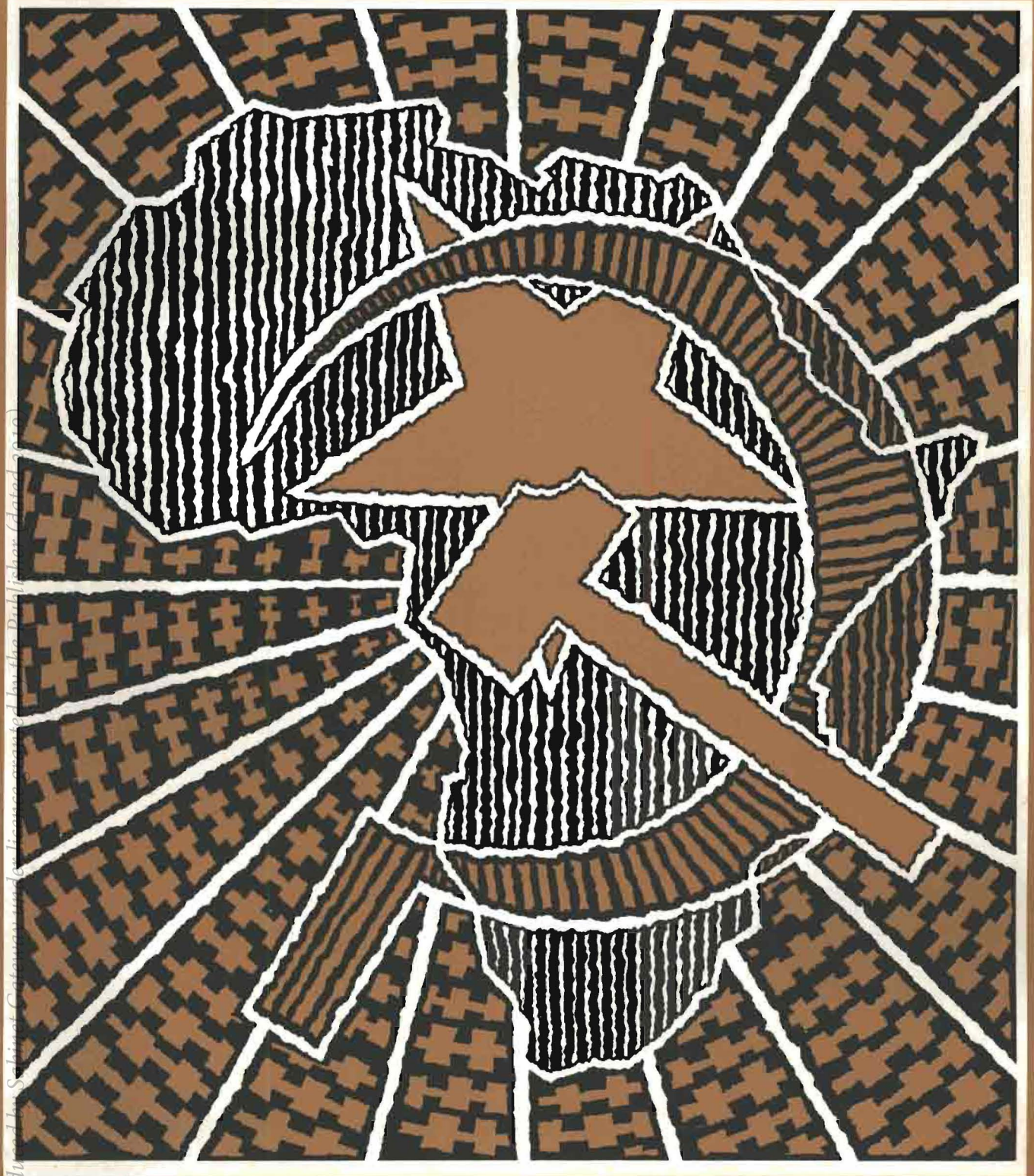


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Risquet business

Richard Cornwell

At the time of writing, the talks aimed at achieving a negotiated settlement to Angola's thirteen years of civil war, the withdrawal of foreign troops from that country and internationally-recognized independence for Namibia have entered a new phase. Representatives of the governments of South Africa, Angola and Cuba are meeting near New York to exchange substantive proposals towards a mutually-acceptable resolution of their differences on these issues.

Given the confidentiality of the diplomatic exchanges, which is usually breached only in the interests of propaganda or disinformation, and the lack of reliable reports on the course of continuing military operations in the Angola-Namibia region it is difficult for interested observers to explain what is happening, what are the intentions of the participants in the discussions — as individuals or as representatives of their respective governments — or to estimate the likelihood of an agreement being reached. Indeed, even those most intimately connected with the proceedings will differ in their interpretations of what is going on.

All that we can sensibly do is attempt to distinguish the outlines of the probable interests of the protagonists and to speculate about the broader considerations that inform their actions and attitudes during the negotiations. Even if we succeed in doing this, and even if we conclude, perhaps, that all parties are genuinely committed to the realization of a regional peace settlement, we should bear in mind that even sterling intentions are no guarantee of success.

As we shall see, the issues in question are so complex and so tightly interwoven that to unravel them in accordance with some predetermined time-scale will require a blend of resolve and sensitivity such as one might associate with bomb-disposal — and that on the part of all concerned, from the conclusion of an agreement to the last stages of its implementation.

It is not, as some people aver, a matter of *either* talking or fighting — the two activities can be complementary. Even as the peace process is under way, the contending armies will continue to manoeuvre for advantage, either to strengthen the negotiating position of their politicians and diplomats, or to prepare against the possible failure of the talks. Under these circumstances there must be a good chance that the peace process will suffer interruption — even sabotage — either by accident or design.

That the process is under way at all is due in no small measure to the unusual concord between the superpowers

about the desirability of a regional peace settlement. This is not to say that Angola and Namibia dominate the foreign policy concerns of either the USA or USSR, indeed, one may question the depth and durability of their commitment to a solution should the principals prove reluctant or obstinate. What leverage the superpowers are able or willing to exert also remains to be seen.

In the case of the United States the talks have begun very late in President Reagan's term of office. That the United States is admitted as mediator is something of a surprise, given its refusal to recognize the MPLA government or to abandon its support for Unita, its known aversion to Castro's Cuba and its supposedly soft stance on South Africa's occupation of Namibia. Yet no one has worked more diligently and skilfully to shape an environment conducive to negotiation than Reagan's much-maligned Under-Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker.

Considering the complexity of the American political and bureaucratic scene, with its plethora of interests, personalities and government agencies — all competing for influence in full view of a fickle public — it would be foolhardy to predict what course events will take, especially in a presidential election year. It must be assumed, however, that the new administration will appoint someone else in Crocker's place, and this is bound to have a considerable impact on the handling of the talks — especially if any of the participants were to perceive the change as altering significantly the diplomatic balance.

Nevertheless, if the momentum of the current series of discussions can be sustained, any administration in Washington would welcome a settlement which would secure the withdrawal of Cuba's expeditionary forces, legitimize official relations with a country whose foreign exchange earnings already depend largely on the operations of American oil companies, and end the embarrassing Namibian tragedy. Western business, too, would welcome the end of hostilities, since this would open Angola's vast potential for commercial exploitation as the country rebuilds its war-ravaged economy.

The mediating role of the United States is currently being facilitated by a Soviet government that has come to regard involvement in distant regional conflicts as an unnecessary and potentially dangerous irritant in its relations with the United States and its allies. The overseas adventures of the past decade or so are now regarded as an expensive luxury, in that they both fuel the arms race and deprive the USSR of

access to Western investment and technology. This is not to say that the USSR can afford simply to walk away from the Angola/Namibia conflict. Though the region is peripheral to Moscow's core foreign policy interests, any agreement to which the superpowers append their signatures as co-guarantors must be at least vaguely consistent with the broader international stance of the USSR, if only to bolster its credibility in the Third World.

The current negotiations may well further reinforce the improvement in Soviet-US relations, for Crocker is keeping his Soviet counterpart informed of developments and the latter appears to be using his good offices to promote the settlement process. In addition to demonstrating that it can co-operate with the USA in the international arena the USSR implicitly receives recognition of its status as a responsible global power. By extension, this reflects favourably on Secretary-General Gorbachev at a time when considerations of personal image are bound to play a significant part in determining his fortunes domestically.

The extent to which the continuation of Soviet co-operation depends upon Gorbachev's political survival probably concerns those who hope for a speedy resolution of the Southern African conflicts. In his handling of internal policy the Soviet leader has committed himself to finding solutions to problems of such magnitude that many observers predict that he will be overwhelmed by them, despite the brave and successful start he has made. Should his policy of restructuring fail to achieve significant results, or should he fall victim to the reaction of party and state officials whose careers he appears to threaten, then the world may face a return to the international adventurism favoured by his predecessors. In short, the window of opportunity in Southern Africa, opened by Gorbachev's *perestroika*, may close again within a couple of years. This is a consideration that will affect the perceptions of all of the participants in the current talks.

In Luanda President dos Santos seems to be well in control of the MPLA and its government, and appears to support those of his colleagues who argue that if Angola is to survive, let alone prosper, then the war must be brought to an end, his government universally recognized and more cordial relations sought with the West.

The failure of the dry-season offensive of 1987, aimed ultimately at the destruction of Unita's headquarters at Jamba, represented a serious setback to those in the Angolan government who maintained that a primarily military solu-

tion to the civil war was possible. Despite intensive training and the deployment of highly-sophisticated military equipment, Luanda's Fapla forces were unable to make significant permanent inroads into Unita's base areas in the south-east of the country. Instead they evidently suffered heavy casualties before withdrawing to Cuito Cuanavale.

No doubt those in Luanda who incline towards a military decision will argue that their reverses were due largely to South African intervention and to American weapons supply. They may believe that the next US administration will be willing to abandon Unita, and, encouraged by the recent forward strategy of the Cubans and by the augmented air and anti-air capability of the combined Cuban-Fapla forces, may think it possible to neutralize South Africa's intervention in future. In other words, there may be a resurgence in the influence of those who maintain that negotiations are secondary, and at best a corollary, to a renewed and conclusive military effort which would make redundant any further political or diplomatic concessions on Luanda's part. Perceptions of significant shifts in the local military balance will therefore have a direct influence upon the negotiating postures adopted at the conference table, though it is also safe to assume that any large-scale campaign would depend upon Soviet willingness to supply the military hardware and financial backing for such an expensive enterprise.

Obviously the relative weight accorded in Luanda to the arguments of the 'peace' and 'war' factions — which should probably be seen as shading off into each other rather than as being irreconcilably opposed — will depend upon the actions of the other protagonists and the demands made upon the MPLA during the course of negotiations.

It is in this context that the role of Unita comes to the fore, along with the issue of "national reconciliation" in Angola, now being raised by South Africa and some elements in the US government as an essential component of any comprehensive peace plan. Neither Pretoria nor Washington has ever recognized the legitimacy of the MPLA government, insisting that it came to power by force of arms — largely foreign — after the abrogation of the Alvor accord in 1975. In order to bring the civil war to a close, it is argued, Luanda must consent to the holding of multi-party elections to return a democratic government representative of all Angola's peoples.

Since Dos Santos has hitherto refused publicly even to negotiate with Unita, claiming that the latter is simply a

bandit surrogate for South Africa, he is likely to regard such a concession as impossibly humiliating. It is more probable that, rather than consent to the relaxation of the MPLA's hold on power in Luanda, Dos Santos will wait upon the chance of a more sympathetic figure occupying the White House, while concentrating on the linkage of a Cuban withdrawal with South Africa's removal of its forces from Namibia. It is doubtful, however, whether such a strategy, even if it proved acceptable, would prove fatal to Unita. Though the movement would undoubtedly be weakened, it could probably continue its insurgency across much of Angola, disrupting the economy and compelling the authorities to devote an unacceptably high proportion of their resources to combatting an elusive and destructive enemy on terms of his own choosing — and that at a time when oil revenues are falling and development funds are at a premium.

As has been demonstrated elsewhere in Africa, rebel movements that can avoid engagements with superior conventional forces are frequently able to sustain a level of brigandage that can lay waste a fragile rural infrastructure. For this reason, Dos Santos might be ultimately persuaded to swallow his pride and conclude some sort of agreement with Unita, perhaps in exchange for gains on more fundamental issues.

This brings us to the Cubans, whose role has suddenly assumed a new prominence of late. Of all the actors upon the regional stage they would seem to have the least to gain from a peaceful settlement — particularly when this would involve having to reabsorb tens of thousands of young men into an economy in which unemployment is rampant. This, together with the recent large-scale reinforcement of their troops in southern Angola, may be of some concern even to the MPLA leadership. It is one thing to call on the aid of more powerful allies, it is quite another to remain in control of one's protectors once key interests begin to differ and a change of strategy is called for.

It may be that the Soviets can exercise a measure of control on Luanda's behalf, but though there certainly has been a measure of conformity between Moscow's interests and Havana's actions in the international arena, the argument that Cuba's behaviour in Africa is explicable primarily in terms of its role as a Soviet puppet has never been particularly convincing. Such conspiracy theories provide simple, analytically undemanding explanations which ignore the numerous considerations that inform the formulation of foreign policy and the myriad accidents that influence its execution.

President Castro, for example, has been aiding the MPLA since the early 1960s, and continued to do so even though the USSR interrupted its support in 1973–1974. In fact Cuba has much more profound historical ties with Angola, which was the ancestral homeland of many of its people, who were transported to the "New World" as slaves, victims thus of capitalist-imperialist oppression. Remember, too, that the major Cuban intervention of 1975 which saved the MPLA was codenamed "Operation Carlotta" after a slave who died leading a revolt against the island's sugar plantation owners in the nineteenth century. How heavily such romantic considerations weigh in the popular mind in Cuba, especially in comparison with the long casualty lists from the Angolan front, may be of mar-

ginal significance given the nature of the Cuban political system. However, they do provide a handy reference point to Castro as he attempts to compensate for his inability to cope with Cuba's intractable economic problems by assuming the role of spokesman for the "Third World". Castro's international prominence is by no means irrelevant to his regime's survival, and in Angola, as nowhere else, Cuba's prestige is at stake — especially since aspersions have been cast upon the courage and ability of its soldiers.

Though Moscow can exercise considerable influence upon Havana, Castro could place Gorbachev in an extremely embarrassing position if the pressure were to become too overt, by playing Cuba's appeal to socialist solidarity against the USSR's uncertain brand of reformist Marxism.

There are other considerations which may constrain the Cuban government towards caution, the risk of major military defeat apart. As the Soviets reduce their financial support to Cuba, some measure of rapprochement with the USA might become economically desirable. With a new administration in Washington it might also become more of a possibility. This would, however, remain contingent upon the withdrawal, or drastic reduction, of Cuban forces in Angola.

At present, however, it would seem that the key to a Cuban withdrawal is to be found in an ironic inversion of the original "linkage" proposal. If Castro could claim to have been instrumental in securing that most elusive of international prizes, the independence of Namibia, presenting it as a major defeat for South Africa and a penultimate step towards the final liberation of the entire sub-continent, he would probably regard honour as having been well satisfied.

Finally then, what about South Africa? Until fairly recently it may have appeared that time was on Pretoria's side in the Angola/Namibia conflict. Swapo's military capacity was shackled, Unita was carrying the war to ever more distant parts of Angola, and while the Cubans were present they were little involved in the south of the country. Over the last few years, however, a defence line has been constructed in southern Angola, stretching from Namibe on the coast to Cuito Cuanavale some 800 km to the east. It was from this line that Fapla launched its annual offensive against Unita last year. Though the attacking forces were repulsed with heavy loss, they themselves inflicted casualties of an unusually high order, particularly on Unita. This indicated to Pretoria that the war was likely to escalate, and that the costs, both in financial and human terms, would rise as the enemy deployed ever-larger amounts of advanced weaponry.

It was against this background that new talks began about finding a way to end the fighting. Since then Cuba has moved thousands of well-equipped troops into the southwest of Angola, fairly close to the Namibian border, and serious clashes between them and South African forces have already occurred.

Having become used to news of military victories over the years, the white South African public is unlikely to cope well with costly reverses. For this reason high-risk operations aimed at inflicting comprehensive defeat upon the Cuban-Fapla forces in southern Angola seem improbable, unless Swapo exploits the current situation to increase its activities in northern Namibia to unacceptable levels.

In the absence of any clear political strategy to cope with a crisis, however, it is easy for short-term tactical considerations to assert their precedence, long-term interests notwithstanding. When hostile forces make contact, the imperatives of military operations quickly develop a logic of their own, as commanders improvise in reaction to the dangers and opportunities of the immediate situation. In addition, once casualties are suffered an atmosphere is created in which it may be difficult to sell the idea of compromise to an electorate deprived of accurate information and reared on an uncomplicated political diet.

What are the diplomatic options? At one stage it appeared that Pretoria might attempt to drive a wedge between Luanda and Havana — whose interests are by no means identical. In this way it might have been possible to de-link the Namibia issue altogether, pressuring Unita's Dr Savimbi to accept peace in Angola on terms favourable to the MPLA in exchange for the latter's denial of facilities to Swapo and the ANC. Such an agreement would have enabled Luanda to dispense with the Cubans' expensive services.

Whether such an accord was ever feasible is open to question: it certainly seems too late now, when all the other principals at the talks are insisting on linkage being maintained. This leaves Pretoria with little choice but to grasp the Namibian nettle, however unpleasant the prospect.

What realignments might occur among Namibia's internal parties given the prospect of open elections in the near future is anyone's guess. Certainly Pretoria has had little success so far in encouraging the creation of a political alliance capable of defeating Swapo at polls held in terms of UN Resolution 435. What happens then, if Namibian independence is perceived to come about as the result of pressure from Angola, Cuba and Swapo, and this is followed by the latter's victory in elections? It may be that Namibia *per se* is of limited strategic importance and that South Africa's continued sovereignty over Walvis Bay would constrain the activities of a "radical" government in Windhoek. Nevertheless, Pretoria has to be able to represent the results of any

negotiated settlement as a rolling back of the revolutionary tide, in accordance with South Africa's declared interests as a regional power.

By its continued emphasis on the essentially ideological nature of regional conflicts Pretoria has thus locked itself into a domestic position which restricts its room for manoeuvre in the current negotiations. Anything perceived as a defeat in Namibia is likely to be exploited most effectively by opposition parties to the right of the government: it will also have a dangerous demonstration effect in South Africa's black townships, which will further inflame the white right-wing.

If the preceding analysis is accepted, what courses lay open to Pretoria?

It can persist with its attempts at de-linkage or even re-linkage, insisting that elections in Namibia are conditional upon a similar process taking place in Angola; it can try to obtain significant modifications to Resolution 435; it can seek to draw out the implementation of an independence agreement; it can take steps to nullify any domestic political reaction that would threaten regime survival; or it can pursue an essentially military option regardless of the consequences.

In conclusion, despite the current expressions of optimism, we should bear in mind that any settlement will be incomplete and open to the criticism that it fails to address certain aspects of the conflict. At best an agreement will redefine the shape and context of regional tensions. Each of the actors will do his best to see that such a redefinition takes place to his advantage, in so far as circumstances permit.

At present it would be premature to anticipate the cessation of hostilities. Nevertheless, all the combatants must be aware that continuing to wage war involves the implicit risk of suffering military defeat. As things stand, there is no way that the losers could restrict the consequences of such a defeat to the battlefield itself. □

Is there a new Soviet approach to South Africa?

Putting the Starushenko/Goncharov controversy into perspective

Dr Winrich Kühne, head of the Africa Department at the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik in Ebenhausen, West Germany, analyses Soviet policy towards Southern Africa in the context of Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost".

Recent statements about South Africa by leading Soviet academics have caused quite a stir in South Africa and in the Western press. In December 1986, the London-based bulletin *Africa Analysis* published a short piece by a Western scholar who had just come back from intensive talks with Soviet Africanists and diplomats in Moscow.¹ In it he argued that Soviet thinking on developments in Southern Africa might be quite different from what it is still believed to be in South Africa and in the West. He was specifically struck by two sets of observations:

- quite a number of Soviet experts seemed to be worried rather than enthusiastic about the escalation of violence in the South African townships in the mid-1980s;
- the more realistic Soviet Africanists and experts on developing countries seemed to have lost faith in the idea that Africa will ever advance to socialism; with regard to post-apartheid South Africa, they asserted that objective factors would compel it to maintain its close economic co-operation with the Western industrialized countries; "There are objective factors which cannot be manipulated by ideology" is a sentence often heard from economists.

A statement by a deputy-director of the Africa Institute of the Soviet Aca-

demy of Science gives credence to this remarkable change in Soviet thinking on Southern Africa. At the second Soviet-African Conference "for Peace, Cooperation and Social Progress" in June 1986, Gleb Starushenko told the audience that in South Africa the "anti-racist forces do not put forward plans for a broad nationalization of capitalist property as indispensable and they are ready to give the bourgeoisie the relevant guarantee". He also encouraged the ANC to "work out comprehensive guarantees for the white population which could be implemented after the elimination of the regime of apartheid".²

For those familiar with constitutional thinking in South Africa, Starushenko's statement was redolent of Progressive Federal Party (PFP) policy. His ideas about safeguarding white minority rights have much in common with the PFP's thinking and with the Kwazulu/Natal Indaba constitutional proposal of 1986/87. The assessment in *Africa Analysis* ended by cautioning that Starushenko's speech should not be taken as official Soviet policy, nevertheless his statements were more than a reflection of his personal views.

This interpretation did not remain unchallenged: it upset parts of the South African Communist Party (SACP). In the official organ of the party, *The African Communist*, the article in *Africa Analysis* was dismissed as a tendentious

piece, full of assertions, but short of evidence.³ At no time, the authors asserted, had Soviet political figures, party functionaries or academics, ever expressed "the kind of scepticism reported in *Africa Analysis*" either "to those in the movement or in their research and published works". With respect to Starushenko's statement, they pointed out that "his view does not represent or claim to represent the views of the CPSU or of the Soviet Government" (which in fact *Africa Analysis* did not claim) and added that the ANC delegation and many Soviet scientists took issue with Starushenko in a comradely manner.

In June 1987 another deputy-director of Moscow's Africa Institute, Victor Goncharov, entered the debate. In Harare he took part in a conference on Southern African regional security, jointly hosted by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies and the University of Zimbabwe. In an interview with the South African journal *Work in Progress*, he explicitly distanced himself from Starushenko's remarks on white minority rights. He made it clear that Starushenko was, in fact, putting forward only his personal views and that these reflected neither the views of the Institute nor those of the Soviet government.⁴

The sharp reaction in *The South*

African Communist and the divergent statements of Starushenko and Goncharov created some confusion among Western journalists, and particularly in South Africa, as to whether there is a significant change in Soviet policy towards South Africa. Dr Philip Nel, the director of the Institute for Soviet Studies at Stellenbosch University, not only perceived a rift between Starushenko and Goncharov, but also between Starushenko and a younger member of the Africa Institute, Vladimir Tikhomirov.⁵ Tikhomirov had just published the first thorough Soviet study on white politics in South Africa, entitled "The party of apartheid — The socio-political evolution of South Africa's National Party" (in Russian). In an interview for the Johannesburg newspaper *The Star*, Nel stated that this book directly contradicted Starushenko's message. In fact, he was struck by the fairly rigid and dogmatic, although well documented, Leninist approach in Tikhomirov's book.

Nel's interview in *The Star* also showed how formidable is the task of interpreting Soviet politics in a period of change. Late in the summer of 1987 he had visited Moscow in an attempt to discover what was happening, especially concerning Soviet policy in Southern Africa. He was able to speak with a number of Soviet Africanists and with decision-makers in bodies like the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He found that there was no fundamental contradiction between the thinking of Tikhomirov and Starushenko. On the contrary, since Tikhomirov had acquired a comprehensive understanding of white politics through the research for his book, he had been heavily involved in drafting Starushenko's speech, including the parts on white minority rights. Since the publication of the article in *Africa Analysis*, most press comment on the Starushenko speech has tended to place too much emphasis on the apparent controversy between him and Goncharov. This is a common mistake on the part of journalists with insufficient experience in analysing Soviet politics. Unfortunately, this has created the impression that there is a fundamental difference between these two views on the future orientation of Soviet policy towards South Africa.

As this article will show, there is no fundamental contradiction between the two leading members of the Africa Institute. In fact, apart from the question of white minority rights, they agree on almost everything. And since I am the author of the then anonymously published piece in *Africa Analysis*, I feel that it is necessary to place the Starushenko/Goncharov controversy into perspective again.

The background of "new realism" under Gorbachev

A more comprehensive look at Soviet policy under Gorbachev is needed to clarify the Starushenko/Goncharov controversy. What is the background and character of Gorbachev's "new realism" and "reform policy"? A few facts should be restated, even though they may be more or less obvious to those who have followed Soviet politics at first hand for some time.

In contrast to the impression sometimes created in the press, Gorbachev is not an isolated figure who took over leadership in the Kremlin just by chance and out of the blue. He rose to the centre of power through the very mechanisms of the bureaucratic system and its dogmatic ideology which he set out to reform. He does not represent an isolated tendency in this system, therefore, but rather a broad feeling of the need for change, however unspecific. To put it another way, he is a systemic expression of the need for change. There may be groups, like the technocratic intelligentsia, which formulate this need more coherently and urgently than others. One insight, however, seems to have become widely accepted in recent years as forming the basis for Gorbachev's reform policy. The Soviet Union is trapped in a state of economic and social stagnation, quite at odds with what its official ideology has been preaching and promising. One has to look hard to find somebody in Moscow who still believes that with the old policy the country will ever be able to surpass the performance of the Western industrialized countries.

On the contrary, there is growing fear that the deeply-rooted desire of many Soviet citizens to see their country as a leading global power will be frustrated, because the Soviet Union is falling increasingly behind. The propagandistic

slogan of an inevitable and permanent "shift in the correlation of forces" in favour of the socialist camp now has a hollow ring.

With respect to the Third World, Soviet writing has become quite explicit on this point in recent years. The successful "counter-offensive of the imperialist forces under the leadership of the US" has become topical. Less explicitly this includes a growing acknowledgement of the waning attraction of Soviet-style socialism for developing countries. To this I would add a personal impression: among the younger and better-trained technocrats in Moscow, in particular, one finds quite a strong desire to come to terms with real facts and real life and to be less confronted with abstract ideological dogmas. It seems to be widely accepted in the Soviet Union that economic and social stagnation is the basic reality of its system. The problem starts with the question of how to remedy the situation; and this is very controversial. People are concerned about what change will mean, not only for the stability of the regime and the country, but also for their personal lives. There is a considerable fear that change involves risk. Life may become more difficult or even very unpleasant, should the window for "glasnost", individual responsibility and free competition in the market-place and at the work-place be opened too wide. One must bear in mind that the inert, authoritarian bureaucratic system with all its economic failures and drastic cut-backs on the personal freedom of most Soviet citizens nevertheless also provides them with a considerable amount of everyday security and guidance many would not like to lose.

It is at this point that the discussion about the character and direction of Gorbachev's reform policy becomes more than academic. Obviously, he and those who support him are convinced that effective economic reforms will not work without far-reaching political and social changes. But will other important groups, like the workers and the older generation of party functionaries, agree to this? The question of whether Gorbachev's reforms will eventually prove substantial — whether they will change the character of Soviet politics — is therefore a legitimate one: as we shall see later, it is also rather difficult to answer.

Soviet Africa policy — change started before Gorbachev

Gorbachev has impressed the Western public with his sophisticated, conciliatory style, which contrasts so markedly with that of his predecessors. On the other hand, this shift in style has led to a mistaken perception of the problem of change in Soviet politics, which is often identified too closely with him personally.

If one turns to Africa, there have been actually very few breathtaking changes during his period in office. It would be more accurate to say that Gorbachev has continued and reinforced changes that began years ago. In retrospect, it is the years 1981 and 1982 that mark the watershed in Soviet policy towards Southern Africa.

In the summer of 1981, the USSR and the other member-countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) unanimously opposed Mozambique's application to upgrade its observer status in the organization to full membership.⁶ Mozambique had been trying hard since the beginning of 1980 to obtain membership of CMEA, and this rejection was a heavy blow for President Machel and for Frelimo's socialist option, since integration into the Eastern Bloc's economic system had formed part of the party's agenda since its Third Congress in 1977.

Mozambique also experienced disillusionment in its attempts to achieve greater military co-operation with the Soviet Union. In May and June 1982, the increasingly precarious security situation within Mozambique triggered a flurry of visits to the Soviet Union and urgent talks about increased military aid. No significant increase in military aid was noted, however, contrary to conventional Western expectations about Soviet expansionism in Africa. Here, after all, was a classic situation of conflict and instability, which Moscow, according to conventional wisdom, should not have hesitated to exploit. And, indeed, with the Soviets already having a strong military presence in Angola, this was a unique opportunity to close the pincer movement on mineral-rich South Africa, a development feared by many Western global strategists.

Moscow's refusal to admit Mozambique to CMEA or to defend it effectively against the South African-supported Mozambican National Resistance

Movement (Renamo) severely jolted Frelimo's pro-Eastern option. In February and March 1983, Machel, accompanied by his Foreign Affairs Minister, Joaquim Chissano, paid another visit to Moscow. There they met Yuri Andropov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, and Defence Minister Dimitri Ustinov, to inform the Soviets about Frelimo's preparation for its Fourth Party Congress and, although this was not made public, about Mozambique's decision to seek an accommodation with Pretoria. About two weeks later, Machel for the first time publicly acknowledged that talks were being held with South Africa in order to achieve such an accommodation.

By this time Maputo had already signalled a shift in its stance of "socialist solidarity" with East Germany, in accordance with which the Mozambican government had refused to recognize West Germany's claims to West Berlin, despite the fact that this denial effectively cut off West German or multilateral EEC development aid. In August 1982, however, Mozambique signed the "Berlin Clause" in a food agreement concluded with West Germany, and followed this by announcing its willingness to participate in the Lomé III negotiations, thus paving the way for its formal reintegration into the Western economic system.

In April 1983 the Fourth Frelimo Party Congress continued this process by taking a series of important decisions concerning the country's future economic orientation. Agricultural development policy was redirected away from centralized state farming towards more support for small-scale family farming. Planning and implementation of economic policy in general were to become more decentralized, and a number of commodity prices were deregulated. These initiatives were followed by a new investment code, which came into force on 6 September 1984. This code not only facilitates joint ventures involving foreign and Mozambican state and private capital, but allows for the establishment of wholly foreign-owned companies, which are offered safeguards in respect of nationalization and a guaranteed right to transfer their profits abroad in hard currency. In the same month, Mozambique was finally accepted into the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. It came as a considerable surprise to many ob-

servers that Frelimo had far fewer reservations about agreeing to the IMF's market-oriented approach than a number of other African governments not generally recognized as close ideological allies of Moscow.

Further practical steps, not to be elaborated here, gave evidence of Frelimo's sincerity in implementing its changed approach. Even in the military field, a differentiation of ties was attempted by requesting various Western countries for military aid. Britain, already fairly involved in the Frontline states through its military training and support programme in Zimbabwe, was the first Western country to take up this new cue. The British military advisory group in Zimbabwe now also began to train Mozambican military personnel.

In 1987 President Chissano toured several West European capitals. Again, it was above all the Thatcher government which felt that his plea for more assistance, including military aid, should be taken seriously. London promised to extend its military aid programme, quite in contrast to the policy advocated by some conservative groups in Washington.

Other Western European governments have since followed the British approach. Paris, for example, started talks with Maputo about some form of military assistance, while the European Economic Commission (EEC) acknowledged the need to help Mozambique defend its development projects. In November 1987, Chancellor Kohl decided to be the first West German leader ever to visit war-torn, socialist-oriented Mozambique.

In the United States conservative groups and think-tanks like the Heritage Foundation have shown clearly why they object to closer ties with the Frelimo government. Frelimo has not officially abandoned either its socialist orientation or its military ties with the Eastern Bloc. And this much is true: the Fourth Party Congress has reconfirmed the leading role of the party — although the importance of "proletarian class struggle" as the ideological justification for Frelimo's leadership was played down in comparison with the position taken at the 1977 party congress. These conservatives therefore dismiss the idea of wooing Frelimo away from the socialist camp as naïve and wishful thinking, falling into the well-known trap of Leninist tacticians who aim to get as

much milk as possible from the capitalist cow without yielding the "commanding heights" of power.

This fear brings us back to the problem of how to analyse Soviet politics in a time of change, for although the fears of conservatives in Washington may be correct, they may equally prove to amount to a self-fulfilling prophecy which undercuts Frelimo's "opening to the West".

Is the change in Soviet politics merely tactical in nature?

In all his statements about reform Gorbachev has made clear that his policy is not about giving up socialism, but about its transformation. To expect anything else would indeed be naïve. As an ideology, Soviet-type socialism — which is to say, Marxism-Leninism — is too comprehensively institutionalized in Soviet life, politics and thinking to be abandoned at short notice.

Western analysts are therefore confronted with a formidable methodological problem: how is one to assess the quality, significance and durability of change in Soviet politics? As Nel's assessment of an alleged divergence between Tikhomirov and Starushenko demonstrated, even the protagonists' use of orthodox, rigid Leninist language is no certain guide to their thinking on reform policy. There is, in fact, a great deal of orthodox ideological language in Starushenko's speech.

The problem of avoiding a tactical Leninist trap is compounded by the fact that Soviet politicians and writers have repeatedly advised socialist-oriented governments in the Third World to follow the example of Lenin's "New Economic Policy" (NEP). This would seem to be a strong argument in support of those who see most changes in Soviet Africa policy as merely tactical. On the other hand, there is a powerful argument against this interpretation. For some time there have been a number of Sovietologists pointing out that a series of quantitative changes may well add up to a change in quality, even against the will of the initiators.⁷

The 1981 decision not to admit Mozambique to CMEA seems to be a good example of this dynamic. While it may not have been intended as a strategic decision, it eventually assumed this character because it was followed by

another similar decision with regard to Ethiopia, thus shattering not only an important pillar of Mozambique's socialist option but also those of other socialist-oriented countries. In 1985 Mengistu's Ethiopia was refused full membership of CMEA, despite its endeavours to perform as a very loyal ideological ally. Mengistu took great pains to convince Soviet leaders that Ethiopia could well play a Cuban-style role in Africa, as a platform for far-reaching Soviet revolutionary and military interests in Africa. His offers to train thousands of South African guerrillas are to be seen in this perspective. However, Ethiopia's application for full membership was also turned down unanimously by all Eastern Bloc countries. Moscow and its allies were simply not prepared to pay the economic price of another Cuba. This was a clear message to all socialist-oriented countries in and around Africa — including the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen — that Moscow had drawn the line after accepting Cuba, Vietnam and Laos as full members of CMEA, and was not willing to give the same treatment to other socialist-oriented states. Most African Marxists, like those in Mozambique, have understood the message and now give far more thought to ways of co-operating with the dominant institutions of the Western-dominated world economy, like the IMF and the World Bank.

The fact that the CMEA decisions were not just tactical becomes even more obvious if one looks at their background. Soviet thinking on the existing world economic order has changed substantially. Studies by Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, Jerry Hough and others have shown convincingly that leading Soviet economists no longer adopt such a very antagonistic position towards a global economy clearly dominated by the capitalist countries.⁸ They feel that Soviet economic interests are better served by pushing for reforms than by fighting for its abolition. The Khrushchevian hope of destroying capitalism by creating anti-imperialist "zones of peace" in the Third World, closely connected with the East Bloc, is a thing of the past.

This alteration of outlook on the economic world order has made it much less important politically for the socialist camp to draw developing countries into their "socialist international division of labour". The costs of such a policy are

now given more careful consideration, since the budgets of the Soviet Union and its East European allies are already overburdened with supporting the weak economics of Cuba, Vietnam and Laos. They will think twice before including another poor Third World country on their payroll.

There are other areas where it can be shown that it is much too simplistic to dismiss changes in Soviet politics under Gorbachev as merely tactical. But let us return briefly to the NEP argument, which is far more ambivalent with regard to the tactical character of changes in Soviet politics than is realized by most of those who refer to it.

Lenin himself never made clear whether NEP amounted to a fundamental change in policy or simply a tactical retreat. And, surprisingly, to this day the debate among Soviet NEP specialists provides no conclusive answer.⁹ There are basically two schools of thought. One, which may be called the Stalinist one, by and large corresponds to the conventional position among Western observers. It views Lenin's decision to stop collectivization and centralization and to revitalize trade, market relations and private initiative as just temporary retreats, which did not alter Lenin's basic approach to socialism, later so crudely executed by Stalin. There are others, however, who challenge this view. They point to the fact that when Lenin put his proposals to the party they caused a great deal of controversy and opposition, precisely because many of his comrades feared that the changes were more than tactical. They looked as if they might herald a shift from a centrally-planned economy to a mixed economy in which private sectors would co-exist with public ones.

Already in the 1960s, and again in recent years, this controversy about the dual character of NEP became a significant issue in Soviet writing. Under Gorbachev the second school of thought seems to have gained ground, for the obvious reason that if the rather far-reaching reforms which Gorbachev and leading economists appear to have in mind can be represented as authentic interpretations of Lenin's thinking, they will be much easier to legitimize and to implement. For most Soviet citizens Lenin is the unchallenged authority when it comes to ideology, even in the Gorbachev era.

In the case of the Third World countries the NEP argument therefore has to be seen in its full ambiguity. Superficially it has a tactical function, in that it helps Soviet politicians and experts to advise their ideological allies on how to handle certain economic changes forced upon them by economic realities, without having to admit openly that their problems might be a consequence of adopting models based on orthodox Marxism-Leninism. Beyond that, however, the NEP analogy does not clarify whether these steps and practices should be seen as of a tactical character only or if they indicate a substantial change.

There is another important aspect of the NEP discussion that is hardly ever mentioned. Some Soviet and East European writers have used the argument of NEP in Third World countries in the 1970s and early 1980s as a metaphor to address indirectly similar problems in the Soviet economy and Marxism-Leninism in general. A good example of this is to be found in an article on the problems of transition to socialism in underdeveloped countries, written by A P Butenko from the Institute for Economy of the Socialist World System in 1982.¹⁰ His analysis of the failure of agricultural policy in socialist-oriented developing countries reads like a radical critique of the Soviet agricultural model and its inability to compete with Western countries in terms of productivity. In 1982 Butenko was still an outsider and his writing was heavily criticized. In the meantime, the mainstream has moved to the kind of thinking that he and other economists represent.

This short discussion of the problem of tactics and changes in Soviet policy may suffice for us to draw the following conclusions: an approach that attempts to judge these changes on the level of either/or — either socialism is abandoned or change is insignificant — does not work. By definition it will fail to understand those changes in Gorbachev's reform policy — as well as those in Mozambique, and other countries — which in the practical dimension of East/West and Third World policy are very important. There are obviously a number of changes of more than tactical significance, however, which will still fail to satisfy the demands of those who seek the public defeat of Marxism-Leninism.

In the field of Soviet policy towards Africa, socio-economic realities in the developing countries and the much narrower limits set by the Soviet Union's own system, especially in the field of economics, have compelled Soviet experts and politicians to rethink their aims, methods and ideological dogmas. Though the Kremlin has certainly nursed hegemonic desires at times, these have turned out to be but world revolutionary dreams. The aggressive anti-imperialist and pro-socialist policies and rhetoric of the Khrushchev era have given way to a much more careful and realistic posture with regard to the developing countries. This is a continuing and very contradictory process. Old style Marxist-Leninist language may coexist in Soviet writings and statements with almost dramatically frank descriptions of the problems of Soviet and socialist affairs in Africa.

Few, however, will go as far as the Soviet journalist, Boris Asoyan, who in a recent article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* criticizes the "distorted ideas" and "bureaucratic platitudes" which have governed Soviet coverage of Africa in the past. However, as Kridl Valkenier and Hough have shown in their books, there is now a wide range of opinions, even quite controversial ones, in Soviet writing about how to deal with the problem of socialist orientation in the Third World.

This, of course, has not left untouched Moscow's approach towards the conflict in South Africa.

What has changed in Soviet policy towards South Africa?

With the general background for changes in Soviet African policy clarified, it is easier to interpret Moscow's new attitudes on the race conflict. The striking fact about the statements of the two deputy directors of the Africa Institute is how much they agree about South Africa. In fact, they agree on all major aspects, excluding the question of white minority rights. Like Starushenko before him, Goncharov, in his Harare statements, did not conceal the growing scepticism in Moscow about the chances of implementing socialism in African countries. He advised the ANC to stress in its policy the "national liberation struggle" rather than the quest for socialism. He told the inter-

viewer from *Work in Progress* that he believed that South Africa would eventually become socialist, but "maybe not in 25 years, but in a century" — and this from someone who considers himself to be an optimist.

Goncharov's remarks reflect a curious contradiction that one also encounters among other analysts in Moscow — the time span within which socialism, or more precisely orthodox Marxism-Leninism, will be realized is constantly being extended, the more time that is spent on implementing it. This kind of time-stretching is one way for Soviet ideologues and analysts to bridge the gap between the increasing difficulties of reconciling Marxist-Leninist models in the real world with the abstract dogma of being victorious in the end. In a recent article, one well-known Soviet writer on developing countries, Georgy Mirsky, was rather blunt on this aspect. He wrote:

A sober assessment of the present-day situation shows, we ought to admit, that today there is less evidence than a quarter of a century ago that the newly-independent states are abandoning the capitalist road of development and shifting to the non-capitalist course.¹¹

Goncharov, like Starushenko, stressed that the Southern African region is of little importance to either the Soviet Union or the United States. Indeed, he claimed that Soviet interest in the region was even less than that of the USA — which is something of a simplification, considering Soviet involvement in Angola. From this perspective, he and others see a reasonable common ground for an acceptable settlement. It is worth noting that he named neither a Soviet document, nor one from the ANC/SACP alliance, as a basis for such a common approach, but rather the report of the US Secretary of State's Advisory Committee on South Africa. It would have been difficult to imagine such a gesture some years ago.

The most important message, to be found both in Starushenko's and in Goncharov's statement, is this: Moscow is concerned that an uncontrolled escalation of violence will lead to increased tensions between the two global powers. At present this concern enjoys priority over the rather dubious expectations of making ideological gains in South Africa. The Soviet Union does not want events in Southern Africa to interfere with its much higher-ranking interests of continuing the Reykjavik

process with Washington. For this reason the quest for a negotiated settlement has become central to Soviet South Africa policy. In his speech in honour of President Chissano of Mozambique's visit to Moscow in August 1987, Gorbachev strongly emphasized the need for a political solution, whereas he did not bother even to mention the armed struggle.

In accordance with this shift of emphasis, Soviet and American diplomats, as well as those of other Western powers, now meet more regularly to discuss developments in Southern Africa. In September 1986 events took an even more dramatic turn: for the first time, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed on the question of how to handle South Africa's membership of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The result was that South Africa will not be expelled, which amounts to a slap in the face for anti-apartheid movements and most black African countries, ignoring their long-held position of isolating the white minority regime, above all in the field of nuclear politics. Of course there are very practical reasons for the two superpowers wanting to keep South Africa in the IAEA. They hope that this will make it easier to control South Africa's nuclear activities.

Do leaders in the Kremlin dislike Starushenko's remarks on white minority rights? Goncharov's statement in Harare may create that impression. But this needs some clarification. Starushenko himself made clear in an interview with a West German journalist, who travelled to Moscow to check the report in *Africa Analysis*, that his opinion is not to be taken as official government policy. And Goncharov is correct to state that there is no official line in the Africa Institute on white minority rights. Such an official line would in any case be quite uncommon for an Institute of the Academy of Science. Members of such institutes scarcely ever claim to represent official government policy or even a uniform institute line of policy, since this would belie their claims to be "independent" research institutes. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude from Goncharov's statement that Starushenko's visionary view on white minority rights is isolated in the Institute. In fact, there is quite a range of different opinions on how to treat this question. Western experts on Southern Africa, from the USA as well as from Europe,

who have had talks in the Africa Institute, or with members of the Africa Institute, have gained this impression, too. There is a diversity of opinions about the importance of Inkatha, Azapo and other movements in South Africa.

It may well be that the discussion amongst Soviet Africanists on white minority rights was sparked off by the regular meetings they have with American scholars. Professor Price from Berkeley has pointed to the fact that only a few weeks before Starushenko gave his speech at the Soviet-African conference in Moscow, one of the regular meetings between American and Soviet Africanists took place. At that time nobody in the Soviet delegation seemed to have any specific ideas about white minority rights. The books about "consociationalism" did not seem to be familiar to them. For instance, it was only through the American scholars that the Soviets learned about Arend Lijphart's book "Power sharing in South Africa".

However the ideas about white minority rights got into Starushenko's speech, there is little reason to believe that the Kremlin sees their controversial discussion amongst Soviet analysts as a big problem. Quite the contrary may be true. In his speech in honour of Chissano's visit to Moscow in August 1987, Gorbachev stressed the need for "new ideas" in the search for a political solution in South Africa. It is in this context that the Starushenko/Goncharov controversy has to be located with respect to its significance for Soviet policy. As mentioned before, there is nothing new about Soviet Third World experts having different opinions about certain questions. It is, however, a new feature that they discuss them so openly in the public international arena. "Glasnost" has reached Soviet Africa policy.

Unlike the academics, the Soviet government will see little reason to publicly commit itself to a fixed position on white minority rights or other details of a negotiated settlement. Such a step would unnecessarily limit its diplomatic flexibility. It would also be counter-productive to the position of the ANC/SACP alliance in a future negotiating process, needlessly giving away a bargaining-chip.

Nevertheless, Moscow has taken pains to signal that it prefers a negotiated settlement to an uncontrolled es-

calation of violence, and that the fears of whites have to be addressed in such a settlement. Furthermore, there are a number of people in Moscow who consider it a matter of "Realpolitik" not to exclude Inkatha from the negotiating table, although this movement is disliked because of its tribal character. Ethnic problems are, however, taken very seriously by Soviet scholars and politicians, not least because of experience in other African countries. Accommodation, not exclusion, is thought to be the only viable approach to guarantee a peaceful and stable post-apartheid South Africa.

For all that, there are a few essentials which Soviet South Africa policy will not abandon in the foreseeable future. The participation of the ANC/SACP alliance as the main anti-apartheid actor in a negotiating process is a condition *sine qua non* for the Soviets. Speculation that the Soviets might give up their support for the ANC and the armed struggle is unfounded. The continuation of this struggle, conducted with rather limited means anyway, will be part of Moscow's as well as the ANC's strategy: neither see a contradiction between armed struggle and a political solution. It is one instrument among others to bring white South Africans and those who rule in Pretoria to the negotiating table. But, as mentioned before, Starushenko and Goncharov have put most emphasis on the labour struggle and better political organization.

In the final analysis it is not the question of violence that divides the Botha government and the ANC/SACP leadership, because both claim that they are prepared to negotiate. It is whether these negotiations are to be about only limited power-sharing between blacks and whites — power sharing without losing control, as P W Botha has called it — or full power sharing.

It may well be that Starushenko's remarks initially caused an irritation in the ANC and SACP leadership because of the extent of change in Soviet South Africa policy under Gorbachev. The reaction to the *Africa Analysis* article in *The African Communist* points in that direction. In the meantime, however, fears seem to have calmed down. During Oliver Tambo's visit to Moscow in 1987, Gorbachev is said to have given him assurances on the continuity of Soviet South Africa policy. On the other

hand, in recent public statements, the ANC as well as the SACP have made it clear that they, like the Soviets, now put much more emphasis on a political solution. In an interview, Joe Slovo, the leader of the SACP and former chief of staff of the ANC's guerrilla organization Umkhonto We Sizwe, said: "I believe the transition in South Africa is coming through negotiations."¹²

Concluding remarks: What about Angola?

South African Defence Minister, General Magnus Malan, has made public statements on Soviet policy in Southern Africa which are strongly at variance with the assessment presented in this article. Talking of Mozambique, he said in October 1987: "I have no doubt the USSR sees Mozambique as one of its instruments to be used to reach its eventual goal in the Republic of South Africa."¹³ He continued in this vein one month later — after South African troops had gone into Angola to help Unita: "South Africa had had to halt Russian aggression in Southern Angola . . . Russia's ultimate target is South Africa."¹⁴

In the case of Mozambique, the analysis presented here argues that Malan is mistaken. In Mozambique nobody is on the offensive with respect to Pretoria. The Soviets would have made different decisions in 1981/82, had they seriously been trying to establish a firm grip on the Republic.

The case of Angola is more complex. There is no denying the huge amount of military aid given to the MPLA government by Cuba and the Soviet Union, although South African sources overstate the direct Soviet involvement in recent fighting at least as much as the Angolans understate it. But I believe that Malan's interpretation of Soviet support is flawed. Neither Angola's own policy nor Soviet policy towards Angola have remained untouched by the lessons learned since the late 1970s. The MPLA government is undertaking

changes in the economic field closely resembling those of the Frelimo government in Mozambique, the strong Cuban and Soviet military presence notwithstanding. Angola has applied for membership in the IMF, World Bank, International Development Association (IDA) and International Finance Corporation (IFC), all of which are dominated by the Western countries. Together with this request, President dos Santos has announced a programme to rehabilitate the economy and the financial situation of the country. Western experts see this as a major departure from earlier economic policies. Private initiative and private ownership will have a significant role to play in Angola's economy.

Why then do the Soviets continue to invest so heavily on the military level? To answer this question, a further aspect of Gorbachev's "new realism" has to be addressed. Like his predecessors, he is not contemplating giving up the claim that the Soviet Union is a global power equal to the United States, at least on the military level. An open defeat of the MPLA government by Unita, supported with military hardware and advice by South Africa and the USA, would, in Soviet eyes, create an intolerable loss of credibility in respect of this status. For it is above all Angola which in the mid-1970s became a symbol of Soviet superpower status. For most Soviets it seems to be a matter of national pride, rather than the hope of turning Angola into a showcase for Marxism-Leninism in Africa, to prevent the MPLA from being defeated by Unita and its allies.

In other words: Angola is no longer — if it ever was — the staging post for a Soviet military grip on the Republic of South Africa. It has become a testing-ground for the global military status of the superpowers and a convenient one at that, since it does not directly touch on the vital interests of either. Because of its becoming enmeshed with South Africa's aggressive regional policies and unresolved ethnic problems this conflict has become very nasty indeed. The Angolans, on both sides of the war,

are the ones who suffer, in human as well as in economic terms. If somebody should find the clue to untangling the Gordian knot of Namibia's independence and national reconciliation in Angola, Moscow will not refuse to listen to him.

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The current Soviet view of regional conflicts: How much of a change?

*Philip Nel, director of the Institute for Soviet Studies at the University of Stellenbosch, discusses the difficulties of analysing Soviet approaches to regional conflicts.**

Introduction

Since late 1985, Soviet pronouncements on, and attention to, regional conflicts have increased significantly. The first summit meeting between Mr Gorbachev and President Reagan in November of that year appears to have acted as the catalyst for this development.¹ Judging by some of the comments by Georgi Arbatov, one of the USSR's most senior American specialists, the issue of regional conflicts was one of the main subjects raised during the discussions between the two leaders.² Given the White House's position on this score, one can safely infer that it was this meeting that finally convinced the Soviet leadership that if it wanted to make progress on arms limitation talks with the USA, then, at the very least, a new public rhetoric on regional conflicts was called for.

Since then, the Soviet leadership and media have accorded considerable attention to "regional conflicts". Gorbachev himself has raised the topic in many of his major speeches,³ including his keynote address to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in February 1986.

This is an abridged version of a paper he presented late last year at a Stellenbosch conference on Soviet policy, and was written before the conclusion of the recent agreement on a Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan or the initiation of talks on Angola.

On that occasion he twice referred to regional conflicts. In the first instance, while addressing the topic of instability in the "Asian and Pacific" region, he called for "the pooling of efforts in the interests of a political settlement of painful problems so as . . . to at least take the edge off the military confrontation in various parts of Asia and stabilize the situation there". In the same breath, he included all regional conflicts: "We are in favour of vitalising collective quests for ways of defusing conflict situations in the Middle East, Central America, Southern Africa, in all of the planet's turbulent points".

Again, in his proposals for an all-embracing system of international security, he singled out regional conflicts and called for "a just political settlement of international crises and regional conflicts".⁴

Since the 27th Congress, Gorbachev's introduction of the theme of "political settlements for all regional conflicts" has been taken up by many Soviet academics and commentators. At a press conference during the Congress, Yevgeni Primakov, director of the prestigious Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and one of the top Soviet specialists on the Third World, reaffirmed the Soviet commitment to finding "non-military" solutions to these problems.⁵ Academic and semi-academic analyses have also emphasized regional conflicts and have all raised the issue of political

settlements.⁶ In addition, since the Congress, Soviet television has aired three "Studio Nine" round-table discussions on regional conflicts in general.⁷ What made the first of these discussions exceptional was the fact that American specialists were invited to take part. Again, Soviet participants emphasized that the USSR wished to see collective efforts to defuse regional conflicts. Finally, one should also note the spill-over effect Moscow's rhetoric has had on its clients in the Third World. Clearly following Moscow's lead, during the last eighteen months leaders as disparate as Ethiopia's Mengistu, Nicaragua's Ortega, Afghanistan's Najib and Angola's Dos Santos have all started to emphasize that the conflicts in their regions should be solved through negotiated, political settlements.⁸

This flurry of activity suggests that by 1986 Moscow and its allies had embarked on a new programme to disentangle those negative trends in the various regional conflicts in which the USSR became involved during the 1970s. That a new approach was indeed called for is not hard to see. This became clear on three levels.

Firstly, the Soviet military, in support of its local clients, was unable to consolidate and safeguard the security of its newly-won allies such as Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique and Kampuchea. In all of these countries, which became Soviet allies

during the 1970s, locally and foreign supported rebel movements effectively challenged their countries' communist regimes, and in some cases threatened to reverse their revolutionary gains. Although Soviet, East European and Cuban military support enabled the beleaguered regimes to contain rebel activities, in some cases — such as Afghanistan and Angola — the rebel threat increasingly got out of hand as the rebels developed more and more conventional capabilities. By late 1985 it became clear that the White House was going to increase its aid to the Contras, Unita and the Mujaheddin, and that this policy would be backed by substantial numbers in the Congress. In February 1985, representatives of the counter-revolutionary movements gathered somewhere in the Angolan bush to receive moral support and promises of material assistance from the Reagan administration. By 1986 these promises had materialized in the form of sophisticated anti-aircraft missiles. By this time the writing was clearly on the wall. If the USSR did not do something to stop the rot in its Third World policy, continued humiliation was on the cards, and perhaps even a reversal of gains made in such priority areas as Afghanistan and Angola.⁹

Secondly, signs of war weariness and a desire to exploit local settlements emerged amongst Soviet allies, and also necessitated a change in the Soviet approach. In Southern Africa, for instance, 1983 and 1984 saw the development of local negotiations between South Africa and Angola and Mozambique which led to the Lusaka agreement and Nkomati accord. Judging from the initial Soviet reaction, especially to the latter, the USSR was not enthusiastic about this development, for various reasons.¹⁰ Not only did the Nkomati accord come in the wake of a failed Soviet-Mozambican attempt to improve Mozambique's defences, but the USA emerged as the credible broker in both sets of negotiations. Initially, the stupor in Moscow prevented the Soviet leadership from drawing the necessary conclusions. However, upon Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985, the following lesson was quickly learnt and acted upon: if the USSR hopes to maintain its privileged position in many regions of the world, it must recognize local desires for regional peace and act in such a way as to facilitate these de-

sires without jeopardizing Soviet interests.

Thirdly, as has been suggested above, since 1985 the USSR has internalized one of the most important lessons of its invasion of Afghanistan. In retrospect, it was this invasion that finally prompted the Western world to realize the duplicity of the Brezhnev approach to *détente*. *Détente*, as the Brezhnev-leadership made abundantly clear,¹¹ was never meant to exclude continued and increased Soviet assertiveness in the Third World, as evidenced by the Angola, Ethiopia and Afghanistan episodes. Yet in the 1980s, conservative Western governments explicitly made renewed *détente* dependent on the achievement of some *modus vivendi* between the great powers in the Third World. This fact fully dawned on the Soviet leadership only when "Americanists" such as Dobrynin and Yakovlev were drawn into the decision-making apparatus in the CPSU's Central Committee. It was realized that progress on arms limitations and improved technological trade with the West and Japan,¹² both of which are crucial to Gorbachev's attempts to restructure the cash- and technology-deficient domestic economy,¹³ could only be ensured through at least a change of rhetoric on regional issues.

Of course, the persistence, and widespread nature, of Soviet public pronouncements implying a changed attitude towards regional conflicts, and the presence of good reasons why the Soviet attitude had to change, do not by themselves indicate that the Soviet approach has indeed changed. Furthermore, even if they did, they would not inform us about the extent and direction of such change.

This article attempts to determine the extent, nature and implications of the hypothesized recent change in the Soviet approach to regional conflicts. My method will be to firstly compare recent Soviet statements on regional conflicts with the central tenets of the Soviet approach as developed under Brezhnev. This will then allow us to ascertain whether a *conceptual* change has, in fact, taken place.

Conceptual innovations

The traditional view

The traditional Soviet view on regio-

nal conflicts was formalized during the Brezhnev years and justified the most extensive Soviet involvement in the Third World to date. It revolves around six basic assumptions:

- a) that stability in the Third World is artificial and that anti-colonial revolutions are historically unavoidable, would safeguard the best interests of "young peoples", and should therefore be supported by the USSR;
- b) that wars of national liberation are similarly justified;
- c) that imperialist meddling is solely responsible for the fact that the "natural course" of Third World development is interrupted, and that a situation which threatens peace arises;
- d) that there is no connection between Soviet behaviour in the Third World and *détente*;
- e) that regional conflicts do not necessarily have to escalate into global confrontations; and
- f) that in some regional conflicts, "political settlements" should be pursued.¹⁴

Since these six assumptions in turn relate to the whole conceptual ambit of Soviet policy towards the Third World, it is impossible to discuss them comprehensively here.¹⁵ It would be instructive, though, to look at some of the basic Soviet convictions underlying each.

a) Since Lenin's days, Soviet policymakers have seen no intrinsic merit in stability in the "Oriental world". In accordance with the general metaphysical assumption that world history is progressing through abrupt, qualitative leaps toward socialism, stability in the Third World implies a retardation of a natural, historical tendency. In direct contrast to the established Western view that stability is preferable to civil conflict, and that if change in a society is necessary it should be brought about through incremental reform, the Soviets have seen Third World instability as the logical means by which to challenge and replace the Western world's political and economic control over the developing world. To legitimize this approach, the two-stage theory of national liberation was devised, originally by Lenin, and has been adapted and amended as the Soviet Union gained experience. Soviet authors regard national liberation as a process which brings political and eventual economic

independence, and which results, under ideal circumstances, in a transition to socialism. This process is accorded the status of an objective, national historical process, the outcome of which may be temporarily retarded, but is eventually assured. Thus, by supporting national liberation, the established socialist world is only fulfilling its historical task.¹⁶

b) History not only justifies the support of national liberation movements, but also determines the justness of *wars of national liberation*. As one of the first Soviet attempts to justify these wars in the early 1960s declared:

There will be wars of liberation as long as imperialism exists, as long as colonialism exists. These are revolutionary wars. Such wars are not only possible but inevitable, since the colonialists will not voluntarily grant the peoples independence. Therefore the peoples can win their freedom and independence only through struggle including armed struggle.¹⁷

Such arguments continued to be used to justify Soviet military support for national liberation movements during the 1960s and 1970s,¹⁸ and were strengthened by the UN General Assembly's recognition of wars of national liberation in 1970 and 1974.¹⁹

c) Basing its position on the acceptance of revolutionary instability as a "normal" process, and on the justness of national liberationary wars, during the Brezhnev years the Soviet Union dismissed attempts at stabilization as an imperialist quest to reverse revolutionary progress. "Stability in Africa", as one Soviet commentator put it, "signifies [for the imperialists] above all securing continued possibilities, as earlier, to exploit in an unhindered way the African people and the riches of the continent".²⁰ Western meddling in the affairs of newly-independent countries not only impedes the progress of these countries towards "social harmony", but is actually the sole source of the military conflicts that arise in some areas. While accepting "natural" instability as part of a revolutionary process, the traditional Soviet view rejects "unnatural" instability caused by outside (imperialist) interference in the affairs of sovereign nations. Brezhnev was unambiguous on this score:

Instability [of the unnatural kind — author] in Africa is born differently. It is caused by external forces that are trying to prevent African peoples from choosing that path which they consider most appropriate. These forces are trying to set some African

countries against others, they kindle and form discord, and provoke quarrels over problems which came to the African peoples from colonial times.²¹

d) There is still debate about the exact nature of the Soviet view of *détente* during the 1970s. What is clear, however, as Coit Blacker noted so perceptively,²² is that the Soviet Union's objectives with *détente* were threefold, the one serving as the logical basis for the next. Firstly, the USSR wanted the USA to recognize it as a nuclear equal. Secondly, that in consequence it is also globally a political equal, which is to say that the USSR has a legitimate role to play in global issues. Finally, and again in consequence, the objective was to use measures such as the agreement on the "Prevention of Nuclear War", to reduce the risks involved in US-Soviet rivalry in the Third World. To the Soviet mind *détente* never implied a relinquishing of Soviet support for national liberation movements, but only served as a check in the event of this support and American reaction getting out of hand. Indeed, Soviet leaders and commentators often, and publicly, stated that *détente* did not imply restraint on Soviet support for radical movements in the Third World. For instance, during 1973 Brezhnev declared:

We have always regarded, and regard now, as our inviolable duty stemming from Communist convictions, from our socialist morality, to render the widest possible support to the peoples fighting for the just cause of freedom. This has always been the case, this will be the case in the future as well.²³

This theme was repeated in an *Izvestia* commentary of 22 May 1975:

It is indeed clear that the easing of tension in relations between states and internal processes within these states are different things . . . *Détente* is not a barrier on the path of the national liberation movements and progressive sociopolitical transformations.²⁴

Even in 1981, Alexander Bovin, a senior Soviet commentator, reaffirmed the Soviet view, de-linking *détente* and Third World adventurism. During a round-table discussion on Moscow Radio (3 May 1981) he said:

If we disregard all the ideological hullabaloo, they want to tell us the following: don't help the national liberation movements. Don't help your friends in, say, Ethiopia, Angola, Libya, Yemen and wherever it pleases you. It is this aid which they regard as our violation of the code of conduct. We cannot, of course, agree to such an approach. Our policy is unquestionably a policy of peaceful coexistence. But at the same time, it is also a policy of internationalism. We have, given

assistance to these peoples and will continue to do so.

e) As will become evident, Soviet thinking on the relationship between local (regional) war and nuclear confrontation between the superpowers, is of a cyclical nature. In his well-documented study of Soviet military thinking about the Third World, Mark Katz indicates that during the Khrushchev era the predominant view, shared by Khrushchev, was that local war, if unchecked, could (some argued *would*) lead to nuclear war.²⁵ From 1969 onwards, Soviet writings and speeches increasingly began to suggest that the progression was no longer to be regarded as inevitable. The growing military might of the "socialist world", the argument went, would in itself deter the "imperialist camp" from escalating local wars into global nuclear confrontation. The implication was that mutually assured destruction would allow the Soviet military to be more active in local wars, freed from the once perceived risk that such action would evoke nuclear retaliation by the USA. The history of Soviet military involvement during the 1970s testified to the prevalence of this modification of the Soviet view.²⁶ This change was dogmatized in 1978 in a new volume of the *Soviet Military Encyclopedia*:

The tendency toward the broadening of the scale of local wars and the intensification of the struggle in them increases the danger of transforming local wars into world war. At the same time, with the growth of the economic and military might of the countries of the socialist commonwealth, grows the possibility of preventing the transformation of local wars into a conflict of worldwide scale.²⁷

f) During the Brezhnev-era, and even during Andropov's reign, the issue of "political settlements" of regional conflicts was raised, albeit, as we will see, with less universal application and also less frequently. When Brezhnev introduced his "peace programme" in 1971, he explicitly referred to political settlements for regional conflicts, but restricted these to South-east Asia (Vietnam) and the Near East. He called for an attempt:

To eliminate the hotheads of war in South-east Asia and in the Near East and to promote political settlements in these areas on the basis of respect for the legitimate rights of states and peoples that have been subjected to aggression.²⁸

Within three months of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, this issue was

also added to the list of regional conflicts for which "political settlements" must be sought. In *Literaturnaya Gazeta* of 12 March 1980, commentator Vitaly Kobyshev wrote about "The path to a settlement in Afghanistan". This was followed by a *Pravda* editorial on 2 July 1980, entitled "Key to a political settlement", which declared that "achieving a political settlement of the situation that has come about with respect to Afghanistan is an urgent problem". This view did not change with the accession of Andropov in 1982, as was attested to by a *Pravda* editorial of 16 December that year, entitled "Who opposes a political settlement of the Afghan problem?" The commitment to a political settlement in the Middle East was also maintained in the Andropov era.²⁹

What conceptual changes were there?

As is related in more detail elsewhere, in two hectic years Gorbachev has overhauled the whole foreign policy apparatus of both the party and the state, has re-established the party's Central Committee departments as the locus of foreign policy formulation, and has introduced conceptual and policy innovations which may facilitate his drive to revitalize the Soviet economy.³⁰

These threefold changes all have a bearing on the Soviet approach to regional conflicts. The extensive change of personnel in the foreign policy apparatus has placed the responsibility for Third World policy on the shoulders of people such as Dobrynin, Yakovlev and Adamishin, all of whom are very familiar with the Western view of the Third World. With the departure of Ponomarev, the once ideologically dogmatic and myopic conceptual approach to the Third World has also been abandoned. Now Soviet policy towards the Third World is formulated and implemented with one eye firmly focussed on American, Western and Japanese reactions and initiatives.

The predominance of the party in the formulation of foreign policy, and the larger than usual responsibility taken by the General Secretary himself, would imply a more co-ordinated foreign policy and one less divisive of the bureaucracy.

Finally, significant general conceptual and policy innovations have been introduced by Gorbachev. Of

these, the concept of "a new political thinking in foreign policy" and the revival of Brezhnev's Peace Programme in the guise of a "comprehensive system of international security", are the most important.

"New thinking"

In the numerous references to this "new thinking" in Soviet sources, four elements are said to constitute its base. First, human survival as such is perceived to be at stake if drastic measures are not taken to curtail the arms race.³¹ Secondly, an elaborate attempt is being made to link "new thinking" with what two important Soviet authors call a "higher stage of civilization".³² By this is implied, so the authors say, that in the conduct of peaceful co-existence previous forms of confrontation must be replaced by international co-operation if a nuclear holocaust is to be averted. Although the element of rivalry between the two competing world systems, capitalism and socialism, will persist, with the eventual triumph of socialism, peaceful rivalry must exclude continued nuclear competition and the extension of the arms race to outer space. Thirdly, and certainly of prime importance, "new thinking" is said to imply that decisions can no longer be taken simply with one side's interests in mind. As a Deputy Director of the USA and Canada Institute has put it: "It is a fact that security must not be gained at the expense of the other side's interest and that the multifaceted interests of all sides must be taken into account."³³ Fourthly, the above three aspects are used to contrast "new thinking" with the policy of "new-globalism" expounded by the Reagan administration. The latter is presented by Soviet authors in such a way that certain American factions, and especially the military-industrial complex in the USA, are accused of attempts to accelerate the arms race all over the globe and in space, and of wilfully embarking on a policy of instigating regional conflicts for their own purposes.

Of course, there is no doubt that the concept of "new thinking" was part of a massive Soviet propaganda campaign to discredit the USA and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) programme during the UN-declared Year of Peace. However, it would be facile to simply dismiss it on this account. As indicated above, the USSR has a tangible interest

in slowing down the arms race, and this presents the possibility of negotiating significant Soviet concessions. Marshall Shulman, one of America's leading scholars on the Soviet Union, has said that he has never experienced a Soviet leadership more prepared to make concessions than the present one. Concessions have already been made, namely the unilateral extension of the moratorium on nuclear tests, and the permitting of on-site verification as part of a larger arms deal. On the other hand it should be noted that these concessions do not affect the clear advantage the USSR has in intermediate nuclear missiles in Europe or its lead in ICBM-payload capabilities.³⁴

A "comprehensive system of international security"

Central to Gorbachev's current foreign policy drive is his suggestion that a new framework of international relations should be established. Introducing this framework during his report to the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachev said:

Now, as never before, it is important to find ways for closer and more productive co-operation with governments, parties, and mass organizations and movements that are genuinely concerned about the destiny of peace on earth, and with all people, in order to build an all-embracing system of international security.³⁵

So far, Soviet leaders have given only sketchy details of what such a system of security might entail. Apart from general disarmament, a ban on chemical weapons, and the renunciation of nuclear war, Gorbachev's proposals also make provision for measures to promote confidence-building between states, a restructuring of international economic relations to eliminate "discrimination", and a whole range of issues termed "humanitarian" by Gorbachev, such as the dissemination of information, and the "extirpation of genocide and apartheid".

In the wake of these proposals, during 1986 Gorbachev suggested international peace conferences on the Pacific region and the Middle East, while the UN was presented during the 1986-1987 session with a detailed list of proposals leading towards the establishment of such an international security system.

In essence, Gorbachev's initiative in this regard is a resurrection of Brezhnev's Peace Programme announced

during the 24th Party Congress in 1971. While most of the elements in Brezhnev's programme are included in the present one, it is instructive to note that Gorbachev's tone is more defensive than Brezhnev's. Gone, for example, is Brezhnev's aggressive resolution "to administer an immediate and firm rebuff to any act of aggression or international highhandedness".³⁶

With this background, we can now return to the six basic features of the traditional (Brezhnev) view on regional conflicts, compare recent statements with these and so determine where and to what extent the Gorbachev team has introduced changes. By discussing these features in reverse order, attention can first be given to those that have undergone either some or significant modification. In summary: features d), e) and f) have been changed, feature c) has partly been changed, but a) and b) remain unchanged.

Political settlements

In contrast to the Brezhnev and Andropov view, which limited the applicability of "political settlements" to the Vietnam, Afghanistan and Middle Eastern conflicts, Gorbachev has extended his to cover all regional conflicts. During his elaboration at the 27th Party Congress of the components of "an all-embracing system of international security" he listed these political components:

- strict respect in international practice for the right of each people to choose the ways and forms of its development independently;
- a just political settlement of international crises and regional conflicts;
- elaboration of a set of measures aimed at building confidence between states and the creation of effective guarantees against attack from without and of the inviolability of their frontiers; and
- elaboration of effective methods of preventing international terrorism, including those ensuring the safety of international land, air and sea communications.³⁷

Of special importance is the fact that these concepts have been extended to include Southern African conflicts. While Gorbachev, as was noted earlier, included Southern Africa already at the 27th Congress, this extension was formalized and made more precise in the joint Angolan-Soviet statement of May 1986. In that document the settlement of the Angolan-Namibian imbroglio was deemed an *urgent* issue.³⁸

A further extension took place in

1987, when Gorbachev, during a visit to Moscow by the Mozambican President, also called for a "political settlement in South Africa", adding that the USSR "does not subscribe to the thesis 'the worse the better' ".³⁹ Thus far, no extension of the concept to the Mozambican conflict has taken place, yet Gorbachev's words may have constituted an oblique warning that should such a settlement be reached in South Africa, Mozambique should not hesitate to initiate a similar process at home.

Regional conflicts and nuclear wars

The main reason for the extension of the concept of political settlements is that the Soviet view on the link between regional conflicts and nuclear war has returned to the Khrushchevian position. Although no Soviet comment has actually implied that the escalation of regional conflicts into global nuclear confrontation is *inevitable*, some have come quite close. One comment on the Angolan, Cuban and Soviet consultations in early February 1986 noted that the parties:

... emphasized that conflicts appearing in different parts of the world might grow into full-scale war and, therefore, it was important to exert efforts to iron them out through joint efforts on fair principles — through negotiations with full respect for independence and the right of peoples to self-determination.⁴⁰

In a comprehensive article on regional conflicts, V Kazakov came very close to saying that regional conflicts inevitably threaten world peace on a global scale:

... a conflict in one region of the world acts as a military political detonator which in the present international situation, tense as it is, can cause serious complications for world peace.⁴¹

He added:

Regional conflicts have become most dangerous today, especially because they occur amidst the global arms race and the general growth of international tensions. The interrelationship is obvious here, all the more so since the art of warfare has been developed to the point where, as was predicted by Lenin 'not only would a war between advanced countries be an enormous crime', but would 'inevitably ... undermine the very foundations of human society'.⁴²

This reversion to the Khrushchevian view is based on the same pessimistic evaluation of trends in the nuclear balance of power that prevailed in the 1960s. Whereas Brezhnev was able to bargain on the deterrence inherent in the American perception of its limitations *vis-à-vis* Soviet nuclear capa-

bilities, this was not feasible during the Khrushchev era, and is no longer guaranteed in the mid-1980s. The re-emergence of Soviet concern about the escalatory potential of regional conflicts is thus an index of their pessimism about their ability to counter and survive a first-strike attack.⁴³

The Gorbachev leadership has introduced another element into this equation. According to the Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, there is another kind of direct link between nuclear war and regional problems. As was suggested by some Soviet officials in the early 1980s,⁴⁴ the global arms race and the general militarization of the Third World exacerbates the already debilitating economic problems of developing countries. Political settlement of regional conflicts would thus serve not only to limit the risks of their escalation into global war, but would also have a direct bearing on the gross amount of capital available on a global scale for development projects.⁴⁵

Détente and regional issues

All of this suggests that in the Gorbachev era the Soviet leadership has come to accept that there is a link between regional issues and the relationship between the superpowers. This amounts to a significant departure from the Brezhnev view. This concession has been forced upon Moscow by its own evaluation of the Reagan administration's insistence that a return to 1970s-style *détente* is simply not practicable.

It should be noted, however, that the Soviet Union still does not accept the initial Reagan view that a consensus on regional issues is a *pre-condition* for progress on other bilateral issues, notably arms-control talks. In the first years of the Reagan administration the price the latter put on "US-Soviet dialogue on issues such as arms control, technology transfer and trade credits was a reduction in Soviet involvement in conflict situations as geographically separated as Poland, Cambodia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Africa and Central America".⁴⁶ Although this American attitude has mellowed somewhat — as illustrated by the progress on arms reduction during 1986 and 1987, it none the less compelled the Soviets to soften their position on the Third World. At the same time, the USSR still appears to favour a reversal of American priorities. Successful arms agreements are still

viewed as “an important contributing factor” towards reaching an understanding on Third World issues.⁴⁷

Thus, in at least three respects the current Soviet view on regional conflicts differs substantially from the traditional view. It is, however, as important to look at those respects in which no perceptible change or very little change has taken place.

Imperialist meddling: The main cause of regional conflicts

As was indicated earlier, imperialist (USA) meddling in the “internal affairs of sovereign states” — support for rebels in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Nicaragua and elsewhere — was regarded by the Brezhnev leadership as the *sole* reason why “natural instability” in the Third World escalated into wars. On this point the current Soviet view has also undergone some change.

This has come in the form of a belated acceptance that regional conflicts are not caused solely by imperialist meddling but, as Gorbachev told the Supreme Soviet in late 1985, “the root causes of such conflicts are multi-form”.⁴⁸ “They are partly rooted”, he added, “in history, but above all in the social and economic conditions in which the newly liberated countries have been placed”. In a similar vein, the eminent Soviet Middle Eastern specialist, Karen Brutents, also emphasized in February 1987 that:

each regional conflict has its own specific causes, and I think this should be the starting point in our approach to it. They are rooted in history, most often in the colonial past and in colonial policies. It is no accident that most regional conflicts occur in the zone of developing countries. They are maintained by the egoistical class policy of the ruling circles, and national and religious fanaticism. For this reason every regional conflict must be approached with an understanding of its specific nature . . .⁴⁹

This is a remarkable acknowledgment, especially if the reference to the “egoistical class policy of the ruling circles” is taken seriously. Be that as it may, these comments are indicative of a realization in Moscow that in the past they have underestimated the complexity of regional conflicts. Such complexity relates to the fact that the official ideology on national liberation only makes provision for the occurrence of a revolutionary challenge to the colonial status quo, and not a counter-revolutionary challenge to the post-colonial status quo. The Soviets are clearly re-

thinking the possibility of national liberation revolutions being reversed.

The acceptance of the “multiform roots of regional conflicts” has not, however, led to a withdrawal of the accusation that the imperialists exacerbate these conflicts by meddling in them. Such accusations are still made, albeit with different intensities, and range from Brutents’ more soft-spoken to Gorbachev’s stronger tone. Brutents declared:

This does not mean, however, that outside forces do not play a role in their [regional conflicts — author] creation or, even more importantly, in their continuation. They do play a very big role, a complicating role; and here we invariably encounter imperialist policies, primarily US imperialist policies.⁵⁰

Compare this with Gorbachev’s bitter rebuke:

I have no doubt that without American interference in other states’ internal affairs, regional conflicts would become a thing of the past and would be resolved much more simply and justly.⁵¹

Support for the national liberation movement and the “natural course of history”

As far as the first two aspects of the Brezhnev view are concerned, no perceptible change has taken place. As in the past, the USSR still regards instability arising from revolutionary change not only as acceptable, but also as historically inevitable. In his authoritative article in *International Affairs*, V Kazakov gleefully quotes the following statement from the new programme of the CPSU: “Revolutions are a natural result of social development of class struggle in every given country”,⁵² while Gorbachev’s report to the 27th Party Congress was explicit in reaffirming “the CPSU’s solidarity with the forces of national liberation and social emancipation”.⁵³

What is perhaps different now in comparison with the Brezhnev era, is the caution and restraint with which support for, and solidarity with, the national liberation movement is expressed. Gone are the bellicose and self-assured proclamations of which Brezhnev was so fond. One of the most striking differences between the 1981 and 1986 Political Reports of the General Secretary to the Party Congress is that in the latter, references to the national liberation movement have been limited to two short and curt phrases, whereas Brezhnev devoted whole

paragraphs to this topic. Of course, since 1981 things have not gone well for the national liberation movement, and given the fact that the Political Report is also an opportunity for self-congratulation, references to “defeats” are usually limited. Yet these documents are usually also “declarations of intent”, particularly when a new leader has just come to power. Clearly, the Gorbachev administration is not yet prepared to drop the national liberation movement, but a new cautiousness and realism, necessitated by those factors which produced the conceptual changes outlined above, is at present the order of the day.

Soviet practice

The mixture of changes, half-changes and consistency in the Soviet view reveals an essential internal tension. On the one hand the Soviet Union is introducing a broader and more extensive commitment to the political settlement of regional conflicts, concedes that local conditions are an important determinant of these conflicts and at all costs wants to prevent an escalation of such wars into global super-power confrontation. In connection with the latter, Soviet spokesmen have gone out of their way to play down any clash of interests between the USA and USSR in various regions.⁵⁴ When Gorbachev says that political settlements are to be solved “immediately”, he is actually saying that the USSR and the USA must be circumspect in their involvement in these conflicts, lest other bilateral issues suffer.

At the same time, Moscow is not prepared to relinquish its proletarian internationalism, or to tone down its support or commitment to the national liberation movement. As in so many other cases, the USSR is caught up in its traditional dilemma: of being a status quo power which tries to act according to the rules of the international game (rules which it does not and cannot unilaterally determine), and at the same time of acting as a revolutionary power, promoting the interests of forces and governments which are desperately trying to change the rules of the game.

It is still an open question which of these two roles will gain predominance. Judging from Soviet actions, rather than from its rhetoric alone, the re-

volutionary role seems still to be dominant. A more detailed analysis of current and recent Soviet actions with respect to important regional conflicts, would seem to support the conclusion that, for the time being at least, the USSR is not yet ready for major concessions in connection with its role as a revolutionary power. It, and its clients, are not prepared to make concessions which would guarantee political settlements but would simultaneously undermine their total or near total control of political power in countries such as Angola, Afghanistan and Nicaragua.

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- 3 See, for example, his speeches to the Indian parliament on 27 November 1986, and to French parliamentarians on 3 October 1985. For a comprehensive survey of his public diplomacy, see R Lyne, "Making waves: Mr Gorbachev's public diplomacy", *International Affairs*, vol 63, no 2, Spring 1987.
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- 5 Press conference on "The Soviet concept of security". Reported in *British Broadcasting Corporation, Summary of World Broadcasts (BBC SWB) SU/8199/C.21*, 5 March 1986.
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- 8 See *The Star*, 23 September 1986 for Mengistu; for Angola, *BBC SWB SU/8172/A5/2*, 1 February 1986; for Najib: *BBC SWB SU/8627/A3/4*, 23 July 1987.
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- 33 See fn 31.
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- 40 *Soviet Weekly*, no 2296, 8 February 1986.
- 41 *International Affairs*, no 2, February 1987, p 46.
- 42 *Ibid*, p 47. See also V Zagladin, "War in general runs counter to the aims of the communist party", *World Marxist Review*, vol 30, no 5, May 1987.
- 43 See Gromyko and Lomeiko, *op cit*.
- 44 See "Economic and technical cooperation of the USSR with Asian countries", *Asia and Africa Today*, no 6, 1982, p 23.
- 45 See Shevardnadze's interview with the Polish press agency PAP on 19 March 1986. Published in *BBC SWB SU/8213/A1/5*, 21 March 1986.
- 46 J Dougherty and R Pfaltzgraff, *American foreign policy — from FDR to Reagan*, New York: Harper and Row, 1986, p 344.
- 47 See, for example, D Volsky, "Regional conflicts and Washington's 'globalism'", *New Times*, no 1, 13 January 1986.
- 48 As quoted in *ibid*, p 19.
- 49 During a "Studio Nine" round-table discussion on Soviet TV, on 28 February 1987. Transcript in *BBC SWB SU/8506/C/2*, 3 March 1987.
- 50 *Ibid*.
- 51 Gorbachev's interview with the Algerian journal *Revolution Africaine*, *BBC SWB SU/8224/A1/7*, 4 April 1986. See also the article by Volsky (fn 47), for a stronger line than that taken by Brutents.
- 52 Kazakov, *op cit*, p 49.
- 53 M Gorbachev, *Political report, op cit*, p 93.
- 54 See, for example, Victor Goncharov's (deputy director of the Institute for African Studies) interview with a South African journalist in *Work in Progress*, no 48, 1987. □

The Soviet Union's economic relations with Southern Africa

Adele Wildschut, researcher at the Institute for Soviet Studies, University of Stellenbosch, surveys Soviet and East European trade and aid relations with Southern Africa.

Introduction

It is self-evident that economic policy, along with diplomatic and military relations, plays a significant role in interstate relations, and in this regard the Soviet Union's relations with Southern Africa are no exception. An examination of the economic relations between Southern African countries and the Soviet Union will, therefore, contribute to our understanding of Soviet-Southern African relations in general.

This task, however, is complicated by a number of factors. Firstly, there is a paucity of economic data obtainable about Southern Africa. All the sources — United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Soviet and other international organizations — present their statistics in global figures, under headings such as "sub-Saharan Africa", "Less-Developed Countries" ("LDCs"), "non-communist LDCs", making it difficult to obtain data on individual African countries. Secondly, even the information that is available has to be treated with the greatest caution, as a wide variety of statistical methods are used. The CIA, for example, uses the figures for extended and delivered aid over a given period, whereas the OECD uses figures which represent those amounts of aid actually drawn or delivered. Furthermore, the compilations are in current US dollars, which means that the effect of inflation has to be taken into account. Finally, many of the countries under consideration have not submitted national accounts to international organizations in recent years.¹



Moscow, December 1985, Prime Minister Mugabe meets Secretary-General Gorbachev

A further problem arises in distinguishing between aid and trade. Generally, aid implies donations and grants, or credit on favourable terms. Trade, on the other hand, involves the commercial transactions — export and import — between countries. A substantial proportion of Soviet exports comprises the export of machinery and equipment for assistance projects and in some cases imports are also obtained as the result of projects initially financed by Soviet aid. In general, the Soviet Union does not publish development aid figures.²

What, then, can be said about the Soviet Union's economic relations with Southern Africa? This article seeks to provide some insights into the topic, and covers the following aspects: the politics of development aid in international relations; Soviet principles of foreign trade and aid, and the char-

acteristics and constraints of its economic relations with Africa; an overview of Soviet economic relations with Southern Africa; and case studies of Angola, Mozambique and other states.

The politics of development aid in international relations:

The Soviet approach

The transition of the former colonial empires to present-day independent states has been an important feature of the post-war period, especially in Africa. These newly-independent states soon realized that merely replacing the former colonial masters with their own nationals was an insufficient response to the demands of their growing populations for social services — health care, education and food supplies: rapid industrial development was seen to be the answer. By the 1970s, disillusionment had set in, however, for the anticipated growth and prosperity had not been realized. Instead, they were confronted by new problems of huge foreign debt, falling world prices for raw materials and their inability to feed growing populations — due to drought, deforestation, wars and famine.

The New International Economic Order³

Increasing dissatisfaction prompted a re-examination of the international economic system by the Third World. This resulted in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO) adopted by the Sixth Special Session of the United Na-

tions General Assembly in 1974. Underlying this call for NIEO is an analysis which insists that the existing international economic system is based on a structural imbalance. The rich North is characterized by highly-developed, industrialized economies dependent upon the cheap raw materials, agricultural products and minerals of the impoverished, underdeveloped South. The South, in turn, is seen as being dependent on the world markets to sell its produce and to purchase manufactured products, machinery and other infrastructural goods from the industrialized North. The international economic system is structured in such a way that world prices for raw materials are constantly falling, leading in the developing countries to reduced incomes, low growth rates and a lack of capital for industrial investment, thus forcing them to borrow on the world's financial markets and eventually leading to the debt crisis. In addition, the price of goods from the North is constantly rising, increasing the strains placed on the economies of the developing countries. The concomitant process of underdevelopment is aggravated by the activities of transnational corporations (TNCs) which, by the global reach of their activities, are able to move capital across national boundaries, to the benefit of their companies and the detriment of the developing countries. Moreover, these corporations favour activities which maximize profits but do not necessarily address the development needs of a particular country. Such grievances have been articulated in one form or another by the spokesmen of the Third World. The "North-South" conflict and the NIEO are among the most hotly debated issues in international relations today.

The demands of the NIEO and the Soviet position

The evolving Soviet approach to these issues forms an important background to the development of the Soviet Union's bilateral economic relations.

The demands of the NIEO include greater economic self-determination, sovereignty over national resources, and equal participation in the international economy. Specific proposals have been put forward in a number of areas. Trade proposals call for commodity agreements to raise and stabi-

lize prices of raw materials,⁴ expanded general preferences for the manufactured products of the less-developed nations in the markets of the industrialized world, and measures to expand the role of the developing countries in the production of the world's industrial goods.⁵ On the subject of aid, a demand is made for a target of 0,7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance from North to South, and 1 per cent from private and public sources combined. Proposals for debt relief, the elimination of legal restrictions on the nationalization of foreign direct investment, and a set of rules to govern the behaviour of the TNCs in ways that benefit host countries, feature in the arena of foreign investment. Calls are also made for a greater flow of technology — from North to South. Finally the advocates of NIEO claim a stronger voice for developing countries in the reform and management of the institutions of the international monetary system.

In 1976, at the fourth meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad IV)⁶ and at the Colombo Conference, a new set of demands were made, calling for an end to barter-type trade and aid practices, and a switch to the use of convertible currencies in Soviet and East European dealings with the Third World.

Initially the Soviet Union gave its whole-hearted support to the advocates of the NIEO, most notably the Group of 77,⁷ believing that the generally anti-imperialistic and anti-capitalistic stance being adopted would signify political and economic gains for Moscow. Indeed, the Soviet Union's dealings with developing countries were submitted as a model for the implementation of the NIEO. It was during this debate that the Soviets linked an agreement on arms reduction to the development issue,⁸ much to the annoyance of the Group of 77.

Many of the demands for the NIEO were directed towards the industrialized North as a whole, however, and this includes the Soviet Union. Moscow has reacted to this by criticizing the NIEO in three areas. It claims that the West alone is responsible for the predicament of the developing countries on account of its history of imperialist and colonial plunder. It further argues that the issue of discrimination in international trade must be addressed in its

entirety — including East-West trade. Finally it submits that the link between disarmament and development cannot be ignored.⁹

These responses to the NIEO reflect Soviet economic concerns, a growing acceptance of the nature of the international economic system and a desire to become an integral part of it. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to explore this aspect further, it is important to point out that the developing world has acquired a significant voice in the international arena, is able to play off East and West, and sometimes uses the element of rivalry between East and West to its advantage. No state can afford to ignore this and act unilaterally. This leads us to a consideration of Soviet principles of foreign trade and economic relations.

Soviet principles of foreign trade and aid, and the characteristics and constraints of its economic relations with Africa¹⁰

Principles of foreign trade and economic relations are well articulated in official Soviet publications, and are based on the premise of an international division of labour, in which the Soviet Union plays an active part. As enunciated by the Soviet Union, these principles are: equality and mutual benefit; help in overcoming the backwardness of newly-liberated countries; respect for sovereignty and non-interference in one another's internal affairs.

The characteristics of Soviet foreign trade and economic relations largely reflect the nature of the Soviet economy. The Soviet Union prefers state-to-state economic relations based on long-term treaties and agreements. In Soviet eyes, intergovernmental economic relations provide a more stable basis for the development of trade, introduce elements of planning into trade and economic relationships and make it possible to reduce the dependence upon market forces. In addition to long-term treaties and agreements, intergovernmental commissions on the future development and co-ordination of trade, economic, scientific and technical co-operation are established with as many countries as possible.

The commodity structure of Soviet exports and the types of projects which

the Soviet Union undertakes also reflect the principal characteristics of the Soviet economy. Machinery and equipment are the most important and dynamic items of Soviet exports to developing countries. More than half of the exports of technology from the Soviet Union to developing countries consist of complete sets of equipment intended for projects being undertaken with Soviet technical assistance. A substantial proportion of the industrial projects being constructed by Soviet organizations in developing countries on general contract terms are handled on a turn-key basis. This allows the general contractors to exert a stronger influence on the course and results of construction, to reduce building times and to improve the quality of work. Oil-producing countries that possess sufficient foreign currency are very prominent in this type of co-operation.

Equipment is supplied by the Soviet Union for iron and steel works, enterprises in the power, engineering and metal-working sectors, for petroleum, chemical and other industries and for transport. The Soviet Union assists in prospecting for and developing natural resources and fuel energy, and in the development of agriculture, including

the construction of irrigation systems. A form of co-operation on a product-pay-back basis is also common; this means that, in payment for its assistance, the Soviet Union receives some of the output from the enterprise that has been built.

The Soviet Union grants commercial credit on easy terms for deliveries of metal-cutting machine tools, power equipment, tractors, lorries, and air transport equipment. In recent years joint co-operation with a third country has featured in Soviet economic assistance: Soviet-Brazilian co-operation in the \$900 million Capanda hydroelectric project in Angola is an example.

Among Soviet exports to developing countries are raw materials — including rolled iron and steel, liquid fuel, timber, chemical products, cement and fertilizers — and consumer goods, such as fabrics, matches, crockery, domestic equipment and medicines. The Soviet Union's imports from developing countries consist principally of mineral and other raw materials, though finished and semi-finished goods are now also making up an increasing proportion of their trade.

Moscow's economic relations with the developing world are subject to vari-

ous constraints.¹¹ In the first place, the structure of the Soviet economy, based as it is upon heavy industry, is not sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapidly changing markets. The increasing demand for consumer goods among the Soviet Union's own population also restricts its ability to export these to the developing countries. The attempts to achieve the necessary diversification of its economy and acceptably high growth rates also reduce the Soviet Union's ability to donate substantial amounts of aid.

It is also significant that the East European economies within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) are heavily dependent on trade for their very solvency. They would therefore like to see economic policies divorced from political considerations within the CMEA.

Finally, in many cases the needs of the more advanced developing countries have outstripped the technological capacity of the Soviet Union to fulfill them. On the other hand, the poorest countries, basing their claims to assistance on a common adherence to Marxist principles, make demands upon the Soviet Union which the latter neither can nor wishes to accommodate. The ideological challenges and problems posed by the LDCs are proving increasingly difficult to overcome.

Overview of Soviet economic relations with Southern Africa

Formal economic links

Table 1 provides a general indication of the Soviet Union's formal trade and economic links with Southern Africa. In this article, the focus is on the nine countries of the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), though no information on Soviet relations with Malawi and Swaziland was obtainable. As can be seen from the table, the formal links are fairly widespread. The Soviet Union has diplomatic relations with all the SADCC states, with the exception of Swaziland and Malawi, trade agreements with six of the states and economic and technical agreements with five. There is a trade representative (a mission, councillor or information centre) in five of these countries.

The Soviet Union participates in trade exhibitions and international trade fairs

Table 1
SOVIET UNION'S ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL SADCC COUNTRIES

	Diplomatic relations (Date established)	Trade agreement (Date signed)	Economic and technical agreement (Date signed)	Trade mission	Other agreements
Angola	11/11/1975	26/5/1976	26/5/1976	Yes	—
Botswana	6/3/1970	20/5/1987	—	—	—
Lesotho	1/2/1980	—	—	—	Development and Co-operation agreement 11/12/85
Malawi	—	—	—	—	—
Mozambique	27/6/1975	12/2/1976	12/2/1976	Yes	—
Swaziland	—	—	—	—	—
Tanzania	11/12/1961	14/8/1963	26/5/1966	Trade Councillor	—
Zambia	30/10/1964	17/12/1971	26/5/1967	Yes	—
Zimbabwe	18/11/1981	18/1/1984	3/12/1985	Trade Information Centre	—

Sources:

Foreign Trade, no 4, 1986; V Lopatov, *The Soviet Union and Africa*, Moscow: Progress, 1987, pp 106–107; British Broadcasting Corporation — Summary of World Broadcasts SU/8574/i; Foreign Broadcasts Information Service — Soviet, 16 February 1985.

Note: The dates represent the first agreements signed. There have been subsequent renewals of the agreements.

in Southern Africa: for example, a Soviet delegation attended the 1984 Luanda Trade Exhibition as well as trade fairs in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The Soviet Union has also recently taken an interest in SADCC itself, and sent a delegation to the 1986 Conference held in Harare on 30–31 January. In April 1986 it also sent representatives, together with those of the German Democratic Republic, to an SADCC funding session for the Beira Corridor railway project. This marks a change in the Soviet Union's attitude towards regional organizations, as it normally prefers to deal with countries on a bilateral basis and did not attend SADCC conferences before 1986.

Trade

Angola and Mozambique are regular trading partners with the Soviet Union. Trade with Tanzania has declined to the extent that no figures are provided for 1985 and 1986. Although the Soviet Union trades with other countries in Southern Africa, such as Zambia, Zimbabwe and recently Botswana, the volume of trade is negligible, and figures do not appear in the official statistics. Table 2 shows that the countries of North Africa, especially Egypt and Libya, are the most important trading partners of the Soviet Union in Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Angola and Mozambique are significant trading partners.

Economic assistance

Economic and technical assistance agreements for the performance of various tasks are concluded by Soviet organizations.¹² These cover a wide range of activities: planning and prospecting work; the supply of equipment complexes, accessories, spares and materials not produced locally; the provision of specialists for construction, equipment assembly and maintenance jobs; assistance in creating national geological services, and planning, construction and research; assistance in training local personnel on-site at construction or operating facilities; building, equipping and organizing educational institutions locally, or by training Africans in Soviet enterprises and educational institutions; and sending Soviet advisers and consultants to institutions and organizations in African countries.

African countries normally assume certain obligations under such assis-

Table 2
VOLUME OF SOVIET UNION'S TRADE WITH AFRICA
(In Rb mn)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Algeria:							
Export	92,6	113,3	132,4	160,5	142,3	132,3	88,4
Import	62,5	84,2	46,1	12,2	145,5	272,9	239,4
Angola:							
Export	69,1	107,0	61,0	170,3	146,6	94,0	154,9
Import	15,8	8,1	3,4	2,8	3,1	2,5	3,3
Benin:							
Export	5,0	1,6	2,4	—	—	—	—
Import	0,9	0,4	0,5	—	—	—	—
Cameroon:							
Export	5,2	3,0	3,3	2,0	6,2	8,2	7,1
Import	5,2	19,1	10,7	14,3	14,9	31,4	23,9
Congo:							
Export	9,7	6,9	8,4	4,7	5,3	5,8	4,9
Import	4,6	5,5	4,0	2,6	1,6	4,1	5,4
Côte d'Ivoire:							
Export	2,9	1,0	1,0	1,3	3,9	4,6	5,9
Import	76,8	102,0	69,9	49,8	143,2	125,6	123,0
Egypt:							
Export	172,7	244,0	218,6	255,3	276,7	282,5	263,6
Import	211,0	267,0	302,1	357,0	270,0	307,6	268,2
Ethiopia:							
Export	120,8	136,2	182,3	168,0	203,2	282,6	153,1
Import	25,7	20,1	13,2	18,0	18,7	34,6	29,2
Ghana:							
Export	0,3	9,3	0,4	2,3	1,5	1,0	1,0
Import	122,3	38,7	37,0	50,2	47,8	38,4	54,8
Guinea:							
Export	13,2	20,9	15,4	20,4	33,5	40,5	35,9
Import	50,8	63,1	28,5	44,1	57,0	58,0	51,1
Libya:							
Export	163,4	189,9	221,1	264,2	139,9	83,4	35,2
Import	287,5	361,2	1125,8	1013,4	1133,4	877,8	695,4
Morocco:							
Export	92,6	126,9	136,1	121,6	118,3	112,5	65,6
Import	105,4	134,2	58,6	31,2	41,4	66,2	52,5
Mozambique:							
Export	17,9	35,7	44,2	77,0	137,5	84,1	57,9
Import	1,7	1,3	6,7	0,8	1,6	1,5	1,7
Nigeria:							
Export	80,2	159,9	265,1	306,9	173,8	149,1	99,9
Import	19,4	19,5	13,9	67,8	42,9	41,0	9,5
Sudan:							
Export	5,6	1,4	0,4	0,8	0,2	—	—
Import	11,9	38,1	8,8	34,7	16,4	—	—
Sierra Leone:							
Export	5,1	6,8	1,8	2,0	3,0	—	—
Import	3,2	3,5	8,0	0,1	1,7	—	—
Tanzania:							
Export	0,8	2,1	3,9	2,9	3,7	4,7	—
Import	9,9	10,2	6,9	2,9	4,3	2,2	—
Tunisia:							
Export	19,5	12,7	6,1	6,8	31,5	11,4	19,7
Import	5,5	2,4	5,1	2,8	4,8	11,6	19,2

Source:

Vneshnyaya Torgovlya, 1980–1987 (Foreign Trade).

A journal published by Ministry of Foreign Trade, Moscow.

tance agreements:¹³ the hiring and paying of local workers; the acquisition of local building materials; the covering of the expenses for transporting equipment and materials supplied by the Soviet Union from the port of entry to the construction site; and various operating expenses in local currency incurred under specific development projects.

Soviet economic aid to African countries is aimed primarily at creating or reinforcing the state sector, as Soviet economists believe that this must play the principal role in the development of a multi-sector economy. The Soviet Union also provides long-term credits on easy terms.

Before we consider individual countries in Southern Africa, we should look at Soviet aid to Africa and the developing world in general, since this will provide a useful perspective. Table 3 reveals some interesting trends: Algeria and Egypt are clearly favoured in Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa, Angola and Mozambique feature prominently, to-

gether with Guinea and Ethiopia. The data reproduced in this table lead one to the conclusion that in Asia it is the countries contiguous to the Soviet Union that are the most likely to receive Soviet aid, while in Africa it is the important states of North Africa and those closest to the Middle East that attract attention. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the bias of Soviet aid towards heavy industrial and infrastructural projects.

Soviet and CMEA aid has come in for heavy criticism, especially in the West. According to one study,¹⁴ in recent years CMEA assistance to sub-Saharan Africa has only accounted for about 3 per cent of the region's total aid receipts, and of this amount two-thirds has gone to Ethiopia. The Soviet Union gives little in the form of food aid. In 1984 it provided only \$15 million in food aid to drought-stricken Africa, of which only \$500 000 went to Ethiopia.

Few developing countries have the infrastructure which would permit their public sectors to absorb the large industrial projects favoured by the Soviet

Union. The steel and cement plants constructed by the Soviets in the developing world are also of questionable economic value, given the low prices of these commodities. Soviet aid pledges are tied to the use or purchase of Soviet goods and services, and in some sectors Soviet technology is obsolete by Western standards.

The Soviets provide no local cost financing for projects and make charges in hard currency for technical services. The CMEA countries make no contribution to the major multilateral development programmes, with the exception of small non-convertible donations to

Table 3
GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECTS (AS AT 1 JANUARY 1982)

Country	Total		Industrial enterprises	
	Under agreements	Put into operation	Under agreements	Put into operation
Total	1 271	705	513	310
Asia	690	408	326	204
Afghanistan	167	78	46	19
India	92	56	65	38
Iraq	99	73	49	38
Iran	121	81	87	59
Kampuchea	23	2	4	5
Pakistan	13	8	4	2
Syria	64	35	24	16
Turkey	15	8	13	8
PDR Yemen	33	15	11	5
Africa	556	295	174	106
Angola	28	11	1	—
Algeria	120	65	29	25
Congo	20	10	5	2
Egypt	107	95	47	36
Guinea	33	26	12	9
Libya	15	2	6	2
Madagascar	9	2	6	2
Mali	17	13	3	1
Mozambique	33	6	7	—
Nigeria	15	2	6	2
Ethiopia	41	4	18	2

Source: E.K Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: An economic bind*, New York: Praeger, 1983, p 158.

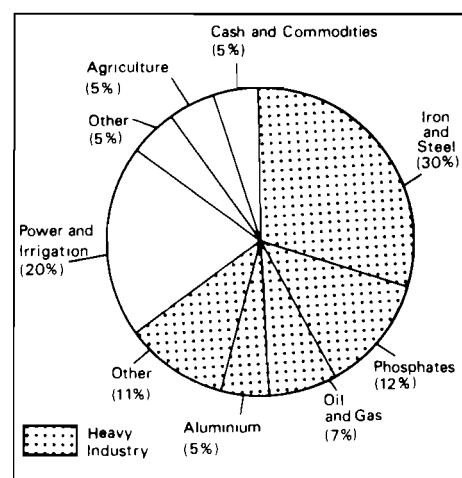


Figure 1: Sectoral distribution of Soviet aid, 1954-79

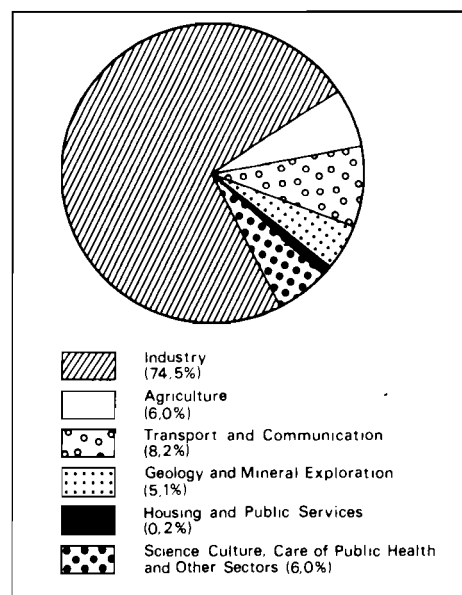


Figure 2: Share of national economic sectors in the volume of USSR economic and technical assistance to developing countries
Source: E K Valkenier, *op cit*, p 156

the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Since the mid-1970s the Soviet Union's average loan terms have hardened significantly. East European terms are even harsher, and there is a growing tendency to extend trade credits on non-concessional terms.

Case studies

Angola

The Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with Angola in 1975, and in May the following year the two countries concluded trade and economic technical agreements and immediately began trading with each other.¹⁵ Nevertheless, while Angola has close ties with the Soviet Union, its main trading partners are in the West. In 1986 the USA imported \$729 million worth of Angolan

Table 6
TRADE WITH ANGOLA
(US\$ mn)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
<i>Angolan Exports:</i>						
USA	527	904	697	911	1 010	1 054
Spain	34	140	176	171	194	327
UK	193	12	13	70	212	196
Brazil	110	156	100	215	127	148
Portugal	15	15	23	14	38	87
<i>Angolan Imports:</i>						
Portugal	178	225	85	100	154	165
USA	112	269	158	91	103	137
France	94	164	119	84	100	136
Brazil	119	107	90	46	90	129
USSR ^{ab}	107	149	84	230	180	112
Italy	66	58	61	37	47	76
Spain	46	25	13	34	75	72
West Germany	102	80	59	43	54	71
UK	65	43	46	35	48	56
Japan	83	83	52	25	22	46
Sweden	66	45	39	18	26	42
East Germany ^{bc}	151	88	109	100	280	287

a) Excluding military sales.

b) At official exchange rates.

c) Trade figures broken down into imports and exports are not published by East Germany.

Source:

Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Profile, Angola, 1987.

Table 4
ECONOMIC AID EXTENDED
TO NON-COMMUNIST LDCS
BY REGIONS
(In US\$ mn)

Regions	1954-1981	1980	1981
North Africa	3 250	315	-
Sub-Saharan Africa	2 870	310	125
East Asia	260	-	-
Latin America	1 420	250	170
Middle East	7 925	-	55
South Asia	6 625	1 195	100

Source:

US Department of State: *Soviet and East European aid to the Third World, 1981.*

Table 5
ACADEMIC STUDENTS FROM
LDCS BEING TRAINED IN
THE USSR AND EASTERN
EUROPE, AS AT DECEMBER
1981

Africa	34 805
North Africa	4 485
Sub-Saharan Africa	30 320
East Asia	15
Latin America	6 800
Middle East	18 650
South Asia	11 820

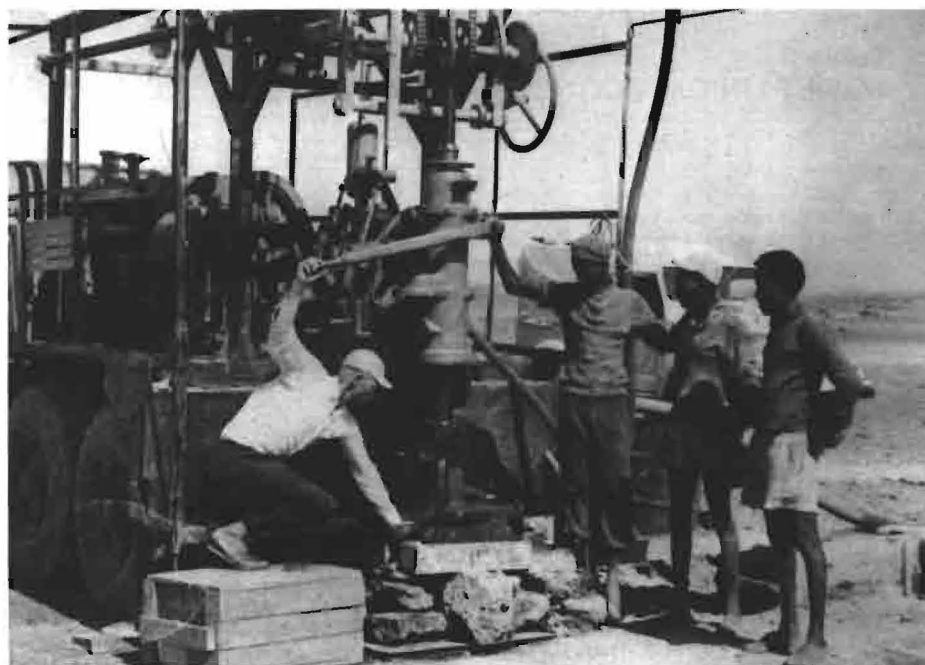
Source:

US Department of State: *Soviet and East European aid to the Third World, 1981.*

exports (more than half of the total); other major markets for Angola's exports are Spain, Britain, Brazil and France. In terms of Angola's imports, major suppliers are Portugal, the USA,

France and Brazil, with the Soviet Union fifth in rank (see Table 6).

Table 7 reveals the general decline in Soviet trade with Angola during the period 1980 to 1985. The principal cate-



Soviet technical assistance to Ethiopia in the 1960s

Table 7
THE STRUCTURE OF SOVIET TRADE WITH ANGOLA
(In Rb '000)¹

	1980	1982	1983	1984	1985
<i>Angolan Imports</i>					
Machines, equipment and transport material	57 372	42 794	139 063	130 259	54 520
Agricultural machinery and equipment	1 123	5	3 140	—	—
Combines	346 (25)	—	—	—	—
Ships and shipping equipment	—	300	420	—	—
Aviation equipment	—	—	—	52 985	19 909
Automobile parts (also in unassembled form) and maintenance equipment	31 821	31 051	69 588	58 090	17 112
Specialized automobiles	3 162 (156)	1 277 (31)	3 816 (88)	3 682 (80)	148 (6)
Goods for aerial communication ²	12 557	2 890	46 294	52 985	—
Passenger cars	49 (22)	842 (222)	2 092 (553)	3 443 (811)	3 245 (661)
Tinned dairy products	1 091	224	423	—	904
Tinned fish	329	—	—	—	—
Fresh fish	—	—	10 800	6 846	22 850
Printed works	151	211	242	154	301
<i>Angolan exports</i>					
Sisal	249	—	—	—	—
Coffee beans	12 545	—	—	—	—
Fuel, raw minerals, metals	—	3 413	2 745	3 026	2 481

Notes:

1 Quantity in brackets.

2 Presumably radar, radios, etc.

Sources:

Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSR v 1980q. (Foreign Trade of the USSR in 1980); *Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSSR v 1983q.* Published by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade, Moscow, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986.

gory in Soviet exports to Angola is that of machinery and transport equipment — indicative both of the structure of Soviet industrial output and of Angola's need to build up its infrastructure. Exports in this category fell from a peak of Rb 139 million in 1983 to Rb 54 million in 1985. With the exception of "fresh fish", all other categories of exports also declined after 1983.

As far as Angola's exports to the Soviet Union are concerned, sisal and coffee beans ceased to feature in the figures after 1982. Since then, fuels, raw minerals and metals have constituted the only significant category of Soviet imports from Angola. As the Soviet Union reassesses its own economic priorities the pattern of trade may broaden to include more processed goods, however.

The data on Soviet economic projects in Angola (Table 8)¹⁶ show that for all three periods covered between 1984 and 1987, food supplies received the greatest attention. Between 1984 and 1985 power engineering projects were prominent, but, probably because these were of a long term nature, none were listed for subsequent years. Other sectors receiving considerable attention were transport, communications and education.

Although there are insufficient data from which to draw firm conclusions, certain features suggest that the priority

Table 8
SOVIET UNION: ECONOMIC PROJECTS (AID AND TRADE) 1984–1987: ANGOLA

1984/85	1986	1987
1) <i>Agriculture, fishing, food</i> — cotton-growing state farm; — meat processing factory; — ship repair facility for fishing boats; — materials and equipment; — factory.	— meat by-products factory; — co-operative fishing \$3 m; — agricultural technical college; — 13 fishing launches and motors 45 tonnes of nets and ropes 5000 floats and assorted equipment 25 heavy and light refrigeration vehicles.	— \$7 m equipment to peasants' association; — fishing co-operation to continue, % of catch for the domestic market.
2) <i>Water</i> — irrigation schemes; — improvement of water supply.	—	—
3) <i>Power engineering</i> — turbine generators for power station; — 500 km power lines; — feasibility studies for hydroelectricity; — rural electrification projects; — serving of power stations; — Capanda hydroelectric power station (Joint venture with Brazil) and electrification of Malanje.	—	—

Table 8 (continued)

1984/85	1986	1987
4) <i>Ferrous metallurgy/mining</i> – geology-prospecting.	–	–
5) <i>Energy: oil/coal</i> – oil tank farms.	–	–
6) <i>Chemical/petrochemical</i> –	– petrochemical development plan.	–
7) <i>Construction</i> –	– building industry equipment.	–
8) <i>Transport and communication</i> – 28 service stations and technical assistance centres; – vehicles and spare parts; – construction and restoration of bridges; – tractor and motor depots; – ships and shipping equipment; – aeroplanes and helicopters.	– vehicles; – transport construction materials; – electronic equipment to upgrade telecommunications.	–
9) <i>Education</i> – personnel training; – training in municipal economy; – 2 vocational agricultural schools (200 students each); – training of national cadres; – 1000 Angolans studying in Soviet Union.	– technical centres for industrial training; – Soviet specialists in Angola.	– Soviet experts to assist in construction of new and reconstruction of existing education centres in Lubango; – 4 training centres for training of specialists in metal-work, construction, power generation, agriculture; 900 graduates per annum.
10) <i>Health care</i> – medicines; – public health, hospitals.	– medicines and hospital supplies.	– 24 Soviet lecturers for health sector; – \$300 000 donation medicine, surgical instruments and other equipment for Lubango City Hospital; – 900 000 doses of anti-cholera vaccine.

NOTES:

1984–86	1987
1) Categories taken from V Lopatov, <i>The Soviet Union and Africa</i> , Moscow: Progress, 1987, pp 162–163.	1) Projects to be undertaken in terms of the long-term economic and technical agreement from 1986–1990 and up to year 2000 as of 26/3/87: – prospecting oil and gas; – building and assembling power lines; – technical assistance in a) building and rebuilding light and processing industry enterprises b) development of livestock; – building fishing port and factory for processing hake.
2) The data for 1986 is rather scanty. Normally information for a particular year can be obtained in the following year, eg. for 1985 in 1986.	2) 20 major projects to be undertaken by May 1987 by CMEA in Angola include: – fishing industry; – mining enterprises; – stock farms; – expansion and supply of 3 hospitals and a medical rehabilitation centre in Luanda; – training of personnel.
3) Soviet Union non-military exports: 1983 1984 1985 \$230 m \$180 m \$112 m. (<i>EIU Country Report, Angola</i> , 4/1986)	
4) Sales financed by long-term credits repayable over 10 years with a 3 year period of grace, at interest rate 3% p.a.	
5) 1985 (September) total debt to USSR \$2.06 bn (total external debt \$3.25 bn).	
6) A moratorium on principle repayments was granted for 1986/87.	
7) Trends cannot be deduced from available information, as the time span is too short (2 years).	
8) Sources: Database: Institute for Soviet Studies.	

areas for Soviet projects in Angola are food supply infrastructure, communications, power and education. This would accord with the Soviet Union's application of its principles of "mutual benefit" and "overcoming backwardness". On this basis one may conclude that some of the criticism levelled at the nature of Soviet aid are not entirely justified, especially since the Soviet Union has to "compete" in this field with Angola's other trading partners and aid donors.¹⁷

Mozambique

The Soviet Union and Mozambique established diplomatic relations in 1975. A trade agreement was concluded in the same year, followed by an economic and technical agreement in 1976. However, as Tables 9 and 10

Table 9
DIRECTION OF MOZAMBIQUE TRADE
(% of total)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
<i>Exports to:</i>						
OECD countries	56	52	40	52	59	70
Centrally planned economies	10	20	11	18	15	18
Others	34	28	49	30	26	12
<i>Imports from:</i>						
OECD countries	36	44	39	58	52	51
Centrally planned economies	14	14	19	17	26	25
African countries	14	21	31	18	16	14
Others	36	21	11	7	6	10

Source:
National Planning Commission, Mozambique in *Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Profile*, 1987.

Table 10
ORIGIN OF MOZAMBIKAN IMPORTS BY COUNTRY
(MT mn)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985 ^a
OECD countries	9 443,2	12 381,8	12 351,9	14 775,2	12 013,7	9 929,9
of which:						
France	1 094,3	3 015,9	2 451,0	2 155,4	1 457,5	1 041,7
Portugal	1 165,4	1 288,7	1 922,2	2 489,4	1 907,0	903,7
West Germany	773,2	784,2	1 134,1	1 106,7	805,1	555,7
Sweden	731,4	695,0	1 156,2	906,2	879,0	488,4
Italy	1 106,4	1 237,1	854,4	1 359,9	800,3	978,3
UK	666,7	991,7	758,6	1 816,3	967,5	561,2
USA	967,3	705,5	738,6	866,9	1 317,0	2 110,2
Switzerland	818,5	1 252,2	725,6	541,2	254,5	171,3
Japan	830,7	891,7	953,2	994,5	738,8	486,7
Netherlands	403,0	715,2	419,1	836,3	1 136,8	837,7
Belgium & Luxembourg	195,7	304,5	230,3	244,7	279,8	225,3
Canada	72,3	89,7	175,6	157,8	325,8	335,3
other	717,3	410,4	833,0	1 299,9	1 144,6	797,4
Centrally planned economies	3 581,0	3 982,2	6 136,1	4 375,9	6 039,7	4 655,0
of which:						
East Germany	1 691,4	1 823,1	3 021,8	1 601,3	933,9	482,8
USSR	496,3	514,5	1 373,3	1 927,7	4 454,5	3 565,9
Romania	895,4	119,9	675,8	19,5	130,9	863,9
China	94,2	308,4	524,6	68,9	153,1	335,5
Bulgaria	92,8	272,0	295,1	201,6	46,0	51,8
Czechoslovakia	142,4	374,2	159,7	288,9	309,1	164,5
other	168,5	570,1	95,8	268,0	12,2	14,7
Africa	3 748,3	5 873,6	9 797,5	4 513,0	3 665,4	2 654,7
of which:						
South Africa	2 854,2	3 537,2	2 552,6	2 448,2	2 686,7	2 139,4
Algeria	—	1 444,4	2 956,5	7,5	8,9	—
Libya	—	—	3 317,8	—	0,8	—
Zimbabwe	12,5	159,2	518,7	816,9	291,8	162,6
Botswana	0,2	171,4	223,5	259,4	112,0	14,6
other	881,4	561,4	228,4	981,0	565,2	338,1
Other countries	9 149,8	6 080,0	3 278,2	1 907,3	1 184,5	1 695,6
Total	25 922,3	28 317,6	31 573,7	25 571,4	22 903,3	18 298,1

^aFigures should be treated with caution; totals do not add in original.

Source:

National Planning Commission, Mozambique, 1986, in *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Profile*, 1987.

show, the Western industrialized countries of the OECD have remained Mozambique's most important trading partners.

Table 11 provides a breakdown of Soviet exports to Mozambique during the period 1980 to 1985 (Figures for 1981 are not available). Oil and related products have become increasingly important and machinery, equipment and components also feature strongly. Mozambique's exports to the Soviet Union have declined steadily, creating a very unfavourable trade balance for the former. This situation is partly a consequence of Mozambique's economic and security crisis, but is also due to the fact that its raw materials and other products are of little use to the Soviets. In trade relations between these two states, economic considerations are more important than ideological ones.

Since 1976 the Soviet Union has apparently been involved in more than forty projects in Mozambique. Though the information available (see Tables 12 and 13) is insufficient to draw firm conclusions, it appears that Mozambique's needs in the face of civil war and drought have determined the nature of Soviet aid.

Other countries

Botswana

Botswana signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Union on 20 May 1987. The terms of this agreement provide for most-favoured nation status, that transactions be conducted in convertible currency and that both countries establish a trade mission. The Soviet Union's involvement in an underground water project has been reported. There are no aid or trade figures available.

Lesotho

A development and co-operation agreement was signed in 1985, covering Soviet-Lesotho co-operation in the fields of education, culture, development, technology, the film and television industry, radio broadcasting and sport. There is no trade agreement between the two countries.

Zambia

Zambia has a trade agreement (1971) and an economic and technical agreement (1967) with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union supplies aircraft, power

Table 11
THE STRUCTURE OF SOVIET TRADE WITH MOZAMBIQUE
(In Rb '000)

	1980	1982	1983	1984	1985
<i>Mozambican imports</i>					
Machines, equipment and transport material	11 674	28 426	39 936	88 160	27 297
Road construction and equipment	340	519	—	—	—
Automobile parts	476	9 439	692	11 506	878
Specialized automobiles	44	—	—	—	—
	(22)*				
Goods for aerial communication**	5 643	428	19 633	28 305	6 165
Passenger cars	1 019	935	31	880	81
	(504)	(367)	—	(207)	(20)
Oil and oil products	—	11	19 698	32 548	36 878
Fresh & frozen fish	2 725	1 979	1 494	2 996	2 238
	(15739t)	(770t)	(4682t)	(9600t)	(7019t)
Ammonia	—	5 940	—	—	—
Printed works	71	147	288	299	478
Clothing and linen	—	—	—	—	1 804
Rolled ferrous metal	—	—	—	597	481
<i>Mozambican exports</i>					
Non-ferrous metals	1 209	—	—	—	—
Metal-ore and concentrate	—	868	197	719	—
Raw sugar	—	5 176	—	—	—
Nuts, almonds	—	—	178	364	508
Twine, string	—	—	—	—	526

Sources:

Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSSR v 1980q. (Foreign Trade of the USSR in 1980); *Vneshnyaya Torgovlya SSSR v 1983q.* Published by the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade, Moscow, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986.

and construction equipment, machinery, motor vehicles, drugs, canned fish, watches and clocks, electric bulbs, matchwood and soap. Zambia exports non-ferrous metals and perfumery products to the Soviet Union.¹⁸ In 1986, the Soviet Union and German Democratic Republic rescheduled repayment of Zambia's loans, totalling \$88 million.¹⁹

Twenty-five doctors, 10 university professors and scholarships for 1 100 students will be financed by the Soviet Union's contribution to the Non-Aligned Movement Fund for Africa.

Tanzania

A trade agreement (1963) and an economic and technical agreement



Prime Minister Mugabe visiting Romania in 1981

Table 12
GROSS OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO MOZAMBIQUE^a
(US\$ mn)

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Bilateral	110,9	166,9	161,9	193,4	225,4
of which:					
USA	6,0	2,0	13,0	16,0	47,0
Sweden	31,6	46,3	36,7	30,6	34,0
Italy	8,2	27,4	32,9	34,2	28,6
Netherlands	18,3	29,5	16,8	29,2	24,8
Norway	12,1	16,5	18,0	14,9	21,2
France	2,6	5,1	9,8	11,9	20,3
UK	10,9	3,4	2,7	5,6	10,9
Multilateral	32,7	41,3	50,2	69,3	78,3
of which:					
European Community	10,5	4,0	14,9	21,4	25,4
World Food Programme	4,9	10,6	12,5	19,6	12,1
Africa Development Fund	1,6	8,3	1,8	3,3	8,8
United Nations Development Programme	8,0	9,4	7,4	7,8	8,4
Total	143,6	208,2	212,1	262,7	303,6
of which:					
grants:	132,8	150,3	164,4	215,5	224,9

^aDisbursements. Official development assistance is defined as grants and loans with at least a 25 per cent grant element, provided by OECD and Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries member countries and multilateral agencies, and administered with the aim of promoting development and welfare in the recipient country. International Monetary Fund loans, other than Trust Fund facilities, are excluded, as is aid from the Eastern bloc.

Source:

OECD Development Assistance Committee, Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries in *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Profile, Mozambique*, 1987.

(1966) represent the formal economic links between Tanzania and the Soviet Union. However, trade between the two countries has declined. The following figures give an indication of this.

In 1980, Tanzanian exports to the Soviet Union amounted to Tsh 130 million, while imports from the Soviet Union to Tanzania totalled Tsh 8 million. In 1985, exports to the Soviet Union amounted to Tsh 22 million and imports from the Soviet Union to Tsh 120 million. This reflected the decline in sisal exports to the Soviet Union.

In 1986, the Soviet Union granted Tanzania a loan of Tsh 80 million, in order to expand the production of oil-seeds, including castor oil. The Soviet Union assists in the rehabilitation of state and co-operative farms producing oil-seeds and processing factories. Negotiations for the supply of tractors and agricultural equipment were entered into.²⁰

The above remarks are based on information retrieved from the database of the Institute for Soviet Studies, University of Stellenbosch, for the years 1985–1987.²¹ They should not be seen

as providing a comprehensive record of Soviet-Southern African economic relations.

Summary and conclusions

There are various reasons why the statistical data reproduced in this article should be interpreted with caution. Little substantive data is available; statistical methods differ from series to series, making comparisons difficult; and there is little research yet available on Soviet or CMEA relations with individual African states. In addition, despite the attempts made here to differentiate between aid and trade, official figures often fail to make this distinction and we have then to talk about “economic relations”. It should also be borne in mind that the whole issue of development is extremely contentious.

Whether Western criticisms of Soviet aid to Africa are justified or not needs further investigation from other perspectives. What have African leaders themselves said about Soviet aid — with due regard to the context of inter-

national politics and the nature of particular grants-in-aid or agreements concluded? To what extent do African leaders solicit aid from, or promote trade with, the Soviet Union? How does the development of Soviet economic relations with Africa compare with that with other parts of the Third World?

More pertinent to the focus of this article, perhaps, is the question of how Soviet-Southern African relations will develop. The recent establishment of firmer ties with Botswana and Zimbabwe seems to indicate that the Soviet Union will expend and strengthen its links with the countries of the region. The Soviets are showing an increasing sensitivity to the issue of development aid and the requirements of individual countries. It also seems likely that they will seek to play a more prominent role in the activities of multilateral aid organizations — witness their contributions to the Non-Aligned Movement Fund, and their attendance of an SADCC funding meeting for the Beira Corridor project.

In conclusion, while expecting the diversification and expansion of ties between the Soviet Union and the countries of Southern Africa, one must bear in mind that a great deal will be determined by the domestic economic and political constraints facing the Soviet Union.

References

- 1 See W Kühne, *Die Politik der Sowjetunion in Afrika*, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 1983, pp 140–144.
- 2 On a few occasions, however, Soviet officials have provided figures on aid disbursements. See Kühne, *op cit*, p 141 and *British Broadcasting Corporation — Summary of World Broadcasts (BBCSWB) SU/8671/i*, 12 September 1987.
- 3 Two useful sources for the discussion about the NIEO are Robert H Donaldson, “The Second World, the Third World and the New International Economic Order” in Robert H Donaldson (ed), *The Soviet Union in the Third World: Successes and failures*, Boulder: Westview, 1981, and Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, *The Soviet Union and the Third World: An economic bind*, New York: Praeger, 1983, chapter 4.
- 4 The Lomé Conventions are of particular importance here. In 1975 the First Lomé Convention was signed between 9 EC countries and 49 developing countries. In terms of these agreements, the prices of raw materials and primary products are stabilized and special

Continued on p 103

Table 13
SOVIET UNION: ECONOMIC PROJECTS (AID AND TRADE) 1984–1987: MOZAMBIQUE

1984/85	1986	1987
1) <i>Agriculture, food, fishing</i> ¹ – 9000 tons of fish; – agricultural implements factory (6000–8000 tons p.a.).	– trawlers; – agricultural implements factory (31000 tons p.a.); – 3rd refrigerated fishing trawler (delivered Nov. 85).	– repairs to fishing vessels; – 10,200 tons fish caught in 1986 by joint Soviet-Mozambique fishing company; – \$48 m commercial credit for rural development to be paid over 3 years.
2) <i>Water</i> – irrigation — 200 000 ha; – water-tank lorries — \$500 000.	–	– equipping irrigation systems in south of country; – artesian wells in Gaza-province — water for 70 000 people to irrigate peasant fields; – wells in Inhambane and other provinces.
3) <i>Power engineering</i> –	– repairs of power lines.	–
4) <i>Ferrous metallurgy mining</i> – mineral exploration assistance; – mining equipment repair shop.	– pergamite mining.	–
5) <i>Energy</i> – liquid fuel supplies; – development of coal deposits; – factory to process coal; – 2 quarries.	– equipment for coal mining; – shaft-sinking in Moatize coal mining; – oil prospecting.	–
6) <i>Chemical/petrochemical</i> –	– exploration of gas reserves (fertilizer and chemical products).	–
7) <i>Construction</i> –	–	–
8) <i>Transport and Communication</i> – merchant marine training; – ship repairs; – floating dockyard (1982) — 130 vessels serviced; – repairs to roads, railways, bridges and electricity lines (\$4 m credit); – construction of Moatize-Beira railway planned.	– reopening of 5 small ports; – technicians on railway.	– Soviet specialists for floating ship repair complex.
9) <i>Education</i> – training of personnel; – secondary school; – equipment to build physics and mechanics laboratory.	– 500 000 skilled workers in technical schools; – 230 completed courses in USSR; – 445 Mozambicans in USSR; – 195 in 1986.	– Soviet teachers, engineers and other specialists; – 10 scholarships to children (victims of war and hunger); – 5 vocational and technical colleges; – 1 industrial teacher training technical centre.
10) <i>Health care</i> – health services; – 40–90 Soviet doctors.	–	– Soviet doctors.

Source:

Database: Institute of Soviet Studies, University of Stellenbosch.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Donation of consumer goods to assist in marketing campaigns 1985 — \$11,7 m — clothing, linen, consumer goods.

1986 — clothing, footwear, school equipment. \$500 000 — sewing machines, beds, clothing, domestic utensils.

\$12,5 m — consumer goods (3/86 aim)

\$29 m — consumer goods (9/86 aim)

Rb10 m — consumer goods (Rb70 m promised 2/86 *Economist Intelligence Unit, Commodity Report*).This doesn't appear to be the norm for foreign trade — could possibly be classified as pure *aid*. The data is very confusing — from the different sources one is not sure whether the same figure or additional amounts are being discussed. Suffice to say in 85/86 a quantity of consumer goods was donated to Mozambique to be used in marketing campaigns in the rural areas.

– In 1986 feasibility study for Limpopo River Valley industrial development scheme was reported.

Projects: (1987)

– agricultural implements plant in Beira;

– construction and repair of irrigation network;

– enterprises and facilities for production of cotton other agricultural output.

A consignment of Soviet unspecified cargo was reported.

– In 1986 it was reported that the industrial development scheme feasibility study was completed.

Note:

Categories based on V Lopatov, *The Soviet Union and Africa*, Moscow: Progress, 1987, pp 162–163.

BOOKSHELF

Food aid: The challenge and the opportunity by Hans Singer, John Wood and Tony Jennings. Oxford: Oxford University Press (1987) 245 pp. ISBN 0 19 828518 3.

Food aid is a controversial component of the international response to human disaster, whether this be the consequence of endemic conditions of extreme mass poverty or the result of natural or man-made catastrophe. This book provides a concise survey of the key issues in the current debate on food aid, its efficacy and appropriateness as a response. The authors look at the practicalities of organizing food aid and assess the uses and abuses of such aid within the international economic context.

Angola: Politics, economics and society by Keith Somerville. London: Frances Pinter (1986) 207 pp. ISBN 0 86187 395 5.

This book, one of a series of 36 monographs examining the application of Marxism in various countries, describes the development of Angola's MPLA as a Marxist-Leninist party, its policies and its attempts to implement them. The author focuses particularly on the effects of the civil war and the shortages of trained manpower as impediments to Angola's socialist transformation.

Rural-urban migration: Aspects of theory, policy and practice by F Theron and J F Graaff. Stellenbosch: University Publishers and Booksellers (1987) 64 pp. ISBN 0 86995 136 X.

Against a background of contemporary theories and models of development the authors look at the movement of people from rural to urban areas, the ways in which this movement is explained and how it may be influenced. They discuss various policy options aimed at influencing migration and examine their successes in achieving their goals. Finally they take South Africa as a case study and argue the probable effects on rural-urban migration of the abolition of influx control regulations.

Kenya to 1990: Prospects for growth by Martin Godfrey. London: Economist Intelligence Unit (1986) 106 pp.

This report in the EIU's "Economic Prospects" series reviews economic, social and political developments in Kenya in the 1980s and provides a number of scenarios as forecasts of Kenya's economic future.

Understanding Africa's rural households and farming systems edited by Joyce Lewinger Mook. Boulder: Westview Press (1986) 234 pp. ISBN 0 8133 7175 9.

The contributors to this book examine the difficult problems of agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa, using the farming systems approach, which aims to improve food production by conducting agronomic and social science research on the farms. Special attention is paid to household decision-making processes, since these affect the ways in which households and farms react to incentives and technological change.

Arms production in the Third World edited by Michael Brzoska and Thomas Ohlson. London: Taylor and Francis (1986) 391 pp. ISBN 0 85066 341 5.

This study, produced by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), looks at Third World countries that have gone in for indigenous weapons production and into the types of arms they are producing and identifies the markets to which they are exporting. Of particular interest to Africanists are the two chapters on Egypt and South Africa.

Guinea Bissau: From liberation struggle to independent statehood by Carlos Lopes. London: Zed Books (1987) 194 pp. ISBN 0 86232 289 8.

The author provides a reassessment of the PAIGC's struggle for national liberation in the 1960s and 1970s and looks at the party's difficulties in facing the new challenges of independence and economic reconstruction. He also analyses the PAIGC's failures to cope with the stresses that ultimately led to the overthrow of President Luis Cabral's government.

Quality of life in South Africa: Measurement and analysis by V Möller, L Schlemmer and S H C du Toit. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council (1987) 150 pp. ISBN 0 7969 0503 7.

In 1982–1983 a nationwide survey was carried out among over 5 000 South Africans to investigate their perceptions of well-being and basic needs. This report sets out the substantive results of that survey and produces a standard set of quality-of-life indicators which can be applied on their own or in the context of a broader enquiry. Recommendations are also made about the future application of this research instrument. □

The ports of Djibouti and Assab: Changing fortunes

Denis Fair, senior research fellow at the Africa Institute, begins a new series on the ports of Africa.

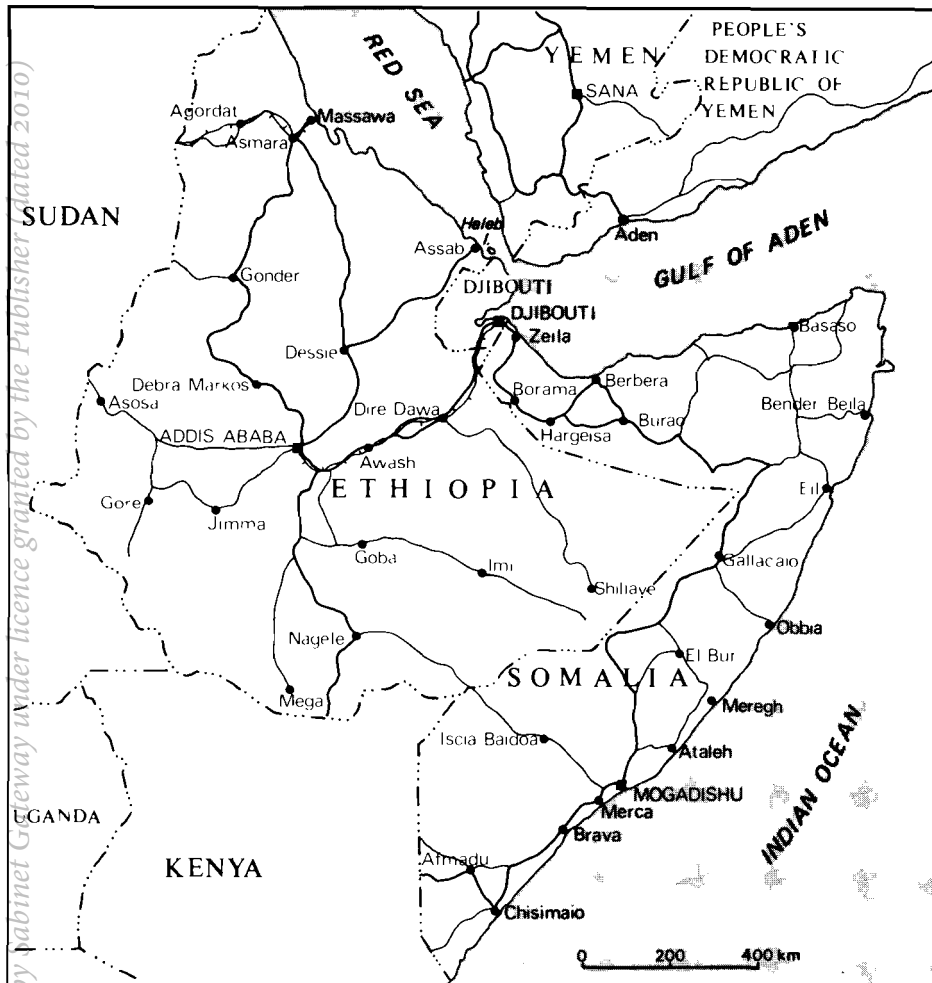
In Southern and East Africa political factors are playing a significant role in changing relationships between ports and their hinterlands as the member countries of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) attempt to divert their traffic

from South African ports to those of Maputo, Beira and Dar es Salaam. In the Horn of Africa a smaller but important realignment of traffic routes and port outlets is also taking place. Ethiopia is now concentrating on developing its own Red Sea port, Assab, in preference

to Djibouti, which has traditionally been its gateway to the world's sea routes. This also involves the construction of a new railway from Addis Ababa to Assab and has serious implications for the future welfare of the tiny Republic of Djibouti and the profitability of its port. Djibouti, previously the French territory of the Afars and Issas, became independent in 1977. It has an area of only 21 783 km², entirely desert, and a population of less than 400 000. Apart from some pastoralism, its economy is wholly dependent on its strategic location on the Gulf of Aden at the entrance to the Red Sea and the regional and international linkages of its port by sea, rail, road and air. It is essentially a services economy associated with the port activities, the railway to Ethiopia and a French military and naval presence. For economic reasons the Republic has been careful to adopt, as far as possible, a neutral stance *vis-à-vis* its more populous neighbours, Ethiopia (46 million) and Somalia (5 million), whose own relations have been far from friendly.

Djibouti

Ethiopia was a landlocked country until its federation with Eritrea in 1952. Its main lifeline was the 780 km railway from Djibouti, commenced in 1896 but completed to Addis Ababa only in 1917. It was built by the French at least cost and its performance and reliability have suffered ever since. Since 1981 it has been jointly owned by Djibouti and Ethiopia. During the Somalia-Ethiopia war in 1977-78 over the disputed Oga-den area of eastern Ethiopia, the line came under attack and was closed for a





The port of Djibouti is located on a peninsula at the entrance of the Gulf of Tadjoura

year. The impact on Djibouti was severe. The total amount of Ethiopian goods loaded and off-loaded at the port fell by 80 per cent from 283 000 tonnes in 1976 to 56 000 tonnes in 1978. In the three years preceding the war, 50 per cent of Ethiopia's external trade had passed through Djibouti. This volume accounted for 55 per cent of total goods handled by the port, with the proportion falling to 25 per cent in 1979. Moreover, by the time the line was reopened, Ethiopia had started switching much of its import-export traffic by road to its own port of Assab.

Djibouti had suffered a previous setback with the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967, when the number of ships calling fell from 3 000 to 1 000 in one year. When the canal was reopened in 1975 the pattern of shipping had changed with the new supertankers, for example, bypassing Djibouti and taking the Cape route instead. By 1984 the number of commercial ships calling had fallen to 811. In 1981 Djibouti was established as a free port but this has not greatly offset the losses in traffic. In 1985 total freight fell still further, by 22 per cent over 1984, oil traffic by over 50 per cent and transit trade with Somalia by 38 per cent. Only isolated and exceptional events have had the effect of boosting traffic through the port in recent years, such as heavy grain imports from 1984 to 1986 destined as food aid for drought-stricken Ethiopia and the fighting in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in 1986 when foreigners were evacuated from Aden and

ships requiring bunkering were temporarily diverted to Djibouti.

A number of steps have been taken recently to halt the port's decline and to offset the growing competition to its prominence as a redistribution centre for the region. First, Djibouti concluded a trade agreement with Ethiopia in 1985 aimed at retaining a share of that country's transit trade. Second, the port has undergone an expansion and modernization programme. In 1985 a new roll-on roll-off container terminal and cold storage plant were built. In 1986 an appraisal mission investigated the proposed second stage of the programme which envisages expansion of the container terminal, refurbishing of the oil terminal, the construction of a re-

pair and maintenance workshop and new warehousing for containers. The work, costing \$18 million, was commenced in late 1987 with financial assistance from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the Saudi Fund for Development. Third, the railway to Addis Ababa, badly in need of repair, is being partly rehabilitated with European Community financial aid, a project that includes the laying of 60 km of track and the purchase of rolling stock and maintenance equipment. Fourth, in 1987 it was reported that Ethiopia suggested that France be asked to upgrade the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway still further and to extend it to Sidamo, 400 km south of Addis Ababa. Djibouti supports the suggestion, provided some minimum of Ethiopian trade continues to pass through its port. Fifth, since the commencement of disruptions to oil-tanker traffic in the Persian Gulf, Djibouti, in view of the large increase in insurance premiums on Gulf shipping, has encouraged ships to unload their cargoes at its port for redistribution by coaster.

Assab

Despite these improvements and agreements, Ethiopia persists in its determination to build a railway to the port of Assab and to expand the latter's facilities. Of Ethiopia's two Red Sea ports, Assab, 800 km by the proposed new railway from Addis Ababa, is not as distant as Massawa further north. Some reconstruction of Assab took place as



The Djibouti railhead

early as 1958. More recently the harbour has been widened and warehouses and a container berth constructed. In addition, a shipyard capable of building ships up to a load capacity of 150 000 tonnes is being constructed on Haleb Island near Assab, along with a marine training and research institute. Facilities at Assab, however, remain inadequate to cope with increasing traffic swollen by food relief imports. In 1982 the port handled 2 million tonnes of cargo, including oil, an amount greater than that handled by Djibouti; hence the need to expand the port and to improve its links with the interior. A road programme was begun in 1983 with financial assistance from the World Bank, African Development Bank, the European Community, Norway and China.

In 1984 feasibility studies were commenced by Rail India Technical and Economic Services on the proposed 600 km rail connection to Awash on the Djibouti line 200 km east of Addis Ababa, estimated then to cost \$1 400 million. Rather exaggerated claims by the consultants regarding Ethiopian imports and exports for the year 2000, 75–80 per cent of which it was calculated would pass through Assab, have been met with scepticism by the World Bank. In support of its policy of not funding new railway lines but rather upgrading existing lines, the Bank has refused to assist the project. It considered that a good road and an oil pipeline was a more sensible alternative. However, financial support for the line, involving 30 tunnels, 24 viaducts and 600 bridges, has now been secured from Comecon, comprising Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union. East Germany undertook the feasibility study and will also be involved in a major expansion and modernization of the port. The World Bank, it was reported in 1988, would appraise a possible transport project costing \$100–120 million, involving the port of Assab and road transport and freight forwarding. Clearly, should the new railway be built, Ethiopia's declining trade through Djibouti will be still further eroded.

Hampering the free flow of Ethiopian goods have been the sporadic attacks on the country's roads and railways by secessionist and dissident groups over a number of years. The closure of the



French warship at anchor in Djibouti

Djibouti line in 1977–78 has been referred to and further attacks on it have since taken place. In the north, Eritrean liberation movements, particularly the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), continuing 25 years of rebel activity, destroyed parts of the Massawa-Asmara-Agordat railway in 1977–78. In addition, roads in this region and in the northern Tigré province of Ethiopia, where the Tigré People's Liberation Front (TPLF) operates, are under regular attack, as are food aid convoys using them. Further south, roads leading from Assab are sporadically attacked by the dissident Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement and Afars Liberation Movement, seeking a greater share of power in government. In March–April 1988 the full-scale battles between the EPLF and Ethiopian forces indicated the urgency of finding a solution to the Eritrean problem. The Eritreans want full independence, which is refused by Ethiopia as this would deny it full access to the Red Sea and the port of Assab.

Berbera

Djibouti may also lose what little transit trade it has with northern Somalia now that that country's ports

are being modernized and expanded. Among them greater competition will certainly come from Berbera, 260 km east of Djibouti, where a new quay has been built and the harbour deepened. Further development includes the installation of a container terminal and workshops. The small port of Basaso, 450 km east of Berbera, and the road leading to it are being improved in order to expedite the export from northern Somalia of live animals, the country's main foreign exchange earner, by avoiding the longer trek to Berbera. The major part of Somalia's port improvement programme is being carried out at Mogadishu, the capital, on the Indian Ocean where harbour works and the construction of a new quay for roll-on roll-off container cargo will be completed by 1990 financed by the World Bank and the European Development Fund.

Sources:

Africa Research Bulletin (UK), Africa Economic Digest (UK), Africa South of the Sahara (Europa Publications, UK), African Business (UK), Aktueller Informationsdienst Afrika (Hamburg), EASA — Trade and Investment in Eastern and Southern Africa (UK), Economist Intelligence Unit — Country Profiles and Country Reports (UK), Ports of the World (Lloyds, UK), The Courier (UN). □

AFRICAN PAST

“Origins” of the Sotho-Tswana peoples and the history of the Batswana

Richard Cornwell

History

Earliest settlement and dispersal: Any attempt to identify the territories occupied in earlier times by the Tswana people encounters difficulties in determining who exactly the Tswana are and were. The very term “Tswana” is of relatively recent date and its use today largely reflects the dictates of modern political and administrative convenience. Viewed across time, we find that national and tribal groupings and identities are far from static or clearly defined, but represent reactions to prevailing social and cultural conditions. The institutionalized histories of European nation-states provide few usable models for the student of Tswana history, not least because of differences in the types of relationship between people and territory. In addition, it should be remembered that traditional Tswana histories concern themselves mostly with genealogies of

ruling groups. The function of these histories is largely that of explaining and sanctioning the customs and institutions of the present, even at the unintentional cost of telescoping and modifying events in the distant past. In fact, the processes of fission and fusion that led to tribal and ethnic formation are far too intricate to suggest simple lines of cultural, political, linguistic or genetic descent.

The earlier orthodoxy, that peoples of the Sotho-Tswana language group entered South Africa from across the Limpopo in a series of three distinct migrations, is no longer unchallenged. Over the last few years increasing emphasis has been placed on the fact that traditional Tswana histories refer only to migrations over relatively short distances within the south-western Transvaal. It now seems more likely that the complex occurrences that resulted in the mixture of cultural and linguistic characteristics we now call

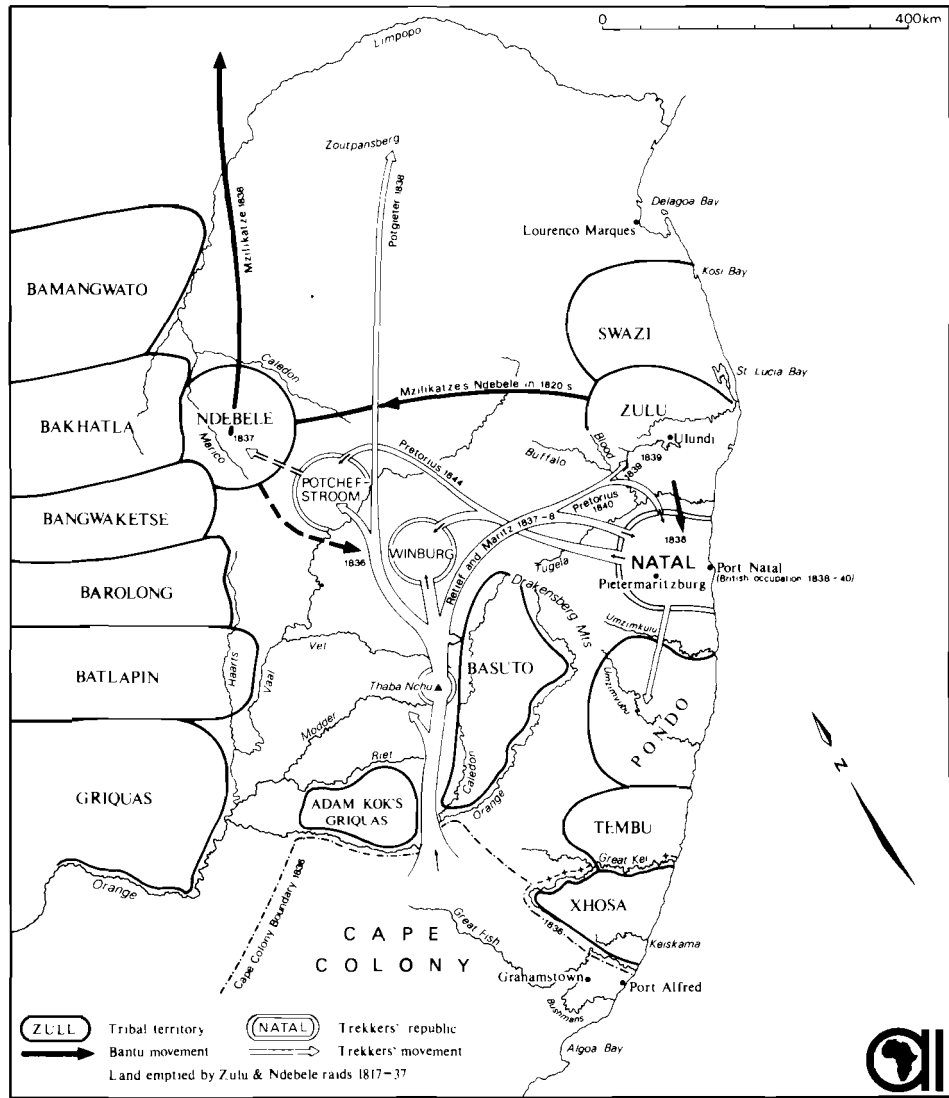
Tswana, occurred for the most part on the Transvaal highveld.

The debate about the origins of negro or Bantu-speaking settlement in South Africa continues unabated. Much of the argument centres on interpretations of the cultures identified as Early Iron Age, which entered the South African scene about two thousand years ago, and those identified as of the Late Iron Age, dating from the eleventh century AD. It was generally agreed that the former belonged to people who, though of negro physical type, were probably not Bantu-speaking, and that this language group is associated with a second southward migration almost a thousand years ago. According to this interpretation it is these Late Iron Age peoples who settled the highveld who are the physical and linguistic ancestors of the Bantu-speakers who inhabit South Africa today. It is even argued that these peoples absorbed the earlier negroid

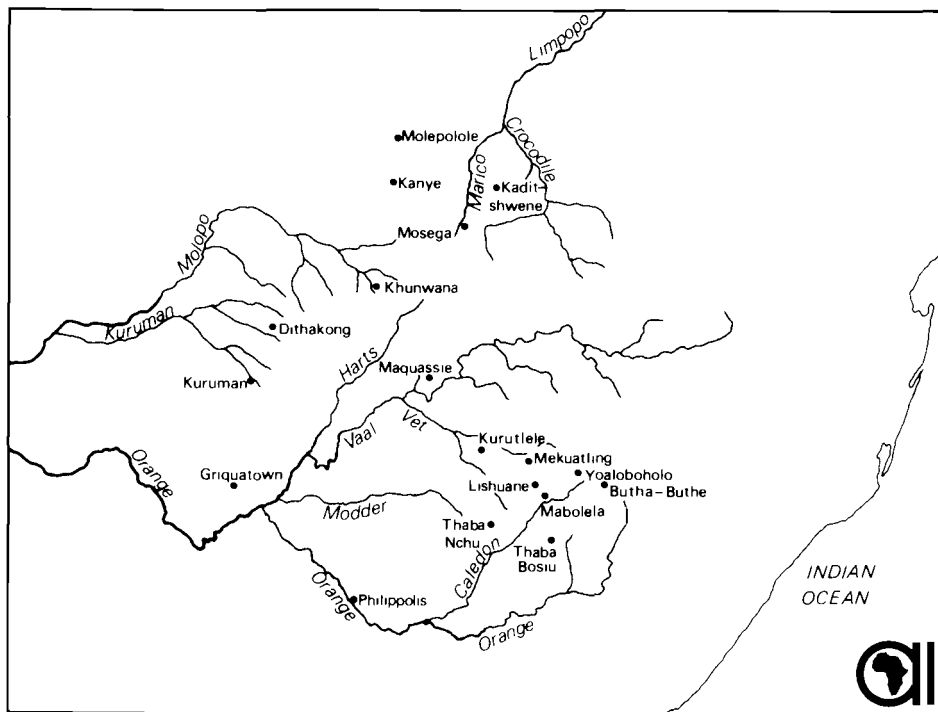
migrants and that over the centuries they assimilated some members of the Stone Age hunter-gatherer communities who had lived in the area from earlier times.

More recently, however, it has been suggested that too much attention has been paid to wholesale migration as the motor of cultural and linguistic change. This implies that the bundling together of physical, cultural and linguistic characteristics in one package may be fundamentally mistaken. Cultural and linguistic borrowings may have occurred with the influx of only small numbers of newcomers. In other words the physical ancestors of today's South African black peoples may have lived south of the Limpopo for many thousands of years.

Such is the nature of the evidence that none of the fascinating hypotheses being touted will ever be proved beyond doubt. What the archaeological record does show, however, is that by



The Great Trek
 (Based on J D Fage, *An Atlas of African History*, London: Edward Arnold, 1958, p 36)



Important sites in the history of the Sotho-Tswana
(Based on J D Omer-Cooper, *The Zulu aftermath*, London, Longmans, 1966, p 88)

the Late Iron Age, the most densely settled area in South Africa was the southern Transvaal, which was well-endowed in pasturage, soil and iron. Archaeologists have made tentative identifications of a "Buispoort culture" which dates from the eleventh century and was centred in the Magaliesberg, whence it spread eastwards and southwards over the succeeding centuries. The closely-related and probably contemporaneous "Uitkomst culture" flourished between Pretoria and Warmbaths. Experts maintain that these cultures exhibit unmistakable similarities with those of the modern Sotho-Tswana peoples.

Over the first few centuries of the present millennium much of the western and southern Transvaal highveld was settled by these Late Iron Age communities, which seem to have shared a basically common culture. The growth in population and the nature of chieftainship within Sotho-Tswana society facilitated dispersal over a wider area. At a time when land and water were abundant, political differences and succession disputes within a chieftom could be solved with relative ease. Dissatisfied members of a ruling lineage simply took their followers to establish an autonomous political unit away from the host community. In time,

this process produced a cluster of chiefdoms linked by descent and by a complex of cultural, ritual and even political ties.

By the end of the fifteenth century two or three chiefdoms had already begun the process of fission and subdivision that created the major communities now comprising the Sotho-Tswana language group. On the southern highveld, branches of the Rolong crossed the Vaal by 1500 and soon spread across the Free State south of Orkney as far as Virginia. Near the confluence of the Crocodile and Marico Rivers the Kwena-Hurutshe chiefdom also began to divide at this time. Over the next three hundred years offshoots of this lineage-cluster spread themselves over the western Transvaal highveld from Brits to Kanye and southwards to the upper reaches of the Caledon. Some Kwena peoples crossed the Vaal into the north-eastern Free State, intermarried with local Fokeng peoples and began a new series of dispersals that eventually distributed them over much of the southern Transvaal and northern Free State. Other offshoots of the Kwena were the Ngwaketse and the Ngwato, who pressed into the Soshong hills. The Kgatla were also one of the founding lineages. Most of their dispersal occurred north of the

Vaal and to the east of the Kwena. From this group stemmed the important chieftaincies of the Tlokwa and Pedi, among others. The expansion of Kwena and Kgatla clusters pushed the Rolong south-westwards where they based themselves on Molepolole towards the end of the seventeenth century. Under the chieftaincy of Tau the Rolong established their hegemony over an area bordered by the Molepo and Setlagole Rivers in the north-west and reaching to Molemane and Klerksdorp to the south-west, Taungs and Khunwana in the south. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the Rolong had divided into four sections, while the Thlaping had split off to form an independent chiefdom, driving the Rolong out of their southernmost territories towards Setlagodi with the aid of the Korana.

This Korana intervention, welcome though it may have been to the Thlaping, represented an ominous portent for the Tswana as a whole, in that it marked the first introduction of European weapons and tactics to their political world. From the middle of the eighteenth century groups of Korana and Griqua, themselves displaced by the expansion of the Cape Colonial frontier, settled along the Orange up to its junction with the Vaal. With their horses and guns these peoples effectively blocked any further southern migration by the Sotho-Tswana. Their frequent recourse to banditry exercised a disruptive effect upon the Tswana for almost fifty years before the first impact of the *Difaqane* was felt.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century Sotho-Tswana communities occupied most of the arable land of the highveld. In the extreme south Sotho chiefdoms and scattered Nguni groups occupied the line of the Caledon up to the Maluti mountains. Along the upper reaches of the Caledon lay Kwena chiefdoms and to their south more Nguni. The Taung had settled the Vet and Sand Rivers as far north as the Vaal and to their east were the Sia, Tlokwa and Phuthing chieftaincies in the foothills of the Drakensberg. North of the Vaal the Pedi dominated a large area from their nucleus along the Steelpoort River. To their west lay more Kwena chiefdoms along the Apies and Crocodile Rivers from the Magaliesberg to the Pilansberg. The area dominated by the Hurutshe ran from the Pilansberg to the area around Rustenburg and thence westward to Zeerust, with their

capital at Kaditshwene. To their south and south-west were the Rolong, whose traditional territories were bordered by the Molopo River, Taaiboschspruit, Schoonspruit, then along the Vaal and westwards to Warrenton, Vryburg and Mafikeng. Their major centres were at Khunwana and Maquassie. To the south and west were the Thlaping, centred at Dithakong, and the Korana; while to the north lived the Kgatla, more Kwena chiefdoms and the Ngwaketse at Kanye.

The Difaqane

By the beginning of the nineteenth century a social and political revolution was under way in Zululand, the effects of which would be felt throughout southern and central Africa. The development of new fighting techniques soon led to the formation of larger, highly-centralized military states which indulged in warfare and raiding on a scale unprecedented in southern Africa. The Sotho-Tswana chiefdoms were ill-equipped to ward off this new challenge for, despite their prosperity and the complex and highly developed nature of their social and political institutions, they occupied territories difficult to defend and acknowledged no common leadership which might have united their resistance.

In 1822 the Sotho-Tswana peoples felt the first shocks of the *Difaqane* as fugitive tribes from Zululand crossed the Drakensberg in search of plunder. The Tlokwa were the first victims and as their society collapsed they themselves embarked on a career of rapine. By 1828 virtually all of the country between the Orange and the Vaal had been denuded of stock and grain. The Sotho communities there were in a state of collapse, their dispossessed survivors forming migrant hordes which spread destruction over an ever-widening area.

By 1823 the effects of the *Difaqane* were felt north of the Vaal. The Phuting sacked the Hurutshe capital at Kaditshwene and the unfortunate victims then fell prey to a second wave of marauders, the Taung of Moletsane, who then pushed on to devastate the lands of the northern Rolong sections. A horde of Fokeng also crossed the Vaal at this time, linked with another Fokeng tribe, and under the leadership of Sebetwane became infamous under the name of Kololo.

Before the end of 1823 the rich herds of the Thlaping at Dithakong had attracted the attention of the starving raiders. The Phuting, Kololo and Hlankwane all converged on the Thlaping capital but were routed by the guns of Griqua horsemen summoned to the town by the resident missionaries. The Kololo then headed north to the Molopo river where they were joined by Moletsane's Taung in an attack on the Rolong at Khunwana in 1824. From here the Taung proceeded to Maquassie to strike the Seleka Rolong while the Kololo pressed into the rich Marico district where they defeated the unfortunate Hurutshe, whose chief they killed. Having devastated the Hurutshe country, the Kololo and Taung attacked the Kgatla chiefdom at the confluence of the Crocodile and Apies Rivers. The newer threat from Mzilikazi's impis forced the raiding alliance to split, and the Kololo headed north-westwards into other Tswana territories. The Tlokwa were their next victims, followed by the Kwena at Dithubaruba. Even the powerful Ngwaketse were unable to defeat the Kololo initially, though in 1826 with the help of two English traders they took their revenge. The Kololo then fled northwards to raid the Ngwato at Serowe. The Ngwato were overwhelmed and forced to flee across the Kalahari to Lake Ngami followed by their tormentors. The Kololo handed out another defeat, this time to the Tawana, then crossed the Zambesi and passed from the South African scene.

In the wake of this original destruction followed the greater menace of Mzilikazi's Ndebele who fled from Shaka's wrath in about 1823 to establish a highveld kingdom based on the Zulu model. Mzilikazi's first settlement on the highveld was on the Olifants River, but his initial failure to subdue the Pedi and the desire to remove himself more effectively beyond the range of Zulu impis took him into the fertile and well-watered Magaliesberg. Here he wrecked the remnants of the Kwena chiefdoms and built a series of kraals along the Crocodile and Apies Rivers from which base he raided in all directions. Recognizing this new threat, elements of the Grikwas, Korana, Taung and Rolong combined to raid Mzilikazi's cattle-posts. Some damage was done to the Ndebele herds over the next few years but clever counter-attacks by Mzilikazi reduced the effect of these commandos and dissuaded the Griqua and Korana from more

extensive operations. The Ndebele impis were also successful against the Ngwaketse, driving them into the Kalahari in 1828. By this time Mzilikazi had extended his control over the best lands between the Vaal and the Limpopo, exacting tribute, soldiers and workers from those Sotho-Tswana peoples who continued to live around the periphery of his state.

In 1832, however, Dingane despatched regiments to attack Mzilikazi and the latter sustained a serious defeat which compelled him to move his capital westwards once more. Nevertheless, he was still able to campaign effectively against the Ngwaketse, Kgatla, Kwena and the Rolong at Khunwana and by the end of the year had evicted the Hurutshe from Mosega. The centre of Mzilikazi's kingdom now lay along the Marico River, with his major kraals at Mosega and eGabeni.

Again he began clearing the veld around him to provide security against attack. His victims included the Rapulana-Rolong who submitted in 1835 but later fled southwards to join other Rolong sections at Thaba Nchu while the Hurutshe were scattered in renewed flight from their settlements along the Harts River. The Ndebele's scorched earth policy was only partially successful, however, for the danger from mounted Griqua and Korana raiders and from the formidable Zulus persisted, and Mzilikazi began to prepare for a move towards the Limpopo.

Though short in duration Mzilikazi's sojourn on the highveld had a profound effect, following as it did upon the havoc brought by the earlier stages of the *Difaqane*. Tribes which had lived in the area for centuries were decimated and their survivors scattered to eke out a precarious existence in deserts or caves where they might avoid the attention of the Ndebele. Some Sotho-Tswana societies managed to survive, at the cost of being incorporated into Mzilikazi's state as vassals, while individual tribesmen joined Sotho-speaking regiments in the Ndebele army. So successful was Mzilikazi's policy of absorption that it seems that by 1835 the majority of his subjects were Sotho-speaking.

The Voortrekkers

It was the recent depopulation of the interior plains that dictated the direction of white migration from the Cape.

Since 1825 white settlers had made sorties across the Orange River in search of pasture and water. Within five years this *trekboer* migration had assumed a more permanent character and some Boers even left beacons along the Harts River, presumably by way of staking some personal claim to the lands there. Griquas, too, filtered back into Transorangia in increasing numbers.

The arrival of the Voortrekkers north of the Orange marked a new departure in the migratory pattern, in terms of scale, motive and effect. The Great Trek introduced to the interior new methods of economic exploitation and alien concepts of landownership and sovereignty. At first the trekkers spread out over the lands between Thaba Nchu, where a Wesleyan mission had been established, and the Orange.

By mid-1836 parties of Voortrekkers began to move across the Vaal, where they ran into Ndebele armies which apparently mistook them for marauding Griqua. Two small groups were wiped out and the main body, under Andries Potgieter, withdrew with difficulty to Vegkop, where it fought a successful defensive battle but lost all its livestock. The Voortrekkers were extricated from their grave predicament by Moroka, the Seleka-Rolong chief, who provided oxen to haul the whites back to Thaba Nchu. Here the trekkers divided, some heading for Natal under Retief's leadership. Potgieter, however, determined to attack Mzilikazi and in January 1837 he led a mixed force of Boers, Griqua, Korana and Rolong to sack Mosega. The expedition cost the Ndebele several thousand cattle and many lives, and they withdrew to eGabeni. On Potgieter's side the only fatal losses were suffered by the Rolong, and the Voortrekker leader advanced his base to Winburg and the Sand River. In June 1837 Mzilikazi suffered a serious defeat at the hands of Dingane and began to shift his people northwards. Before he could complete this move, however, Potgieter struck again with a stronger, composite force. In a nine-days battle around eGabeni the Ndebele power was broken; once again the only casualties to Potgieter's force were suffered by the Rolong. Mzilikazi fled northwards with sections of his people, abandoning many of his Sotho subjects to make whatever peace they could with the newcomers.

Andries Potgieter now claimed the whole Transvaal highveld as his by

right of conquest. This act had more to do with entrenching his own political position against the British authorities and his rivals among the leaders of the Trek than with any attempt to promote immediate white occupation of Mzilikazi's old territories. By the end of 1838 a small settlement had been established on the Mooi River, moving to Potchefstroom's present site in 1842. From here white farmers filtered gradually into the area bordered by the Magaliesberg, Schoonspruit and Suikerbosrand. At the same time Mzilikazi's Sotho-Tswana victims began to return to their old homes on the highveld. Some individuals and small groups were quickly absorbed into the white communities as labourers, but most attached themselves to one or other chief trying to re-establish an autonomous political and social structure. In the central highveld most of these attempts were doomed, swamped by the influx of trekkers which continued steadily through the 1840s. Most of the Hurutshe, Ratlou-Rolong, Rapulana-Rolong and Kgafela-Kgatla succumbed in this way, the social and political fabric of their tribes too badly rent by the ravages of the *Difaqane* to offer effective resistance.

The expansion of white settlement

Voortrekker society began to segment in the mid-1840s; Potgieter himself left Potchefstroom for the eastern lowveld and other nuclear communities were established at Ohrigstad and Zoutpansberg. This dispersal, which aggravated political differences within the Voortrekker camp, and the slow diffusion of white farmers from the denser concentrations, diminished the white military advantage relative to the stronger among the African chiefdoms. Thus, to the west of the Potchefstroom community the Tshidi-Rolong, Thlaping, Sechele's Kwena, the Ngwaketse and Ngwato were all able to maintain an effective independence. These tribes had emerged from the *Difaqane* with a measure of cohesion and were even reinforced by other survivors of Mzilikazi's fall.

Resistance to the Boers' westward expansion was strengthened by the missionaries who since the beginning of the century had established their presence in a series of stations among the Griqua and Tswana. In many ways

the missionaries' penetration of Tswana society was but another form of conquest by an alien power, for they deliberately aimed at a transformation of the very foundations of tribal life and of the nature of chieftainship. Indeed, from about 1850 onwards the missionaries began to appeal openly for the British government to protect the field of their labours from Boer encroachment. For a while it seemed that they would manage to convince the Imperial authorities that British control of the "Road to the North", which linked the mission stations and carried traders and hunters into the interior, was vital in order to preserve the Cape's commercial interests and Imperial security. In 1852, however, came one of those sudden reversals of British policy in Southern Africa. Alarmed by the expense and apparent futility of attempts to control their erstwhile subjects north of the Orange and the Vaal, the British government determined to disengage itself from the affairs of the interior.

In January 1852 Her Majesty's Commissioners Hogge and Owen put their signatures to a document which became known as the Sand River Convention. This accorded recognition to the independence of the Transvaal Boers and to Pretorius as leader of the inland republic. It also included a renunciation of all treaties and alliances between Britain and the non-white peoples north of the Vaal, and, perhaps most important of all, it opened the trade in munitions to the Boers and expressly closed it to non-whites.

This Convention obviously tilted the local balance of power heavily in favour of the Boers, who quickly proceeded to follow up their advantage. Until now it had been by the efforts of individual farmers rather than by any formal act on the part of the relatively impotent Republican authorities that white sovereignty had been imposed over African tribes north of the Vaal. By extracting labour from neighbouring kraals control had been extended piecemeal over the weaker chiefdoms. Such impositions could, however, lead to flight on the part of chiefs and their subjects. One such fugitive, Mosielele of the Kgatla, sought refuge in 1852 with Sechele's Kwena at Dimawe. The Republican Government decided to follow up the success of Sand River by demanding not only Mosielele's surrender, but that Sechele hand over all guns in his possession and that he close the northern road to British traders and

missionaries. Sechele refused and in the ensuing battle, Dimawe and the nearby mission station of Kolobeng were destroyed, and Sechele was forced to flee to Dithubaruba. In a sequel to this incident, the Tshidi-Rolong were also attacked for Montshiwa's refusal to participate in the expedition against Sechele. Montshiwa himself was forced north to Setlagodi and Mosaneng, though his people remained along the Molopo with Molema. According to Rolong tradition a second war followed, which was concluded in October 1853 by a treaty that restored the old boundaries of Rolong territory but sanctioned those white farms already occupied there. The measure of Montshiwa's independence may be gauged by his successful refusal to supply farm labour in 1865.

For more than a decade after the commandos against Sechele and Montshiwa the Boer republics were too distracted by internal political and ecclesiastical divisions to achieve permanent dominance over the Tswana chiefdoms. Nevertheless, white settlement continued to expand and in 1858 the Thlaping began to resist further encroachment across the Maquassispruit. The Republic mobilized a strong commando to break the Thlaping and two chiefs were killed, Gasibone and Phofuetsile. Mahura, the most important surviving Thlaping leader, evaded an attempt to convert him into a puppet ruler and refused the Boer leaders' offer to recognize him as paramount chief of the Thlaping.

By the later 1860s white settlement had expanded further to the west, though it was still confined to pockets surrounded by Tswana chiefdoms. It should not be imagined that the Republic's writ now ran wherever title-deeds had been issued to farmers, however. The issue of title certainly did not imply effective, constant or even occasional occupation of a farm; indeed, surveying parties were frequently chased off tribal lands. Where Boer encroachment was most effective, however, was along important water-courses, for by occupying the headwaters of various streams and by damming their waters, white farmers incidentally reduced the carrying capacity of surrounding black territories and compelled the occupants to seek pasture and arable land in less-favoured areas.

In the 1860s the Tswana and Griqua leaders began to employ more sophis-

ticated methods of protesting their independence, by seeking the aid of white land agents and their representatives. The assistance they received was certainly not without its conditions, for the men they employed had their own political motives and also made their own extraordinary demands for commission in terms of land grants. In 1867 events took a new turn with two discoveries: diamonds were found on the Vaal near Klipdrift and gold was reported from Tati. President Pretorius soon issued a proclamation defining the boundaries of the South African Republic. To the east the frontier followed the Lebombo Mountains, including all of Swaziland, with a strip of land reaching Delagoa Bay. To the north it included the Shashi River and its tributaries, most of the Matoppos and the Tati Goldfields, though it prudently excluded Matabeleland. In the west the borders were defined from Langeberg on the Orange directly northwards to Lake Ngami thus, with one stroke of the pen, incorporating virtually all of the major Tswana tribes within the Republic.

The Keate Award

In a desperate attempt to save their lands from annexation the Griqua and Rolong appealed to the Crown to intercede. Eventually the Rolong, Thlaping, Griqua and the South African Republic agreed to submit their respective claims to arbitration, in which the ultimate judgement would be given by Lieutenant-Governor Keate of Natal.

A complex series of problems faced Governor Keate when he tried to unravel the tangle of oral and written evidence presented to the Bloemhof Arbitration Court. In the south of the disputed territory the Griqua case was simplified by the Free State's refusal to participate at all in the exercise. Here it was largely a question of establishing to what extent the Griquas exercised sovereignty over those Thlaping and Rolong tribes whose lands were interspersed with the Griqua farms. Here, as elsewhere in the area in dispute, the essence of the difficulty was to lay down firm boundaries in an area where political and judicial authority were exercised on a personal rather than a territorial basis. The Griqua were well served by their agents, however, and a series of treaties was led as evidence to secure most of what was demanded

at the cost of certain Tswana claims.

The issue between the Tswana and the South African Republic was even less clear-cut. In the area under consideration land was claimed under a multiplicity of titles. There were tribal claims by the Tswana in occupation, there were individual claims based on title issued by the authorities in Potchefstroom and Pretoria and there were other individual claims based on private cession by Tswana chiefs. Again, private title did not imply actual occupation, nor did it solve the questions of whether tribal chiefs actually possessed the power to alienate land or whether the transfer of title to private hands implied a change of sovereignty in favour of the white government. Once more, long catalogues were presented of alleged submissions by Tswana chiefs to Republican authority, or of white acknowledgements of Tswana autonomy. Pretorius allowed his more extreme claims of 1868 to sink into obscurity, but still appealed to the Sand River Convention and to the overthrow of Mzilikazi, a story in which he played down the role of the Boers' Rolong allies.

In the event, Keate decided to ignore the more extreme Rolong claims, which would have placed the boundary on the Schoonspruit and penned white occupation to the Mooi River Valley. Instead he chose the Maquassi as the frontier, with the line running from its source to the headwaters of the Harts River. Naturally any judgement which attempted to embrace all the complicated developments of the previous half-century was bound to have its imperfections. Nevertheless, for all its undoubted flaws, Keate's Award, published on 17 October 1871, represented the first reasoned attempt to define a western frontier for the South African Republic and to secure the rights of the independent chiefs.

Almost immediately after the publication of Keate's judgement Griqualand became a crown colony, the Griquas having asked for annexation in order to protect their rights against the Free State and the unruly population of diggers which flocked to the diamond fields.

While the land speculators and the agents of the Tswana and Griqua leaders squabbled about a division of the spoils in this diamondiferous territory the Transvaal simply repudiated the Award. The Volksraad invoked a legal technicality to dissociate itself from

Pretorius' submission to the arbitration and then secured the election of a new President clever enough to mend the harm done. By 1873 President Burgers had found a way of exploiting differences among the various Thlaping chiefs. Matlabane and Bothlasitse, the latter recognized for the occasion as paramount of the Thlaping, were induced to cede to the Republic all their territories between the Vaal and the Harts Rivers and to bind themselves as subjects to the Republic. In return they were promised that locations would be demarcated where they might rule their tribes in relative security. The chiefs themselves were evidently ignorant of the nature of this cession and believed that they were merely signing a treaty of alliance which would preserve them from British annexation after the example of Griqualand West. Makurwane, the other major Thlaping leader, was more circumspect and refused to submit to the Transvaal.

The conventions

In fact the administration of the diamond fields soon involved the Imperial authorities in far too much expense for any further annexations or even for the extension of formal protection over the Tswana chiefs. As a result, no attempt was made to counter the continued advance of white farmers across the Keate Award line, which remained unbeaconed. By 1877, however, the South African Republic itself was in difficulties that were aggravated by a disastrous war against the Pedi and the threat of invasion by the Zulu. Britain stepped in and annexed the Transvaal on the pretext of avoiding anarchy in the interior and in the hope of pressing through a South African confederation to consolidate British hegemony in the region. Far from bringing relief to the Tswana chiefs, however, the annexation of the Transvaal caused a deterioration in their position, as claim-holders advanced in increasing numbers across the Keate Award line, confident that British arms would now enforce their title to lands there. In any event the old order was fast breaking down to the west of the boundary.

In Griqualand West the Griquas themselves had in fact ceased to exist as an organized community. The turmoil of conflicting and overlapping land claims in the territory had led to

the institution of a land court in 1876 and the resulting judgement dealt a mortal blow to the Griquas. Over the next few years these people bargained away what remained of their patrimony in exchange for money and drink. Their Thlaping subjects, too, had their lands sold from under them and from 1876 until 1878 a series of clashes took place as Griqua and Thlaping attempted a futile resistance to the new order. White volunteer forces suppressed the rising with great loss of life and substance, and in 1880 Griqualand West was annexed to the Cape Colony.

To the north the unrest communicated itself to other Thlaping, Rolong and Thlalo peoples, who rose in arms against the social and economic change brought by the missionaries. The chiefs' inevitable defeat was followed by renewed missionary pressure for them to petition for British rule and a formal protectorate over Bechuanaland south of the Limpopo. Only setbacks elsewhere to Britain's schemes for a South African confederation prevented the realization of this end, for the revolt by the Transvaal Boers threw the whole of Imperial policy in South Africa into question once again.

While Boer and Briton wrestled for control of the Transvaal, old Rolong feuds came to a head and Montshiwa of the Tshidi-Rolong became involved in a conflict with Moswete of the Rapulana-Rolong. Montshiwa hoped for some British support against his pro-Boer opponent and the retrocession of the Transvaal Republic in 1881 came as a severe blow to him. The western boundaries of the Transvaal were now redefined by the Pretoria Convention in an arrangement based more on the hope of keeping the peace between white and black than on any concept of abstract justice. Rolong and Thlaping chiefs lost much of the territory vouchsafed them by the Keate Award. More serious was the fact that Moswete began to enlist white mercenaries to aid him in his struggle against Montshiwa. These men would be rewarded with looted cattle and with land in the territory of the defeated chief. Massouw of the Korana also joined the assault on Montshiwa and was himself attacked by the Thlaping chief Makurwane. The Korana thereupon hired their own set of white volunteers, encouraged by the Republican authorities who saw this as an opportunity for further quasi-official expansion of their territories. Britain refused to

intervene with force to defend the Convention of 1881 and confined its response to verbal protests.

In June 1882 Makurwane admitted defeat and saw most of his remaining lands divided up as farms for Massouw's mercenaries, who set up the Stellaland Republic with its capital at Vryburg. A few months later Montshiwa too was exhausted and concluded a treaty with Moswete. Almost three-quarters of his territory was handed to Moswete's white freebooters to establish the Republic of Goshen, centred on Rooigrond. The Transvaal Republic promptly extended its protection over these new states.

Stellaland and Goshen, however, lay across the "Road to the North", and to the clamour of the missionaries was added the protest of the Cape mercantile interest, urging that Britain oppose Transvaal's expansionism. The new western border laid down by the London Convention of 1884 extended the Transvaal frontier even further into Thlaping and Rolong territory, but kept it to the east of the all-important road. Anarchy still reigned along the border, however, and a combination of factors, including Germany's appearance on the colonial scene and some inept diplomacy by Kruger, led to a firmer hand being taken by London.

A British expeditionary force was despatched to oust the freebooters, restore order and assume control over Bechuanaland. The Thlaping and Rolong west of the Transvaal and south of the Molopo readily accepted British protection as their last remaining hope of preserving any of their territories. North of the Molopo, too, the Tswana had suffered from Boer pressure, and the principal chiefs of the Ngwato, Ngwaketse and Kwena all submitted to a British protectorate.

In 1885 the area south of the Molopo was annexed as the Crown Colony of British Bechuanaland, ten years later to be incorporated in the Cape Colony. This development did not preserve the independence of Montshiwa and Makurwane, however, for they found themselves penned back in small reserves which represented only fractions of their former holdings. North of the Molopo the Tswana chiefs were more fortunate, and even managed to avert the wholesale transfer of the Protectorate to the British South Africa Company in 1895. Here too the powers of chiefs were far less affected by white officialdom than to the south, where

Tswana independence was virtually extinguished.

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Continued from pg 90

- drawing rights from development funds are granted. The Third Lomé Convention came into force in 1986 and includes 66 ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) states.
- 5 The United Nations Development Organization (Unido), an independent UN organization, is the forum where these demands are vociferously articulated.
 - 6 Unctad is a permanent organ of the United Nations General Assembly, instituted to promote international trade, especially with a view to accelerating economic development. The conference meets every four years. Unctad's main functions include the promotion of trade between countries in different stages of development and with different economic systems, initiating action for the negotiation of

trade agreements, and the formulation of international trade policies. Unctad is an important forum in which the demands of NIEO are articulated, particularly with respect to trade.

- 7 The "Group of 77", was the name first given to the Afro-Asian solidarity bloc which lobbied Third World economic issues at the first Unctad conference in Geneva in 1964. Although the number of countries belonging to this group has increased to more than 120, it is still known as the Group of 77.
- 8 The theory behind the disarmament/development link is that world expenditure on armaments has reached astronomical proportions, while the position of the developing world is constantly deteriorating. It is argued that instead of allocating large sums to an arms build-up — the funds could be diverted to development. See Valkenier, *op cit*, p 114.
- 9 See Valkenier, *op cit*, pp 118–121.

10 This discussion is based entirely on Soviet sources, see Vladimir Lopatov, *The Soviet Union and Africa*, Moscow: Progress, 1987; and V Klochek, *et al*, *Soviet foreign trade: Today and tomorrow* Moscow: Progress, 1985.

11 See generally: Valkenier, *op cit*, chapter 4 and Kühne, *op cit*, section E, pp 129–147.

12 Lopatov, *op cit*, p 129.

13 *Ibid*, p 130.

14 Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Background Brief*, p 3.

15 See Table 1 above.

16 See note 14 above.

18 *Foreign Trade*, no 12, 1986.

19 *Africa Research Bulletin*, 31 August 1986.

20 *Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Report, Tanzania*, no 4, 1986.

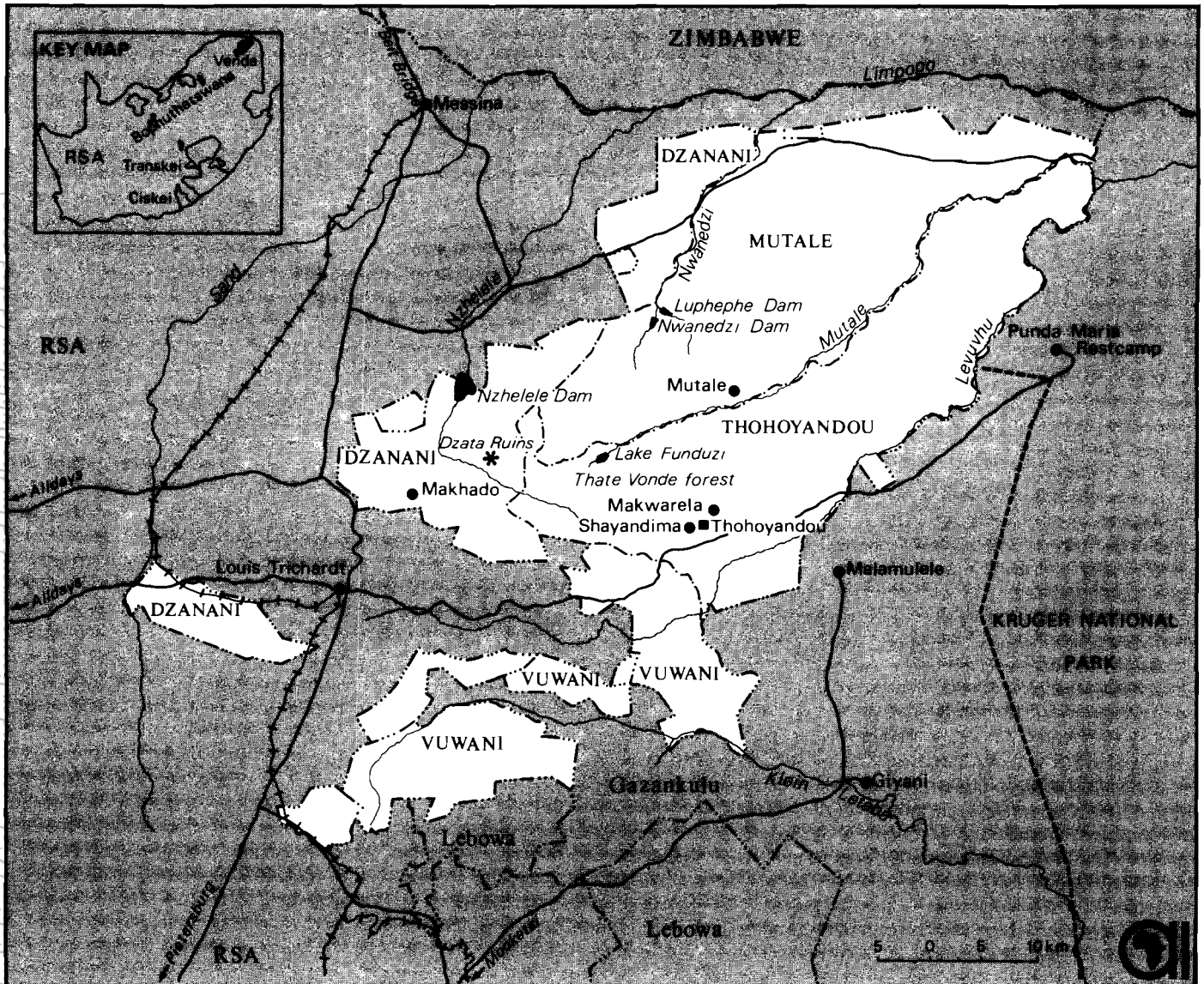
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Venda

The Republic of Venda, the smallest independent state on the African continent, is one of a group of four states that obtained their independence from the Republic of South Africa during the period 1976 to 1981. Consisting of two linked land masses in the north-east corner of the Transvaal (RSA), it is bounded in the north by a narrow strip of Transvaal which separates it from the southernmost boundary of Zimbabwe, in the east by the Kruger National Park, and by the self-governing states of Gazankulu and Lebowa in the south.

Venda is the homeland of about half a million Vhavenda. These people are relative newcomers to the area south of the Limpopo, the movement of their forefathers into what is now the independent state of Venda and its environs taking place in successive waves. Over the years these have formed a homogeneous core so that the Venda people now see themselves as a single national unit with a common language and cultural heritage. Historically it is certain that their more recent origins are in Zimbabwe.

Although the Vhavenda traded with the Portuguese set-



tlements along the east coast, they lived in comparative isolation until the middle of the 19th century, when whites from the south settled in the northern Transvaal. Following the Mphhephu war of 1898 the South African Republic established its control over the Vhavenda, whose territory was subsequently incorporated as part of the Transvaal into the Union of South Africa in 1910.

The constitutional development of Venda was initiated by legislation in 1913 and 1936 which set aside certain defined areas for blacks. In 1951 a system of local government was instituted, and in 1962 a territorial authority established, with Chief Patrick Mphhephu as its first chairman. With the establishment of a Legislative Assembly in 1971, a decisive step was taken towards sovereign independence, which was gained on 13 September 1979. Currently its independence, as well as that of its sister states (Bophuthatswana, Transkei and Ciskei), is recognized only by South Africa and the other TBVC states. Nevertheless, traders and investors from numerous foreign countries are involved in the economies of the TBVC states.

The constitution provides for a parliament which consists of the President, Frank Ndwakhulu Ravele, and a unicameral National Assembly (which may be dissolved by the president at any time). The National Assembly consists of 91 members: 28 chiefs who are ex-officio members; 15 designated members from the four district councils; 45 elected members and three members nominated by the president by virtue of their special knowledge and qualifications. Executive power is vested in the executive president, who appoints an executive council of nine ministers from the members of the National Assembly to head the 19 government departments and two state corporations — the Venda Development Corporation and the Venda Agricultural Corporation. Judicial power is vested in the Venda Supreme Court and in the lower courts — the Magistrate and Mahosi (traditional) courts. In the first post-independence elections held in 1984, the ruling party, the Venda National Party, won 41 of the 45 elected seats, the Venda Independence People's Party taking the remainder.

The reign of Pres Mphhephu, who became Life President in 1983, was a controversial one with claims by the VIPP of electoral malpractices, and that it and not the UNP enjoyed majority support. In August 1986 Chief Mphhephu declared Venda a one-party state, allegedly because of the adverse effect of the practising of party politics. There was also much criticism during his rule of detentions without trial and of the actions of the security police.

Following his death on 16 April 1988 he was succeeded by the Minister of Finance, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Gota Ravele. A cousin to Mphhephu and his former confidant, the election of the 61 year old Ravele is exceptional in that he previously held a traditionally junior position of tribal headman.

It is expected that he will be promoted to the rank of chief. An "enlightened" traditionalist, his election is viewed as a compromise between the traditionalists and the growing "modernist" political movement of the young, educated urban population.

Although a variety of minerals occur, Venda is not rich in exploitable mineral resources. The roads and power sup-

plies are linked to South Africa's. Fairly well endowed with both surface and ground water resources, Venda has six major dams. Domestic economic activity consists mainly of agriculture and forestry. Although only about 11 per cent of Venda's total area is potentially arable land, agriculture is Venda's most important economic base. The high population density in the rural areas, where about 97 per cent of the population live, unemployment and landlessness has resulted in about 75 per cent of the agricultural land being allocated to betterment schemes. More than a quarter of a million Vhavenda (including more than half the total economically active population) live and work outside the state. Nearly 70 per cent of Venda's male labour force work within the Republic of South Africa.

There are comprehensive health facilities in Venda — four hospitals and two health care centres. More than 90 per cent of pupils attend school at least for a while; the University of Venda, established in 1981, had 1 873 students in 1985.

Basic data:

Land area:	7 176 km ²
Population:	460 00 (1985)
Per sq km:	64
Growth rate:	2,7%
Urbanized:	2,9%
Daily commuters:	6 000 (1986)
Migrant workers:	49 000 (1986)

Education (1985)

Estimated adult literacy rate:	51% (1980)
Total primary school pupils:	135 327
Total secondary school pupils:	45 937
Primary pupils per teacher:	35

Health (1985)

Life expectancy at birth:	57 years (1980)
Infant mortality per 1 000 live births:	89 (1982)
Population per doctor:	24 210
Population per nurse:	603
Population per hospital bed:	346

Economic (1985)

Gross National Product:	R446 million
GNP per capita:	R884

Origin of GDP

	%
Community, social — personal services:	50,1
Agriculture, forestry and fishing:	12,3
Construction:	12,4
Commerce, catering and accommodation:	7,6
Manufacturing:	6,7
Other:	10,9

Transport (1985)

Railways:	0 km
Paved roads:	191 km





January – February 1988

Susaar Ribbens and Jenny Macgregor

Sub-Saharan Africa's **food aid** requirement in 1987/88 is projected to rise by 42 per cent to 4,6 mn tons, according to the latest UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) report. Pledges to the 35 countries in need already cover 2,9 mn tons. Ethiopia heads the list with a requirement of more than a million tons, while large supplies are also urgently required in Angola, Mozambique and Malawi (ARB 31/1).

NORTH AFRICA

Algeria

The Minister of the Interior has announced the reorganization of the state's **administrative structure** and measures to simplify relations between the administration and citizens, in an effort to fight the "paralysing bureaucracy" (ARB 24/12).

The 1988 **budget** of 113 bn dinars announced in December 1987 is one of austerity and rigour, showing an expected deficit of 10 bn dinars. The objectives for 1988 are: to increase gross domestic production by 4,1 per cent; guarantee an imports level of 45,8 bn dinars; create 116 000 jobs, and increase household income (ARB 31/1).

Chad

An OAU ad hoc committee on the Chadian conflict scheduled to take place in Dakar in early February has been postponed until April, principally because Senegal is to hold general elections on 28 February. Chad has expressed opposition to the delay, believing it to be a Libyan attempt to stop the conference in order to restart the war (H 23/1; WA 8/2; ARB 15/2).

Several **opposition** groups have announced their intention to see peace return by joining the ruling sole party in Ndjamena, the UNIR (National Union for Independence and Revolution) (SWB 10/2, 12/2, 13/2; WA 29/2).

The **World Bank** has approved a loan of \$12,8 mn to help the government to improve its economic and financial management. It is hoped that it will pave the way for approval of a structural adjustment loan late this year (AED 12/2).

Egypt

In January Pres Mubarak undertook a six-nation tour of the **Persian Gulf** during which he held talks on developments in the Israeli-occupied territories as well as the situation in the Gulf. His reception throughout the region shows that Egypt is again welcomed as a military and political ally after eight years of isolation (S 13/1; ARB 15/1; H 30/1).

Sudan

Hopes of reducing border tension with **Ethiopia** have dimmed as talks between the two sides failed to take place on 7 January (C 14/01; ARB 15/01; AED 15/01).

The **World Bank** has agreed to two loans worth a total of \$104,7 mn, to finance the start-up of the third agricultural rehabilitation programme (AED 22/01).

Sudan has appealed to be allowed 40 years to repay its **foreign debts** of about \$12 bn. Major western aid donors pledged \$227.6 mn in balance-of-payments support in December. They are to meet again in May to discuss how Sudan could service its foreign debt and settle arrears of about \$700 mn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (DT 19/02).

Tunisia

Diplomatic relations with **Egypt** have been restored, having been broken off in 1979. A joint statement said the decision was taken in the light of growing ties between the two countries (ARB 15/1).

In an effort to appear less secular than his predecessor, and thereby undercut the powerful challenge of Islamic fundamentalism, Pres Ben Ali has released some 2 000 **Islamic fundamentalists and political opponents**. He has also enacted and is preparing laws granting new freedoms to political parties and the press, and has opened talks with the still illegal Mouvement de Tendence Islamique (**MTI**) (AC 19/2).

WEST AFRICA

Burkina Faso

Basic **wages** for all civil servants, parastatal workers and other public-sector employees have been increased, bringing an end to the wage freeze in force since 1982. Capt Campaoré has also announced **free pardons** and reductions in sentences for 95 prisoners (AED 15/1).

The Gambia

More than twenty people were arrested after an attempted plot against Pres Dawda Jawara's government, apparently inspired by Libya, was foiled (AC 12/2, ARB 15/3).

Ghana

The biggest undertaking in Ghana's economic recovery programme, the \$220 mn rehabilitation project for the **transport sector**, due to begin early in 1989, has been approved by the **World**

Bank. The project's main aim is to get the 32 200 kilometre national road network back into working order (AC 29/1; ARB 31/1).

Reaping the fruits of new investment as a direct result of incentive measures introduced over the past 3 years, Ghana's **gold** mines are taking over from cocoa as the backbone of the economy. Ghana's total exports for 1990 are forecast to reach 400 000 ounces, while it has been estimated that the country, which is enjoying its third gold boom, is capable of mining 2,7 mn ounces of gold per year for the next 740 years (AA 8/1; WA 1/2; AED 29/1, 19/2; S 20/2).

The decline in export earnings from cocoa will affect the country's ability to meet its **debt servicing** commitment of \$630 mn, estimated to equal 79 per cent of export earnings for 1988. Once the world's leading cocoa producer, Ghana has now slipped to third place behind Côte d'Ivoire and Brazil (ARB 29/2, DT 29/2).

Guinea

Students have **rioted** against the high increase in prices of petrol and staple foods which followed the corresponding 80 per cent hike in military and civil servants' salaries on 1 January. A freeze on prices of essential goods was subsequently ordered. A **cabinet reshuffle** on 17 January, which observers linked to rumours of an attempted coup, significantly altered the balance of military to civilian personnel from 18 soldiers and 12 civilians, to 15 of each (SWB 19/1; AA 22/1).

Guinea Bissau

The EEC has approved a \$30,3 mn grant for **rural development**. The money represents 70 per cent of the country's allocation under the third Lomé Convention (AED 22/1).

Liberia

The **International Monetary Fund** (IMF) has closed its mission in Monrovia, claiming the government has failed to make a serious effort to reform the economy. The move came despite heavy lobbying by the government and US officials who wanted support shown for the US experts who are helping the government to manage the budget (AED 12/2).

Nigeria

Former Nigerian president, **Shehu Shagari**, who has been held under house arrest for the past 18 months, has been given complete freedom (ARB 15/2).

Togo, referred to by Pres Babangida as "his second fatherland", and Nigeria are working to-

wards the integration of their respective armed forces (ARB 15/2).

UK Prime Minister Thatcher's two days of talks with the president in early January focused mainly on bilateral issues and UK support for the country's structural adjustment programme. The visit was marked by student and trade union demonstrations at Lagos airport, and a barrage of hostile press criticism in protest against Mrs Thatcher's pro-South African policies (AED 15/1; H 9/1).

Senegal

The ruling Parti Socialiste's (PS) congress on 9 January confirmed the candidacy of **Pres Abdou Diouf** for re-election. Reaffirming his commitment to free, fair and democratic elections and rejecting the now usual result in African presidential elections of 99.9 per cent of the vote, Diouf nevertheless refused the opposition's call for a reform of the electoral code. Four presidential candidates and six political parties are to contest the 120 seats in the national assembly (AED 13/1; WA 22/1).

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon

The **World Bank** has approved a loan of \$103 mn in support of the drive to revitalize the country's cocoa industry, which Cameroon is hoping to stimulate to make up for lost revenues as a result of declining oil revenues (WBN 25/2).

Zaire

Hopes of a gradual liberalization of Zairean political structures were put to an end with the arrest on 17 January of Tshisekedi wa Mulumba, leader of the largest opposition group, the **UDPS (Union for Democracy and Social Progress)**. He and other members were detained while attending a mass rally in Kinshasa which brought together about 250 000 supporters — the first major demonstration since 1983 (WA 8/2; AC 22/1, 5/2).

Zambia and Zaire have introduced strict new visa regulations between the two countries in a move aimed at stemming the tide of cross-border smuggling of essential goods into Zaire (AC 19/2).

Pres Mobutu has taken over from Gabon's **Pres Bongo** as chairman of the 10-member **Communaute Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale (CEEAC)** (AED 4/3).

EAST AFRICA

Burundi

At the meeting of the Economic Community of the Countries of the Great Lakes hosted by Burundi, the heads of states of Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi reiterated their commitment to revive all the activities of the **CEPGL** (SWB 19/1).

Comoros

The South African based hotel consortium, **Sun International**, will manage and market the £8.3 mn hotel scheme (due to open in July 1988), which triples the hotel capacity of the islands (EASA 2/2).

France has committed itself to meeting the cost of the settlement of the country's **internal debts**, which amount to 50 mn French francs, and are owed to 230 creditors. The whole of the Comorian internal debt will be settled in 1990 in an operation which aims to eliminate the deficit of the

state treasury (ION 6/2).

A joint meeting of all the Comorian **opposition** movements (excepting the **Union Nationale pour la Democraties aux Comores**) was held for the first time in several years on 10 January. A mass demonstration to be held in Paris against **Pres Abdallah's** presidential guard, was banned by the French government (ION 16/1, 6/2).

Ethiopia

Ethiopia has called off indefinitely a joint Ethiopia-Sudan ministerial committee meeting because of disagreement over the venue (ARB 15/2).

Rumours of serious **unrest in the army** divisions based in the north, which have come under increasing attack from Eritrean and Tigrayan rebel movements in the past six months, is thought to be behind the secret 16-day tour of northern Ethiopia by **Col Mengistu** (ION 27/02).

Ethiopia has recently raised its estimate of the number of people facing possible **famine** to be between 6.7 and 7 million, and the amount of food aid needed to 1.3 mn tons. The Soviet Union, which has previously concentrated on logistical help only, has promised to send 250 000 tons of wheat, the largest pledged by any country (DT 29/1, 18/2).

Prices paid to farmers have been raised by at least 10 per cent and extensive changes are being made to the **agricultural marketing** system. The measures, urged on the government since at least 1984, serve to concentrate efforts on the peasant sector rather than large state farms (AC 22/1; AED 5/2).

Kenya

The **IMF** has agreed to grant loans totalling \$240 mn in a structural adjustment facility totalling 90.2 mn SDR. The new loans will assist in the funding of the 1988-90 economic programme (ION 6/2).

Turbulent relations between Kenya and **Uganda** appear to have eased following an agreement to establish a buffer zone between the two countries. Trade has now restarted (AED 8/1).

The first official visit to Kenya by a British prime minister since independence in 1963 took place in early January with the visit of **Margaret Thatcher**. The visit was intended to strengthen trade links and cultural and technical co-operation (ION 9/01).

Pres Moi has dissolved parliament in readiness for **general elections** to be held on 21 March. All candidates for the 188 seats must be members of **Kanu**, the sole legal party. The first round of elections held on 22 February were marred by allegations of malpractice and favouritism, with a less than 30 per cent turnout in many constituencies (ST 6/2; SWB 8/2; DT 23/2; C 24/2; ION 27/2).

Madagascar

Lt-Col Ramhatra has replaced Gen Rakotoarijaona as **prime minister**. The latter resigned his post for health reasons. The new government formed on 12 February is otherwise unchanged (ION 5/3).

Foreign donors are to provide **aid** totalling at least \$700 mn to back the government's adjustment programme in 1988, although public investment will continue to fall in real terms. This sum is more than double the pledges made at the last donors' meeting in April 1986. By the end of 1987 **debt** totalled \$3 200 mn, with this year's servicing obligations put at around \$400 mn (AED 5/2; ION 6/2).

Réunion

Réunion's 9 per cent **economic growth rate** for 1987 has been attributed mainly to the sizeable increase in the amount of public funds transferred from France. Imports for the year rose by 25 per cent, exports by 18 per cent (ION 19/3).

Seychelles

Announcing the **budget** for 1988, **Pres René** said that personal income tax has been abolished and tax on business profits reduced in order to boost investment and increase worker motivation (ARB 29/2).

Somalia

Eight **political detainees** who were sentenced to death in a major treason trial subsequently had their sentences commuted — 6 to a 24 year prison term, while former vice-president Aboka and former foreign minister Ghalib, who had been held incommunicado for six years, were released. The commutation of the sentences followed wholesale condemnation from around the world (SWB 15/2; ION 22/2).

Somalia has temporarily suspended its agreement with the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** while a technical committee, which is charged with charting a new course in relations with donors, reviews the attached conditions (AED 12/2).

Tanzania

The president of Zanzibar, **Idris Abdul Wakil**, dismissed his entire **cabinet** on 24 January after accusing several of his ministers of conspiring to overthrow his government. He dropped his Chief Minister and long time rival, **Seif Sharif Hamad**, and four other ministers from the newly-formed and smaller cabinet, and from the Revolutionary Council. The changes in the government reflect a victory for members who wish to moderate the economic liberalization promoted by Hamad (S 25/1; DN 27/1; WR 29/1; ION 23/1, 30/1; AED 5/2).

Tanzania harvested a record **cotton crop** in 1987, 50 per cent above that forecast, and breaking the 1973 record. The large crop is however causing transport, storage and processing problems (DT 22/2).

Uganda

A **Libyan diplomat** has been killed in a grenade attack on the Libyan embassy in Kampala. A group calling itself the Federal Army claimed responsibility saying that its aim was to curb Libyan and communist influence in Uganda (AC 22/1, 29/1; ARB 15/2).

In a major **cabinet reshuffle**, **Pres Museveni** has appointed three deputy prime ministers to back up his ageing prime minister, **Samson Kisekka** (DT 29/1; SWB 25/2).

In an effort to increase **coffee exports**, prices paid to coffee producers have been increased by 21-25 per cent. With inflation at an unofficially estimated 200 per cent, farmers are already complaining that the new prices represent too little, too late (AED 12/2, 19/2; AA 19/2).

Expenditure by several government departments has been cut by an average 27 per cent in the 1987/88 **budget**. The **World Bank** has set aside \$500 mn to support Uganda's economic reform programme. Disbursement will be approved only if Uganda conforms to the programme (DT 29/2).

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola

Chevron, Angola's top crude oil producer, has predicted a one-third jump in output by the start of the 1990s, while French company, **Elf Aquitaine** has forecast an 80 per cent increase in its crude output over the next three years. The joint rise in volume will add considerable muscle to the country's role as an oil producer (BD 19/1).

Pres Dos Santos' New Year speech marked the official start of the three-year **economic and financial restructuring programme** (SEF), with its three main objectives of improving productivity, purchasing power and consumption levels. Domestic economic policy is being reformed, foreign investment encouraged, and efforts to reduce the debt burden of around \$4 bn are being made (ARB 31/1).

Botswana

South Africa suddenly eased crippling border checks on road traffic from Botswana in early January in a move thought to facilitate bilateral talks on security (S 5/1).

Botswana unveiled a cautious 1988/89 **budget** on 23 February which forecast increased revenue and a modest 7 per cent pay rise for civil servants, one percentage point below the annual rate of inflation. Vice-president Mmusi reported that **economic growth** has so far outstripped the government's own projections in its 1985-91 development plan, and revenue, mainly from diamonds, has left it with a growing budget surplus. Employment growth for the period 1967-86 was an average of 8.4 per cent per annum, and highest in 1986 when formal sector employment increased by 11.4 per cent, most of this in the private sector (DN 23/2; 24/2; DT 25/2).

Malawi

The external value of the Malawian kwacha has been **devalued** by 15 per cent, and the importation procedures of certain raw materials and spare parts simplified (DT 8/1).

Preliminary results of the **census** conducted in September 1987 show an average 3.7 per cent growth rate in the preceding 10 years, bringing the population to 7.9 million (DT 17/2).

Mozambique

A 12.5 per cent **devaluation** of the metical was announced on 2 January. The move, the third devaluation in a year, brings the official exchange rate to \$1 = 450 meticais (AED 8/1; ION 9/1).

The **International Red Cross**, threatened by the worsening situation in war-torn Mozambique, has suspended food airlifts to starving peasants (C 5/2; S 8/2).

Italy has agreed to reschedule all arrears up to December 1987, and all debts due in 1988, and in addition to reduce the interest rate on repayments from 8-9 per cent to 1.5 per cent. **Portugal** has reduced its interest rate to 4 per cent. Even with a substantial cut in interest charges, **debt servicing** will reach \$125 million in 1988 — or 119 per cent of prospective export earnings (H 15/1; AED 22/1; ION 23/1, 13/2; AIM 6/2).

South Africa

Pres Botha opened the new parliamentary session on 5 February with proposals for a dramatic

shift in economic policy. The new programme includes the privatization of state-controlled industries, substitution of general sales tax with a form of value added tax, lower subsidies and a politically risky pay freeze for civil servants, whose remuneration accounts for 32 per cent of government spending (S 6/2; SS 7/2; FM 12/2; ARB 29/2).

Torrential rains in February caused widespread **flooding** in the central part of the country. The downpours, which caused the Limpopo and Orange rivers to reach their highest levels in 20 years, left thousands homeless and caused an estimated R1 bn in damage (C 29/1; SA Bar 29/2).

New regulations effectively banning 17 **opposition organizations** and severely restricting the activities of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (**Cosatu**) and 18 individuals, were announced on 24 February. Among the organizations affected were the United Democratic Front (**UDF**) and 14 of its affiliates, and the Azanian People's Organization (**Azapo**) (C 25/2; BD 25/2; SWB 26/2; ION 27/2).

TBVC States — The four **TBVC states** received grants, services and assistance to the value of R1 319.4 million during 1987, while aid to the six self-governing territories was R2 210.1 million. Both the Conservative Party and the Progressive Federal Party have criticized the government's spending in the homelands (ARB 15/2).

Bophuthatswana — An **attempted coup** to overthrow Pres Mangope on 10 February failed after an armoured column of the South African Defence Force entered the territory to arrest the rebel officers, and free Mangope and other members of his government. Pres Mangope claimed that the coup, in which five people died, was organized by the homeland's internal opposition People's Progressive Party. PPP leader, Rocky Malebane-Metsing, disappeared shortly after the coup was halted and is still at large. Five of the six MPs of the official opposition, the wife of the alleged leader of the abortive coup, and the Bafokeng chief were among the 452 people arrested (AED 19/2; C 19/2; WM 25/2).

Transkei — On 2 January General Holomisa **lifted martial law** and reinstated part of the constitution. Legislative and executive authority remain under the direct control of the military council, with Gen Holomisa as military and government chief. Eight ministers from the ousted regime of Ms Stella Sigcau have been appointed to the military council. Political meetings have been outlawed (SA Bar 29/1; ARB 15/2).

South West Africa/Namibia

On 19 February a massive **bomb explosion** in an Oshakati bank killed 19 people and injured 44. The death toll is the highest in the history of Namibia's twenty-two years old war. The same day the South African Air Force retaliated in two separate strikes on targets 300 km inside Angola (S 20/2; B 20/2; SS 21/2; SWB 25/2; WR 26/2).

Zambia

US foreign assistance legislation is blocking fresh **US development aid** totalling \$10 mn to Zambia because the country is now more than a year behind with a \$4 mn debt repayment. Zam-

bian repayments to the US are affected by a ceiling limiting servicing on Zambia's more than \$5 bn foreign debt to the equivalent of 10 per cent of export earnings (BD 5/2; DT 8/2).

Zambia's modest 1988 **budget**, which contains little that was not in the government's interim national development plan, aims to achieve growth of at least 2.2 per cent, to reduce the budget deficit to 9.5 per cent of GDP, boost capital expenditure to 23.5 per cent of GDP and to hold inflation to 35 per cent. Continued subsidies take up 14 per cent of government spending (DT 2/2; AED 5/2; H 9/2; ARB 29/2).

Talks with prospective donors about an \$80 mn **bridging loan** to pay off World Bank arrears have ended without agreement (AED 12/02).

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's **population** is poised to reach 9.4 mn in 1990, 12.5 mn in the year 2000, and to double by the year 2015 (H 11/1).

Described as the most significant **devaluation** since the 1982 16 per cent cut, the Zimbabwe dollar dropped suddenly by 3 per cent against the US dollar between 5-6 January. Such devaluations are seen as evidence of active management by the Reserve Bank in line with the repeated recommendations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The drop is likely to make the currency a lot more competitive (AED 22/2).

Following a **GDP** decline of about 2 per cent in 1987 owing to drought and a shortage of foreign exchange, GDP is forecast to grow by about 3 per cent in real terms. The expected growth is attributed to the strongest recovery in mining since the 1970s, to marginal growth in manufacturing output, and to an unexpectedly strong rebound in agriculture in the 1987/88 seasons (AB 2/88; ARB 31/1).

Proposals for **job creation** have been made which include cutting back on expatriate staff (who number about 3 000), and the introduction of a subsidy for employers who create jobs. More than 150 000 secondary school-leavers join the labour market each-year, competing for the 7 000 jobs the economy creates annually (H 28/1).

On 18 February the government lifted the eight-month old **wage freeze** and awarded an across-the-board increase of between 2 and 15 per cent in the private and public sectors (C 19/2; BD 19/2; H 19/2; AED 26/2). **Separate taxation** for men and women has been introduced as from 1 April (H 26/2; BD 26/2).

Sources:

AA — Africa Analysis; AB — African Business; AC — Africa Confidential; A Concord — Africa Concord; AED — Africa Economic Digest; AIB — Africa Institute Bulletin; AIM — Mozambique Information Agency; B — Beeld; BD — Business Day; C — Citizen; DN — Daily News; DT — Daily Times; E — Economist; FM — Financial Mail; H — The Herald; ION — Indian Ocean Newsletter; JA — Jeune Afrique; NA — New African; NN — New Nation; S — Star; SA Bar — SA Barometer; SS — Sunday Star; ST — Sunday Times; SWB — Summary of World Broadcasts; TS — Times of Swaziland; TWR — Third World Reports; WA — West Africa; WM — Weekly Mail; WR — Weekly Review; ZN — Zimbabwe News. □

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