-155).

³⁴ Or "Hot War," as Cabral Couto notes in *Elementos de Estratégia. Apontamentos para um curso*, Volume I (1988, p. 152).

³⁵ Namely diplomatic and military; prior to this, the domestic public opinion would be prepared and an appeal to the international public opinion would be made to isolate the opponent.

³⁶ An idea developed by Beaufre in the work *"La Guerre révolutionnaire: les formes nouvelles de la guerre"* (1972).

war”³⁷, “guerrilla warfare”³⁸, “proxy war”³⁹ and “liberation war” became part of the vocabulary not only of military doctrine but also of politics. Furthermore, they had a broad influence on security studies during the Cold War. Against this background, and because it is commonly accepted in the social sciences *fora* that the wars conducted in the Third World were of an ideological or revolutionary nature, it is pertinent to elaborate further on revolutionary warfare.

*The Bolshevik revolution that brought Lenin to power was seen as the main predecessor of the idea of a revolutionary war. Although Trotsky was also a pioneer of studies in this field, it was Lenin who sought to bring the Marxist-inspired revolution, which had turned into the permanent revolution, to all humankind. However, the true theorist of revolutionary war was Michel Frunze*⁴⁰, whom Lenin and Boukharine joined to devise a new form of warfare. Stalin rose to prominence after Lenin’s death and took Lenin’s permanent revolutionary war to the universal level. But the evidence of flaws in this theory led to the appearance of Mao Zedong, who emerged in a discussion forum at the School of Political War established in Crimea in 1926 and, with him, Stalin’s permanent universal war turned into a total war⁴¹ that engaged all the activities of given state and society. Years later, in 1954, Vichinsky stated that modern warfare was psychological warfare (Oliveira, 1966, pp. 55-59), which is in keeping with the indirect approach advanced by Beaufre.

Finally, the indirect approach can be described at the level: (1) of grand strategy, which deals with economic, diplomatic, political and military coercion; and (2) operational strategy, which refers to the indirect employment of the military, which, in turn, relies on surprise, flexibility, speed and deception to affect an enemy or adversary physically and psychologically⁴². Thus, to consolidate the aspects discussed in the first section of this paper, a model of analysis was elaborated to answer the question formulated above. Figure 2 depicts the two phases of research (conceptual and analytical) that reflect our search for indicators that show the use

³⁷ A subversive war is a conflict carried out within a territory by its population, who may be receiving foreign aid and reinforcements, against the lawful or de facto authority, with the aim of removing that authority’s control of the territory or, at least, to paralyse its action. It is a protracted fight, conducted methodically with the goal of achieving specific intermediate objectives that ultimately lead to the acquisition of power (Couto 1988, p. 158).

³⁸ Guerilla warfare occurs when two opponents battle one another and one of them possesses distinctly inferior combat means, but has not yet reached the state of psychological imbalance that signals a defeat (Santos, 1982, p. 225). According to Grundy (1971, p. 25), guerrilla warfare is a combination of operations in which combatants use mobile tactics to wear down or influence a well-trained enemy.

³⁹ Bar-Siman-Tov (1984, p. 263) describes proxy wars as indirect confrontations between two superpowers who support conflicting parties. This approach was used on a regular basis during the Cold War, particularly in Southern Africa.

⁴⁰ A Soviet officer and one of the founders of the Red Army, Frunze was a military theorist who helped lay the foundations for a permanent and efficient Soviet military machine in peacetime by introducing compulsory military service and the standardisation of military formations, exercises and uniforms. His opposition to Trotsky’s ideas during the civil war earned him Stalin’s support (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017). The Military Academy in Moscow was named after him (Oliveira, 1966, p 56).

⁴¹ Although the concept of total war emerged a few years later, in 1935, introduced by E. Ludendorff, in *Der Totale Krieg*, the intent is not to link his thinking to that of Mao Zedong. The latter’s total war was waged against the political unit vested with power.

⁴² See http://en.specwar.info/TTT_and_S/indirect_approach.php.

of an indirect approach by the great powers in Angola and Mozambique. The analysis will be carried out at the grand strategy level, that is, it will focus on the political, economic and military coercion instruments.



Figure 2 – Model of analysis and structure of this paper

Source: prepared by author (2017).

2. The indirect Cold War dynamics in the overseas territories of Angola and Mozambique

This section will present elements that, on the one hand, represent the presence of the Cold War in Southern Africa, particularly in Angola and Mozambique, and, on the other, reflect an indirect approach. The rise of the global powers during the Cold War gave impetus to the process of decolonisation post-World War II and posed a challenge to European powers with possessions in Africa and Asia.

The decolonisation process was accelerated in 1947 when the British granted independence to India and Pakistan, two states that battled each other in 1965, 1971 and 2002 (already as nuclear powers) as a result of conflicting interests (in the Kashmir territory). Violence also broke in Vietnam in the 1950s and in Algeria in the early 1960s as the French sought to regain control of their former colony. The same state of conflict was witnessed in

Congo in 1960, after Belgium granted the country independence, and from 1961 onwards Portugal was confronted with the “winds of change” brought by subversive liberation movements (Angola in 1961, Guinea-Bissau in 1963, and Mozambique in 1964) (Kegley & Blanton, 2011, p. 110).

Unrest in the Third World, and particularly in Africa, continued until the 1970s, leading to the emergence of new states and political movements, which were left permeable to communist influence. The “freedom” granted to Africans caused the US to open another front in the Cold War (Westad, 2007, pp. 134-136 and 207-210). However, they had to deal with the fact that Lenin, Stalin, and Mao were more appealing than the American political system, which had its sights set on Vietnam⁴³. Moreover, the Soviets⁴⁴ knew, better than anyone else, how to arm illiterates with cheap weapons that were easy to use (Fergusson, 2006, p. 528). They were also counting on Fidel Castro, although they saw him as a “wireless puppet”⁴⁵ (Fergusson, 2006, p. 527).

The Bandung Conference held in 1955 under the banner of the self-determination of peoples in non-autonomous territories was seen by the USSR and China as a window of opportunity for an influence manoeuvre to encourage adherence to the communist regime. That same year, on 27 September, Egypt signed an agreement⁴⁶ with Czechoslovakia for a massive supply of weapons. Czechoslovakia was regarded as the largest arms exporter to Third World countries (Laron, 2007, pp. 1-5). The deal with Czechoslovakia⁴⁷ was seen as the main trigger of the Suez crisis (26 July 1956) and had consequences for the Cold War⁴⁸. It was the beginning of a new era for Soviet foreign policy as the country attempted to present itself as a visible alternative to the west in the Middle East, with repercussions on the military and economic spheres (i.e. by sending arms shipments and technicians, as well as through the construction of the Aswan⁴⁹ dam, which would be nationalised following the Suez crisis). Eisenhower understood this and his message to the US Congress on 5 January

⁴³ This heavily influenced the American posture on southern Africa, which was also influenced by the different administrations; Johnson’s being the one that most neglected the problems in Africa.

⁴⁴ Soviet involvement had a decisive influence on the main anti-colonial movements of the 1960s and 1970s. These movements had Marxism for a political base. The Portuguese resistance to granting self-determination to the overseas possessions made peaceful independence impossible. Many thought that Marxism had become a vehicle for radical nationalism in non-industrialised societies (Guimarães 1992 p. 424).

⁴⁵ The Cuban intervention aligned with Soviet interests. However, as a policy, it emerged from an internal political and ideological process in Cuba (Guimarães, 1992, p. 24).

⁴⁶ The United States unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate a military assistance agreement with Egypt during the previous three years, between 1952 and 1955. Nevertheless, in that same period Egypt received US financial aid to develop the country (Laron, 2007, p. 1). This refusal signalled a pivot away from the west and towards the eastern bloc.

⁴⁷ See also C. Sobers (2014), “Africa’s Czechoslovakia”: *Internationalism and (Trans)national Liberation in Angola, 1961-1976*.

⁴⁸ Nasser believed this was a response to the Baghdad Pact (signed between Turkey, Iraq, Britain, Pakistan and Iran), which had allowed Iraq to receive western assistance by pulling the balance of forces to its side and away from Egypt. Although the Pact served as the west’s defensive network against the Soviet Union, it also affected the Egyptian economy (Skaggs, 2015, p. 31).

⁴⁹ The Soviet Union had been reassuring Egypt of its intention to build the Aswan dam since 1954 (CIA, 1957, p. 5).

1957 laid down the Eisenhower Doctrine⁵⁰ meant to contain the indicators of Nasser's pan-Arabism, as well as Soviet expansion in Africa (Skaggs, 2015, pp. 83-84).

As for the African continent, the Congo independence in 1960 was a kind of "enemy at the gates" situation that provoked imbalances in the security architecture of Southern Africa, imposing a siege on this regional space that would eventually trigger a domino effect with repercussions on the independence of Tanzania (Tanganyika) in 1961; and Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and Malawi in 1964. Through Angola and Mozambique, Portugal was at the frontlines of a White Redoubt⁵¹ that had to be protected from communist penetration (Watts, 2006, p. 236).

The great powers had played an important role in the liberation struggles in Southern Africa since the early 1960s. Before 1960, in the case of South Africa, two leaders (Nana Mahomo and Peter Molosti) of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) were sent to the United States to mobilise political support and raise funds. The African National Congress followed suit (by sending O. R. Tambo). In addition to the US, these movements attempted a rapprochement to Western Europe, to the Soviet Union (ANC) and to China (PAC). The great powers initially provided financial and logistical support to these and other movements in Zambia and Tanzania. Between 1961 and 1975, this support was mainly provided by non-governmental organizations and other non-state actors (Kondlo, 2009, p. 70).

In the case of Portugal, Amaral Lopes, the first Secretary of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), stated in an interview with Dalila Mateus (2006, pp. 64-65) that the Congo's independence was "a torch that had lit the already dry straw...". The interviewee also mentioned that the war in Algeria, as well as Ghana's independence in 1957, had considerable influence on the desire to fight for independence. Similarly, in an interview with Fernando Guimarães, Manuel Santos Lima, commander of the first military force of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), emphasised the support of Morocco, where he had organised and trained his force, of Algeria⁵², where he had gained expertise in urban guerrilla, and of Congo-Leopoldville, where the MPLA headquarters was based. He also underlined the role played by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), China and the Soviet Union.

⁵⁰ This required military and economic support and, if necessary, direct intervention (Skaggs, 2015, pp. 83-84).

⁵¹ The term appears in a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report of 28 June 1962, annexed to a report of 6 July 1962 by McGhee et al. NSF, Box 2, JFKL. The designation referred to Portugal (through Angola and Mozambique), South Africa and Rhodesia. In *The Unholy Alliance: Salazar, Verwoerd, Welensky*, Rosalynde Ainslie (1962) grouped the three countries in the same "unholy alliance". Later, in 1967, the Southern Africa Committee published the article "The Southern Africa Axis: The Unholy Alliance" (pp. 9-11). The group formed by the three countries would also become known as ASPRO (the initials of South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia), a term that appeared in issue 46 of the newspaper *Der Spiegel* (1968, p. 127) and also in *Africa in Eclipse* by L. Barnes (1972, p. 266). In July 1973, on the occasion of a visit by M. Caetano to England, the English anti-apartheid movement produced a pamphlet that called the three countries "the white axis" (In: <http://aamarchives.org/>, "The white axis"). In 1984, A. Amakiri referred to the link between Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa as a "triple alliance" (p. 317). More recently, in 2013, S. Funada-Classen (p. 264) used the term "council of three" in *The Origins of War in Mozambique*.

⁵² J. Byrne (2016, p. 164) notes that the alliance between the Algerian National Liberation Front and China during the Algerian War associated this and other revolutionary-inspired movements with Mao Zedong.

The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) established in Cairo in late 1957 was the result of a Russian⁵³ and Chinese manoeuvre to influence Nasser in anticipation of the Conference of Independent African States organised by Nkrumah, a pan-African nationalist.

However, it was in 1958 that the UAR entered into a de facto agreement with the Soviet Union. It was not considered an ideological agreement, but a "marriage of convenience" whose strength rested on Gamal Nasser's anti-imperialism. It was through its connection to the UAR that the USSR glimpsed the possibility of supporting other African states and nationalist movements, presenting itself as an alternative to the technical and financial support provided by the west (Ismael, 1968, pp. 185-186).

At the third⁵⁴ AAPSO plenary conference held in Moshi, Tanganyika, between 4 and 10 February 1963, the organisation already had 36 overseas provinces as members, including Angola, through the MPLA (Mário d'Andrade), and Mozambique, through FRELIMO (Marcelino dos Santos). In February 1961, the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Fund was founded in Conakry, with a Chinese vice-president and members from the Soviet Union's directing committees. The Fund became the concrete means through which the AAPSO sent aid to the pro-independence movements in Africa and Asia. A second meeting of the Solidarity Fund in Conakry in June 1961 had on the agenda "the efforts for the liberation of Algeria, Angola, Congo and Cameroon, among others..." The AAPSO emerged as one of the key battlegrounds⁵⁵ between the Chinese and the Russians (Kimche, 1969, pp. 93-105).

Holden Roberto, leader of the UPA⁵⁶ and later of the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA), had ties with several African countries, in particular with the United Arab Republic (UAR) and with Algeria, which he visited on several occasions. These countries' solidarity with the cause of the nationalist movements even led the UAR, as well as other entities, to

⁵³ J. Milhazes stresses this idea in *Angola. O princípio do fim da União Soviética* (2014, p. 31). Milhazes also states that the US supported Israel, following the logic of the Cold War. The Afro-Asian Youth Conference held two years later, in January 1959 was another opportunity to recruit young people into the communist cause in Africa (Ismael 1968, p. 187).

⁵⁴ Considered the culmination of the Chinese influence in the Solidarity Movement; this is related to the fact that the AAPSO served as one of the main battlegrounds for the Chinese (who supported the liberation of the colonies) and the Russians (who advocated for peaceful coexistence and disarmament) with the African countries (Kimche 1969, pp. 106 -107). This situation resulted from the second Assembly, held in April 1960 in Conakry, attended by delegations from 49 countries and territories. The African presence was reinforced by the participation of eminent personalities such as Odinga Oginga from Kenya, Joshua Nkomo from Rhodesia, Oscar Kambona from Tanganyika, Djibo Bakary from Nigeria, Ismael Touré, Guinean president and host of the meeting, three teams of observers representing the Black African Students Federation in France, the *Présence Africaine*, and the Committee of African Organisations. The proceedings were largely dominated by the communist, Asian, and Arab delegations. Most of the resolutions had been prepared beforehand by the Cairo Secretariat, which at that time was headed by Egyptian Secretary-General Yusuf al-Sibai, by Sharaf Rashidov from Russia, and by Dr. Malaviya, a pro-Communist from Indian. The members of these three countries, together with a Chinese delegation, were the most active members in the restricted committees (Kimche, 1969, pp. 103-104).

⁵⁵ This confrontation would lead to China's exit from the AAPSO in 1967 (Dreyer, 1994, p. 57).

⁵⁶ The UPA was seen as a tool of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). On 27 March 1962, the UPA and the Angolan Democratic Party (PDA) founded the FNLA. The following year, in 1963, the UPA created the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE) in Leopoldville, which was immediately recognised by Congo President Cyrille Adoula (Humbaraci & Muchnik 1974, p. 123).

break diplomatic relations with Portugal and send weapons and troops to Angola⁵⁷. In line with this support, the UAR, through Mohammed Fayek, the director of the presidency's Office of African Affairs, who was at the origin of the 1964 Fayek Plan⁵⁸ to subvert Southern Africa, argued that African states that belonged to the United Nations (UN) should take joint action against South Africa and Portugal. The choice "...was between 250 million Africans and less than five million whites". For the UAR, Portugal could not make further promises of reforms while hiding behind the USA, England and France. Self-determination was the only possible path. "...all African countries supported the cause of the movements in Angola, and would do the same in Mozambique the moment the people so desired it⁵⁹. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. The first is the role of the UN as the driver that institutionalised decolonisation⁶⁰. The second is the role of the UAR as the state that facilitated the process in the African context. We believe that this stance was related: to the UAR's greater maturity as an independent state; to the revolution of 1952⁶¹, which allowed it to industrialise; and to the Suez crisis, which "ousted" the European powers, opening the door for the world powers.

In 1962, a CIA report⁶² emphasised the complexity of the problem posed by Portuguese relations with the US. The Defence Agreement⁶³ signed between the two countries in 1951 only granted the US use of the Lajes base until 1962, and renegotiations were required. During the Kennedy era, three-quarters of US military traffic to Europe and the Middle East went through the Lajes base, which shows the importance of this infrastructure⁶⁴. The CIA document outlined seven possible courses of action to deal with this difficult situation: (1) the adoption of a two-face policy, which implied calling on the UN and Africa to resolve the problem and showing that the Azores and the African issue were two separate issues; (2) waiting for technological developments that would make the Azores a moot issue; (3) calling on Brazil due to this country's good relations with Portugal; (4) asking the Vatican to intervene with Salazar; (5) supporting self-determination; (6) focusing on economic and educational

⁵⁷ B., G., (1964). *Le derniers bastions du colonialisme en Afrique - 18. Images: Le Sommet Africain au Caire* - No. 1819, 18 Juillet, pp. 20-22.

⁵⁸ The Fayek Plan garnered support in Zambia, which was considered the "base" of terrorist training for future actions in Angola and Mozambique (Meneses & McNamara, 2014, p. 380). Mohammed Fayek headed the Office of African Affairs established under the Nasser administration, which provided diplomatic, political and military assistance to African liberation movements and newly independent African state leaders against former colonial powers. Furthermore, the headquarters of the African Association in Zamalek became a haven for revolutionaries, students and nationalist leaders... Anwar Sadat's rise to power in 1970 reversed this policy and Egypt began to support the US in Africa and UNITA in Angola (Tawfik, 2016, pp. 303 and 305).

⁵⁹ Idem "...La RAU insiste pour la Libération complète du continent Africain..." (p. 46).

⁶⁰ O. Eze (1976, p. 4) supports this argument, describing the UN as a "decolonising agent" in Southern Africa.

⁶¹ B., in *L'Afrique d'aujourd'hui* (1964, p. 32).

⁶² Dated 28 June 1962 and annexed to a report of 6 July 1962, McGhee et al. NSF, Box 2, JFKL, pp. 9-13.

⁶³ The US entered into a mutual defence agreement in 1951, which stated that: the peninsular territory was guaranteed security and that military support could be provided for the colonies, although only in secrecy. In return, Portugal granted use of the Azores to the US for five years, subject to renewal in 1957 until December 1962. As a result, the first half of the 1950s was a period of silence for Salazar, which culminated in 1955 with the country's entry into the UN (Sanz, 2015, p. 156).

⁶⁴ Schmidt, A., *Foreign Intervention in Africa. From the Cold War to the War on Terror*, (2013, pp. 84-85).

issues in the continent and in Africa; and (7) allowing events to influence the “way the wind blew” until it blew the way of the United States.

Convinced that Salazar’s inflexibility towards Africa could lead to a full-scale war with Soviet involvement, Kennedy had to exercise caution. His administration discreetly reduced military aid to Portugal and in 1961 the use of US arms and military equipment in Africa by Portugal was banned via the US ambassador to Lisbon. Salazar’s successive denials of self-determination to Angola led Kennedy to initiate contacts with the Portuguese political opposition, with intermediate rank army officers, and even with African nationalist movements, hoping to avoid communist influence and armed conflict. Kennedy secretly channelled aid through the Adoula administration in the neighbouring Congo and the CIA granted an annual stipend of \$ 6,000⁶⁵ to Holden Roberto (the FNLA leader) in exchange for information and for the reinforcement of the UPA/FNLA against the MPLA. The Kennedy administration also sent aid to 150,000 Angolan refugees in the Congo and provided scholarships to Portuguese African students in exile (Schmidt, 2013, pp. 84-85).

Although the ongoing process of decolonisation led to a wave of solidarity in the African context that called for a united effort, an ideological split occurred in 1960-1961, creating two large African groups in the UN, the Casablanca Group and the Monrovia Group⁶⁶. The establishment of the Casablanca Group came as a shock to the white communities⁶⁷. Three years later, the leaders of these groups met on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa to found the Organization of African Unity⁶⁸ (OAU) (Zang, 1998, p. 3).

As early as 1963, on 11 August, the OUA adopted a condemnatory stance towards Portugal and South Africa, which led to an economic and political boycott that relied on “direct and indirect” methods⁶⁹. E. Ekpenyong mentions Portugal joining⁷⁰ the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). However, Portugal was expelled in 1963 for failing to comply with the Commission’s determinations and with the UN resolutions for the country (1989, pp. 33-35).

⁶⁵ Hoff (2008, p. 105) reports that American support, which amounted to \$300,000 (total value received between 1961 and 1975), was covert and unknown even to the Congress. The author points out that this funding increased in the Nixon era and that it came from NSC 40 (the secret committee) to be used for covert operations (see <https://ratical.org/ratville/JFK/40Comm.html>, J. Stockwell, (1978), Ray, et al (1982) and <https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsdm-nixon/nsdm-40.pdf>).

⁶⁶ The two groups came out of the Pan-African Congresses of 1953 (Kumasi) and 1958 (Accra). For Tshiyembe (2002), the Casablanca Group followed a maximalist strand of pan-Africanism that called for the founding of the United States of Africa and for the continent to become an actor on the world stage. The main faces of the Casablanca Group were Gamal Nasser (Egypt) and Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana). For its part, the Monrovia Group pursued a minimalist approach focused on the right to independence, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. The Monrovia Group was led by Félix Boigny (Ivory Coast) and Léopold Sédar Senghor (Senegal) (Tshiyembe, 2002).

⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report of 28 June 1962, annexed to a report of 6 July 1962, McGhee et al. NSF, Box 2, JFKL, p. 5.

⁶⁸ In: Addis Ababa Conference of African Heads of States and Governments. - Adoption of Charter of the Organization of African Unity. *Keesing's Record of World Events (Formerly Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1931-1988) Volume 7 (1961), Issue No. 7 (July), Page 18217.*

⁶⁹ In: Resolutions and recommendations of the first ordinary meeting of the OUA Council of Ministers, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 2 to 11 August 1963, p. 6.

⁷⁰ Alongside Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and the United Arab Republic; Belgium, France, Italy and Portugal were among the six non-African members (Ekpenyong 1989, p. 33).

This stance of “rejection” regarding Africa was accompanied by an economically-motivated “attraction” to Europe, motivated in part by Portugal’s entry into the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in 1959, into the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in 1960, and the country’s adherence to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in 1962 (Sanz, 2015, p. 166)⁷¹.

The Soviet authorities had been aware of the MPLA since 1956. However, it was only in 1961 that contacts intensified during a visit by MPLA leaders⁷² to Moscow⁷³. The process was monitored by Piotr Evsiukov for fifteen years. Evsiukov reported that in 1963, due to disagreements between MPLA leaders, the Soviet Union was on the verge of cutting ties with the movement and of recognising the FNLA⁷⁴ as the legitimate representative of the Angolan people. However, it was Álvaro Cunhal who avoided this⁷⁵. In 1967, the Soviet Union sent delegations to Africa to establish contact with the MPLA leaders in Dar-El-Salam, Lusaka and Brazzaville, the headquarters of Chipenda, Aníbal de Melo, and Agostinho Neto, respectively⁷⁶ (Milhazes, 2014, pp. 33-39).

In 1961, the PAIGC, FRELIMO and the MPLA formed the Conference of Nationalist Organisations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP)⁷⁷ with the purpose of coordinating the liberation struggle in the territories of Guinea, Mozambique and Angola, respectively. The three organisations participated in the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1966, out of which came the Organization of Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America, its stated purpose being to support national liberation and economic development across the three continents (Schmidt, 2013, p. 82).

On 4 December 1963, GRAE/FNLA⁷⁸ representatives at the United Nations approached the Soviet delegation to request financial and material support. The Soviet Union had been seeking to establish this link for some time, and on 17 December Dimitri Dolidze, secretary

⁷¹ Securing the defence of the Portuguese colonies forced Salazar to allow many sectors of the national economy, as well as of the African territories, to be “colonised”. The systematic opening of Angola to foreign capital followed the outbreak of hostilities by the MPLA. This resulted in the preponderance of American oil, banking, and mining interests (Rosenberg, 1976, pp. 48-49).

⁷² Mário Pinto de Andrade, followed by Agostinho Neto at a later date, the latter with the support of the Portuguese Communist Party (Milhazes, 2014, p. 33).

⁷³ Mário de Andrade had attended a conference in 1960 in Tashkent (Soviet Union). In: Interview conducted by Manuel Santos Lima with F. Guimarães (1992, p. 473).

⁷⁴ The decision by the Soviet Union to recognise the FNLA shows that, at that time, the issue was not ideological. On the other hand, it contradicts the impression that the Americans formed of Holden Roberto when he studied in the United States, which was that of anticommunism (Noer 1985, p. 68).

⁷⁵ In: Shubin (2008, p. 18).

⁷⁶ The MPLA also had a hospital in the city of Dolezzi, near the border between the Congo and Angola (Milhazes, 2014, p. 39).

⁷⁷ In Rabat; the Committee for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe (CLSTP) participated in the CONCP (Humbaraci & Muchnik, 1974, p. 117). See also the CONCP statutes, retrievable from <http://casacomum.net/cc/visualizador?pasta=04604.023.015>.

⁷⁸ There were also reports of contacts between the GRAE and the leader of the American Committee on Africa, Frank Montero, in 1966. Document No. 250, Proc. 940.1 (7) I, of 16 November 1966, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. AHD - S11.1.E10. P3/69604.

general of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, met with Holden Roberto in Nairobi during Kenya's independence celebrations. In the meeting, Roberto expressed the desire to make contacts in socialist countries and said that he was open to the idea of a common front with the MPLA, which pleased Dolidze exceedingly. Roberto stressed that the union would have to be headed by the FNLA, taking the opportunity to denounce an alleged collaboration of Agostinho Neto with the Portuguese authorities. Roberto's nervous behaviour during the meeting later led the Soviets to pay more attention to the GRAE foreign affairs minister, Jonas Savimbi (Telepneva, 2014, pp. 115-116), who would form the third force, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), in 1966. China attempted to establish contacts with UNITA early on, and the organisation would also receive support from the United States⁷⁹ and from the Republic of South Africa (Shubin, 2008, pp. 40, 42, and 49).

The OUA recognised the MPLA on 25 November 1964. This recognition process opened other doors, such as the permission granted by Agostinho Neto (MPLA) to Zambia and Tanzania in 1965 to establish refuelling routes to Eastern Angola. This support by the two governments was decisive, since it allowed the MPLA to open the eastern front against Portuguese forces in 1966 (Humbaraci & Muchnik, 1974, pp. 124-125). Despite this, and particularly in the case of Zambia in 1965, Portuguese informants reported a successful arms transit between Catanga and Mozambique and the seizure of a shipment from Tanzania. When asked, Kaunda stated that he agreed with the struggle against colonialism; however, he did not accept the transit of arms through his country⁸⁰. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. The first is the stance of the states that were former British territories, which, once they gained independence (Zambia in 1964 and Tanzania in 1961) became themselves enablers or force multipliers. Second, the "enemy at the gates" situation that resulted from the independence of the Congo in 1960 was becoming a sign of involvement and penetration in Angola as well as in Mozambique. The recognition of the MPLA by the OUA had further advantages. One of them was the possibility of ties with the African Liberation Committee (CLA) established in 1963 by the OUA.

The CLA was tasked with coordinating foreign support to subversive movements and with legitimising their action. It was a coordinating body for all kinds of foreign support. Among the movements operating in Angola and Mozambique, in addition to the MPLA, the OAU recognised the GRAE/FNLA⁸¹ and FRELIMO (Grundy, 1971, pp. 137-138 and Appendix 2). Despite being *de jure*⁸², the recognition of the GRAE/FNLA was likely related to the Soviet Union "almost" recognising the force as the legitimate representative of the Angolan people.

Nyerere and Kaunda identified the need for a railway line between Lusaka and Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania-Zambia - TANZAM). Apparently, a study developed by the US showed

⁷⁹ See also J. Hoff (2008, p. 105).

⁸⁰ PT-TT-SCCIM-A-20-7-43. Notice No. 7527/E-5-15-29 of 24 November 1965, issued by the Political Studies Office and addressed to the governor-general of Mozambique.

⁸¹ Recognition *de jure* (Grundy, 1971, Appendix 2).

⁸² Guimarães (1992, pp. 240-241) states that this was meant to force an alliance between the MPLA and the GRAE. The OAU's Conciliation Committee would withdraw its recognition of the FNLA in 1967. However, the MPLA had been recognised as a legitimate movement in 1964 and, after 1966, the movement was the CLA's preferred organization.

that the infrastructure did not make sense from an economic perspective. Nevertheless, the leaders of these two countries believed that it was necessary and attempted to raise western capital to build it, but were unsuccessful⁸³. Rhodesia's UDI served the purpose of persuading Kaunda to accept China's proposal⁸⁴ after having refused proposals from the US, the USSR and England in 1964⁸⁵. According to Taylor (2006, pp. 39-40), the Chinese decision to embrace the project had several motives. Three of them are noteworthy. First, it reflected the continued Chinese interest in Southern Africa, as the country was aware that the Soviet Union had begun to control the Indian Ocean through the presence of naval assets and to garner several allies in the continent, among which Somalia. This project was a form of influence vis-a-vis an avalanche of Soviet support to subversive movements. Second, it was also a way to foster economic development in Zambia, which in turn ensured more support to subversive movements without fear of the consequences imposed by the white regimes that controlled the access routes to the sea (such as Angola and Mozambique). Finally, TANZAM garnered favour for China with the African continent because it meant developing an infrastructure that promoted pan-Africanism. B. Semple (1992, p. 11) notes that the project served to showcase China's economic and technological dimension, as well as allowing it easier access to Zambia's raw materials (such as copper, among others)⁸⁶.

In *Guerrilla Struggle in Africa. An Analysis and Preview*, K. Grundy (1971, p. 95) describes Zambia in 1970 as the origin of the guerrilla infiltration routes to eastern Angola, northern Rhodesia, and western Mozambique (Figure 3).

The infiltrations in Mozambique, in the Niassa and Cabo Delgado regions, were still coming from Tanzania. Westad (2007, p. 217) reports that in 1970, the Soviet Union intensified its support to the MPLA in Angola through the Soviet ambassador to Zambia, Belokolos, who granted Agostinho Neto freedom of movement in that country, in Zaire and in Congo. Three years later, on 10 February 1973, *The Point* reported the presence of more than 80 permanent terrorist bases in Zambia (Figure 4).

⁸³ Houser, George (1967), "A report on a trip to Africa may 31 - June 10", *Africa Action Archive*, p. 8.

⁸⁴ Following an agreement entered into on 5 September 1967. The project amounted to \$ 406 million, supplanting the Soviet Union's 325 million-dollar loan to Egypt for the construction of the Aswan Dam (Taylor, 2006, p. 38).

⁸⁵ According to Taylor (2006, p. 38), Japan, the World Bank and the African Development Bank also refused to provide aid.

⁸⁶ See also Altorfer-Ong (2009).

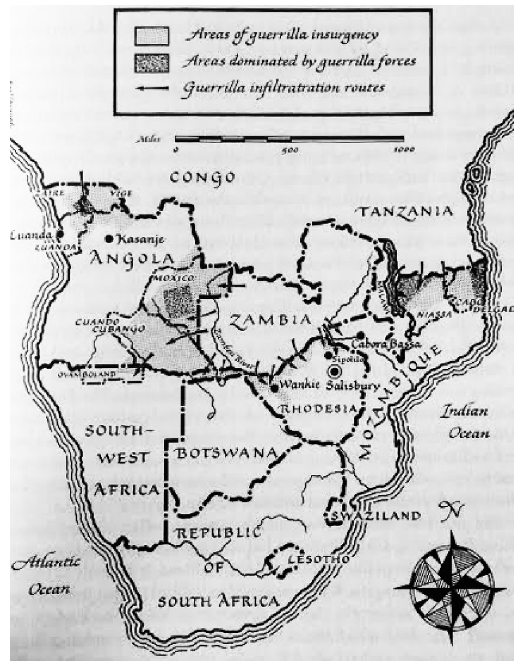


Figure 3 – Guerilla infiltration routes through Zambia in 1970

Source: (Grundy, 1971, p. 117)

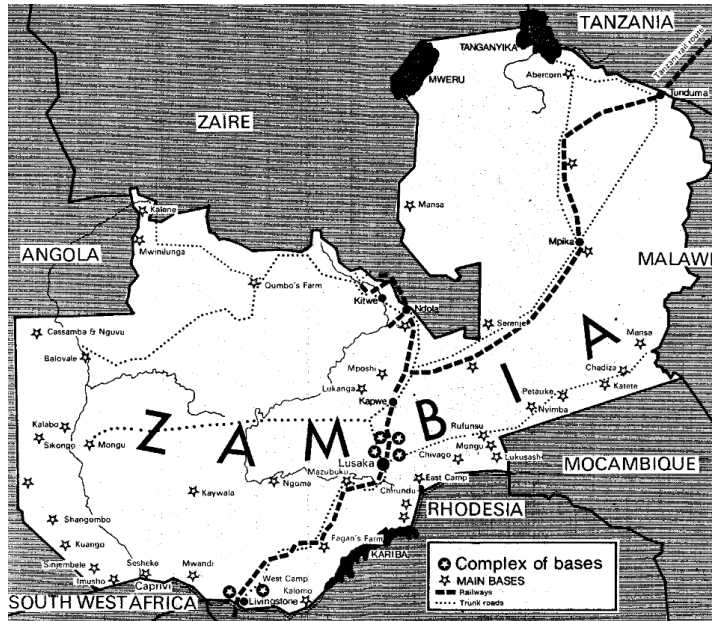


Figure 4 – Terrorist bases in Zambia in 1973.

Source: The Point, 10 February 197387.

⁸⁷ Retrieved from <http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=04317.002.003#!4>.

The news highlighted the presence of forces from the MPLA (about 2,000 troops) and FRELIMO, among other movements, and mentions the provision of Chinese and Soviet supplies⁸⁸.

In the second half of the 1960s, alongside the Solidarity Committees that existed in Eastern European countries, committees to support the liberation struggle in Angola and in other African countries began to be established in some western European countries. There was a very active committee in Great Britain, the Committee for the Liberation of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, headed by Basil Davidson, a British Africanist, and by Lord Anthony Gifford. These “western” committees held conferences, sometimes during the Easter holidays, since many of their members were students. At some point, the representatives of the “eastern countries” committees also began being invited to these events. The event that had the most impact on the development of the strong movement of solidarity with the anti-colonial struggle was the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Portuguese Colonies, held in Rome from 27 to 29 June 1970, which Agostinho Neto attended. The MPLA leader stated in his speech that “We are certain that Rome will lead to a new stage in the conquest of the moral, political and material support that our people needs”. The Soviet Union delegation was headed by the then director of the Africa Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences and vice-chair of the Soviet Committee of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organization, Vassili Solodovnikov. Piotr Evsiukov⁸⁹ described the Rome Conference as a devastating blow to Portuguese colonialism for two reasons. The first was that Portugal, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was being severely criticised for its policies. The second was that the conference was attended by Agostinho Neto (MPLA), A. Cabral (PAIGC) and M. dos Santos (FRELIMO), who had been granted a Vatican audience with Pope Paul VI. This development was a blow to the Portuguese regime because it signified the recognition of the legitimacy of the struggle of the independence movements (Pravda, 2005). Portugal reacted by calling on the Portuguese Ambassador to the Holy See, Eduardo Brazão, to express the profound displeasure of the Portuguese state⁹⁰.

It was only in January 1969, in Khartoum, that a conference organised by the AAPSO and the World Peace Council would bring together nationalist movements from Southern Africa, particularly from the Portuguese overseas possessions. The conference resulted in international solidarity organisations recognising the MPLA, FRELIMO, PAIGC, ANC, ZAPU, and SWAPO as legitimate and official authorities and representatives of the territories for which they fought. These six nationalist groups would be called the “authentic six” which

⁸⁸ Article retrieved from <http://casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=04317.002.003#12>.

⁸⁹ According to *Pravda* (29-06-2005) in “The struggle for the liberation of the PALOP - support by the USSR/Russia”, Evsiukov was in charge of the International Department of the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU), where he dealt with issues pertaining to Moscow’s aid to the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies (<http://port.pravda.ru/news/russa/29-06-2005/8176-0/#sthash.0a7P5bHR.dpuf>). Between 1967 and 1976, \$ 196 million worth of weapons entered into Angola (Kilford, 2010, p. 48).

⁹⁰ In: “Dispute with Vatican after Pope’s Reception of Rebel Leaders from Portuguese Africa. Rebels’ “Solidarity Conference” in Rome. - Continued Guerrilla Activities in African Provinces”. *Keesing’s Record of World Events* (Formerly *Keesing’s Contemporary Archives* 1931-1988), Volume XVII (1970), Issue No. 12 (December), Page 24147.

formed the Khartoum Alliance⁹¹ with the political and logistical support of the Soviet Union. China, for its part, supported FRELIMO⁹² and other groups⁹³ such as PAC, ZANU, UNITA and COREMO. This did not prevent the “authentic six” from receiving Chinese support or from affiliating with other groups (Dreyer 1994, p. 59).

Thomas (1989, pp. 64-65) notes that the Khartoum Alliance, in particular the ANC and the three main CONCP movements (MPLA, FRELIMO and PAIGC), lent a systemic character to the liberation movements of Southern Africa. As a response, between 1963 and 1964 and in opposition to the Khartoum alliance, China created the Congo Alliance, which included movements such as ZANU, PAC, UNITA, COREMO, SWAPO⁹⁴ and the FNLA⁹⁵. In the case of UNITA, Dreyer (1994, pp. 61-62) notes that Savimbi⁹⁶ and some of his supporters travelled to China to be instructed in guerrilla warfare. SWAPO also helped train UNITA operatives in southern Angola.

In late 1972, Agostinho Neto (MPLA) signed a secret agreement with Holden Roberto (FNLA) to create a united front. However, the news was not well received by Moscow and by several MPLA members. In a report prepared in December 1973 by General Vladimir Kulikov⁹⁷, the MPLA was seen as a weakened movement, and the causes for that were lack of training of the governing bodies, lack of value placed on political and educational work, and authoritarian methods that created divisions in the party. As an example of the latter, Kulikov mentioned that supplies stopped being sent to the camps in Zambia because the fighters there demanded new leadership. The result was a suspension of armed actions in Angola. The weakening of the MPLA was accompanied by a strengthening of the positions of the FNLA, which had the support of Mobutu. Internationally, in addition to US support, Holden Roberto also forged political ties with China. This was proof of the MPLA's inactivity in the Zambia and Congo fronts, respectively (Milhazes, 2014, pp. 41-44).

The Soviet stance on the MPLA was also reported on by Johnson (1977, p. 135), albeit in a rather different way. According to the author, the Soviet Union interrupted the supply of arms to the MPLA in 1972-1973, but only to Agostinho Neto⁹⁸, since they maintained their support to Chipenda. It was not until March 1974 that the USSR resumed their support as a way to counterbalance the Chinese aid (which included military instructors) to Holden Roberto in Zaire.

⁹¹ See also Scott Thomas (1989), especially Appendix 5.2 (p. 533).

⁹² In: Grundy (1971, p. 137).

⁹³ These groups condemned the Khartoum Alliance as an attempt to control the liberation movements of the Portuguese colonies and southern Africa (Dreyer 1994, p. 59).

⁹⁴ In: Dreyer (1994, p. 62).

⁹⁵ In: Taylor (2011, p. 13).

⁹⁶ Savimbi was an agent recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency (Winter, 1981, pp. 540-541).

⁹⁷ Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union (Milhazes, 2014, p. 42).

⁹⁸ Ironically, until 1972, the MPLA had been the dominant nationalist force in Angola. Holden Roberto had not left the country since 1961 and UNITA had disappeared almost entirely under the weight of the Portuguese military campaign of 1972. As for Agostinho Neto, he had spent some years in Portuguese prisons and had associations with the Portuguese left wing. Despite this, he was the USSR's second choice (Johnson 1977, p. 135).

The Soviet rapprochement to the FNLA is a direct consequence of the formation of the Chinese-led Congo Alliance to counter the Khartoum Alliance supported by the UAR and the Soviet Union. Kulikov believed the following measures were required: (1) including the Soviet ambassadors in Zambia and Congo in the rapprochement to Neto and Chipenda in order to warn them that the MPLA's struggle depended on the support of the Soviet Union⁹⁹; and (2) should the decision be made to invite Mobutu to visit the Soviet Union, the MPLA's joint struggle with the FNLA in Angola had to be discussed with him, leading to the need to establish contacts with Holden Roberto (Milhazes, 2014, pp. 42-44).

One might ask why the Congo Alliance was created in 1963-1964 but it was only in the 1970s that the Soviet Union took action to "balance" its influence in the region. There may be three reasons for this. The first could be a lack of belief in the MPLA, as mentioned above. The second, and perhaps the main reason, would have been the accession of communist China (People's Republic of China) to the UN in 1971, replacing the Republic of China. This change was reflected in a more pronounced and more ideological struggle (associated with Mao Zedong) against American imperialism, which would have global repercussions. In the case of Africa, China would support the self-determination of peoples against colonialism, specifically in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau¹⁰⁰. The third reason, also advanced by Lise Namikas (2013), in *Battleground Africa: Cold War in the Congo, 1960-1965*, may be associated with ideological differences between the Soviet Union and China that led to competition between the two powers for influence in the Congo, and in Africa in general. This competition took place at several levels, and was ever-present in the military and economic spheres. Figure 5 shows to what degree the Soviet Union was associated with the liberation struggles in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. The high value placed on countries like Algeria, Egypt (UAR), Libya, Tanzania, Zaire and Congo, among others is also clear.

⁹⁹ In 1973, the aid meant for the MPLA was provided to the People's Republic of the Congo and Tanzania. It was also in Crimea (in the Perevalnoe village) that one of the MPLA training camps and those of other liberation movements were set up. There they received ground troop training, specifically: infantry, reconnaissance and artillery. The guerrillas travelled through neighbouring countries, usually Tanzania. Sometimes these guerrillas were subject to PIDE/DGS recruitment actions, as was the case of two Guineans trained in the Soviet Union who would later be involved in the death of Amílcar Cabral (Milhazes, 2014, pp. 45-52).

¹⁰⁰ Document No. 17 (Subject: Communist China at the United Nations) of 20 January 1972, by the Mozambique Information Centralization and Coordination Services. AHD - S11.1.E10.P3/69604.

African State	China	Soviet Union	
Algeria	—	1500	★
Angola	—	300	
Benin	—	20	
Burundi	1	10	
Cameroon	10	—	
Central African Empire	—	1	
Chad	—	10	
Congo	10	50	★
Egypt	60	2615	★
Equatorial Guinea	—	10	
Gambia	5	—	
Guinea	5	60	
Guinea-Bissau	—	30	
Libya	—	5000	★
Malagasy Republic	—	1	
Malawi	1	—	←
Mali	5	110	
Morocco	—	20	
Mozambique	5	170	
Nigeria	—	150	
Rwanda	1	—	
Somalia	5	210	
Sudan	5	75	
Tanzania	105	300	★
Tunisia	10	—	
Uganda	10	65	
Zaire	31	110	★
Zambia	32	60	★
TOTALS	301	11,076	

Figure 5 – Supply of weapons to African countries by China and the Soviet Union (1967-1979)

(in millions of dollars)

Source: (Semple, 1992, p. 38)¹⁰¹.

Johnson succeeded Kennedy, who died in 1963, and, with him, the US foreign policy entered into a phase of lack of direction regarding the African continent. It was Nixon and Kissinger who, after 1969, brought with them a change in the stance on Southern Africa that resulted in the elaboration of the National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 39, the purpose of which was to make sure the region remained on the side of the west (Guelke, 1980, pp. 651-652).

The NSSM 39 provided six options. Option 1 was geared towards promoting good relations with the white regimes in order to protect and improve American interests. Option 2 aimed to foster understanding, moderation, and promoting good relations between the black and the white regimes in order to reduce tensions as well as the likelihood of an increase in violence. Option 3 provided for increased support to black regimes as a precondition for pursuing American interests with white regimes. Option 4 established a limited association with white regimes and a closer link with black regimes in an effort to

¹⁰¹ See also: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/36716747.pdf> and <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/185674.pdf>. Kilford (2010, p. 48) lists approximate total values relative to Angola, but not entirely related to the USSR.

keep some American interests in the former, while maintaining a stance on racial issues that was acceptable to the black populations. Option 5 provided for disengagement from the white regimes and for the promotion of closer relations with the black regimes in an effort to garner acceptance in Africa and with the International Community in light of racial issues. Option 6 proposed an increase in forms of coercion and a reduction of the use of armed force, bilaterally and internationally, in order to encourage constructive change in white regimes (Sobers, 2014, p. 106). Option 2 (the best of two worlds) was considered the most relevant (Guelke, 1980, p. 652).

For Kissinger, a failure to contain Moscow's expansion in Southern Africa could spur Soviet expansion into other regions and cause US allies to question both the American will and its ability to defend/support them. As a result, growing doubts about US determination could lead to a radical change in foreign policy in many countries and in a greater threat to the US. This basis of trust was called into question when the MPLA took power in Angola in 1975, backed by the USSR (Clough, 1992, p. 10).

Although the NSSM 39 was completed in August 1969¹⁰², the truth is that in December that same year many doubts remained on what would be the most suitable US stance for Southern Africa. In a meeting of the US National Security Council¹⁰³, the constraints associated with the UN (as one-third of the institution's 40 members were African), but also with the Congress were presented. It was also pointed out that there had been no real Soviet penetration in Southern Africa until that moment, which contradicts the reports presented above. Furthermore, there was also mention of the importance of the chromium in Rhodesia and in the USSR¹⁰⁴. J. Hoff (2008, p. 105) points out that the scarcity of this raw material was at the origin of the Byrd Amendment (1970) devised to circumvent the sanctions imposed on Rhodesia by the International Community. This measure allowed Rhodesia to continue to sell chromium to the US. However, the US would come out of it weakened internationally. American foreign policy was even described as a "tar baby" policy¹⁰⁵ until 1975.

Conclusions

We aimed to demonstrate in this paper that Portugal's persistence in maintaining its overseas territories of Angola and Mozambique led to the adoption of an indirect approach by the great powers and, consequently, to an intensification of the Cold War in Southern Africa. We concluded, first, that the Cold War was present in Southern Africa from the 1960s onward, and, second, that this presence materialised in an indirect approach at the economic, military, political and diplomatic levels.

¹⁰² See Guelke (1980, p. 651).

¹⁰³ NSC Meeting on Southern Africa, 17 December 1969. Retrieved from <https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/releases/dec10/36.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ Seventy per cent of this raw material came from the USSR.

¹⁰⁵ An expression describing something that becomes more complicated/aggravated the more one intervenes.

To that end, the paper was divided into two parts/sections, one conceptual and the other analytical. In the conceptual part, we began by conceptualising the Cold War, characterising it as a period of improbable war but also of impossible peace. This impossible peace tells us that, although bipolarity was immune to war as a direct confrontation between the two powers, it did not prevent indirectly influenced smaller-scale wars such as those that broke out in Africa, specifically in the Southern region. This indirect influence also played a fundamental and permanent role in the Cold War through the paralysis that nuclear weapons imposed on direct strategy. We discovered that the “weapons” of the Cold War were diplomacy, ideology, propaganda, scientific and economic competition, espionage and subversion.

These “weapons” of the Cold War laid the foundations for the model presented in Figure 2, which allowed us to develop the second part of this paper, the analytical part, in order to answer the question: *What evidence is there of the presence of a strategy of indirect approach by the great powers in response to Portugal’s persistence in maintaining its overseas possessions?* The indirect approach translated into a low intensity conflict using proxies, both foreign (Cuba and African countries Algeria, the UAR, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and domestic (the various subversive movements in Angola and Mozambique). At the domestic level, three types of presence by the great powers in Southern Africa could be observed. First, the presence of the US, which can be described as: (1) cautious, as the country had larger interests with the white regimes (Portugal, RAS and Rhodesia) but also needed to present an image of non-hostility to black regimes; (2) erratic, as a result of the different postures on Africa by the American administrations; and (3) important, evidencing the type of interests at stake. The American approach had repercussions mainly on the economic and political spheres, especially in the support to the GRAE/FNLA and UNITA. Second, the presence of the Soviet Union, which we can describe as: (1) uniform, because it was constant and proactive in its approach; (2) centralised, because it answered to a sole authority in Moscow; and (3) focused on space/geography, rather than on what group received support, which was evidenced by the alternation between the FNLA and the MPLA. The Soviet approach had repercussions on the military, economic and political spheres, especially in the support to the GRAE/FNLA (initially), the MPLA and FRELIMO. Finally, China’s presence can be described as: (1) discreet, given the way it manoeuvred in Africa; (2) ideological, especially in the 1970s, with the transformation into Communist China; and (3) effective, as evidenced in the search for a balance with already occupied spaces (i.e.: the Khartoum Alliance versus the Congo Alliance). The Chinese approach was mainly reflected in the economic and military spheres, especially in the country’s support to UNITA, COREMO and the FNLA.

One could venture saying that the indirect approach worked as a manoeuvre of lassitude. One thing this paper did not explore, however, was how the eastern bloc penetrated part of the Portuguese social, political and military fabric in the European space, also contributing to that lassitude.

Finally, if we were asked to describe the indirect approach by the great powers in Southern Africa in only two words, the most appropriate would be: interest and solidarity, because there was, in fact, a constant defence of interests through the promotion of solidarity!

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