

A 'COLDER WAR?': NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF GREAT  
POWER COMPETITION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

A 'COLDER WAR?': NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA by Major Ibrahim Ali, 151 pages.

The Cold War and Post-Cold War great power competition superimposed on the structural challenges in sub-Saharan Africa has led to several cascading effects. In both the Cold War and post-Cold War era, sub-Saharan African countries have been uncoordinated in their interactions with great powers in the subregion. The crux of this qualitative study was to track the Cold War and post-Cold War great power competition in the D.R. Congo, Angola, and Zimbabwe in an attempt to understand its trends, characteristics, and challenges in order to distill valuable lessons that could guide sub-Saharan African countries within the competitive landscape of the subregion. The research identified that sub-Saharan African countries faced a strategic dilemma at national birth during the Cold War. This required them to take sides in a global ideological contest that had dire consequences on the future of the nascent states. It resulted in instability and untold hardships. In the contemporary era, the evidence revealed that geo-economics was the main driver and sustainer of the competition. The study recommends an umbrella strategy by the sub-Saharan African countries that lays out parameters for interaction with the great powers. This would ensure a reasonably uniform approach and a greater probability of success in their dealings with great powers.

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## DEDICATION

To Meimuna, my sister, and Chase Archambault, a young life lost too soon. God be with you two till we meet again.

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## ACRONYMS

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AU	African Union
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DIME	Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FNLA	<i>Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola</i> (National Front for the Liberation of Angola)
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
FRELIMO	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i> (Mozambique Liberation Front)
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPLA	<i>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</i> (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NSC	National Security Council
REC	Regional Economic Community
RENAMO	<i>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</i> (Mozambican National Resistance)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNITA	<i>União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola</i> (The National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)
USAFRICOM	United States Africa Command
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WHO	World Health Organization
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

We have slain a large dragon, but we live now in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes. And in many ways, the dragon was easier to keep track of.

—R James Woolsey, testimony before the U.S Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, February 2, 1993

Human interaction since time immemorial comprises many aspects of contests and competition. Some of these contests have manifested in bloody wars between tribes, communities, and nations. To a large extent, the post-Westphalian era and the associated creation of the modern nation-state increased the stakes in this competition to the level of nation-states, which has become a constant characteristic of international interaction. Critical areas that nation-state competition has manifested include the struggle for influence, cultural projection, economic endeavor, military, information, and diplomatic realms, to mention a few (Jablonsky 2014, 104).

Throughout history, many violent clashes, including World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII), represented periods that nation-states formed alliances and opposed one another over contrasting ideologies, interests, and geopolitical objectives. Key examples of such partnerships were the Axis powers and the Allies in WWII. The latter predominantly comprised the West and the USSR. The Allied coalition was described by many as an alliance of convenience since the USSR and the West represented stark contrasts in ideology, values, and governance (Resnick 2010, 144-146). With hindsight, many scholars have argued the Allies banded together to defeat a

common enemy but had always been wary of one another since fundamental differences in ideology drew a sharp line between the USSR and the West led by the United States. With WWII drawing to an end, the Allies' stark contrasts became more pronounced, resulting in the Cold War. A notional frontier, later christened the *iron curtain* by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, had been created between the Soviet Union and other eastern European countries and Western Europe (Churchill 1946). This drew the lines in the Cold War.

The Cold War was when the emerged superpowers, the United States and the USSR, and their allies engaged in a long and tense conflict (Blakemore 2019). This was short of direct armed hostilities between the two superpowers but characterized by an aggressive arms race, ideological bids for world dominance, and proxy wars (Blakemore 2019). The superpowers waged several proxy wars and other forms of competition in different parts of the world. America and the USSR waged proxy wars in Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. In sub-Saharan Africa, the footprints of the superpowers were pronounced in proxy conflicts in Angola, Namibia, and Guinea Bissau, to mention a few.

To a large extent, US interests in Africa were subtle, and this was particularly glaring during the period of European colonialism on the continent. The Cold War changed this as America, and its allies sought to *contain* the growing influence of the Soviets on the continent. As a result, there was a pronounced footprint of US and Western efforts to counter the Soviets, marking the beginning of the Cold War great power competition in Africa. This competition came at a critical time for many African countries. Most of the countries had either just attained independence or were in the process of achieving independence from European colonizers. The path taken by some of

the countries towards independence and the struggles associated with gaining self-rule from most of the European colonizers were ugly and bloody. The struggles were mainly due to many European colonizers' reluctance to grant independence to the African countries. Some reasons for this included the fact that their economies were nested into that of their African colonies. African colonies served as a source of raw materials that fed their industries and a market for the goods they produced (Eltis and Engerman 2000 123-144). Additionally, the timing was critical as most of the imperial powers were coming out of WWII with their economies in poor shape (Tumlir and La Haye 1981, 367-389).

Due to some European colonizers' reluctance to grant independence, armed struggles erupted in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, such as Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. Energized nationalism and Pan-Africanism across the region's length and breadth fueled sub-Saharan Africa's struggles (Coleman 1954, 404-410). Tensions were also rife between indigenous Africans and minority European rulers and settlers in countries like South Africa and Zimbabwe, with occasional bloody clashes. With most of the European colonizers being allies of the United States, the USSR saw an opportunity which it exploited. It aimed at winning over the independence movements ideologically with the hope that the newly independent states that the nationalist movements sought could be communist states. Pursuant to this, the USSR supported many indigenous African groups in their struggle for independence, which led to drawing the frontline between the Western and Eastern blocs in sub-Saharan Africa.

The competition between the United States and her allies and the Soviet Union and its allies marked a tense period in sub-Saharan Africa. In West Africa, for instance,

the USSR supported nationalist movements waging a guerilla war on Portuguese colonialists in Guinea Bissau (Forrest 1987, 94-95). In Central Africa, there were armed skirmishes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) following the overthrow of Patrice Lumumba (Weissman 2014, 14-24); in eastern Africa, Ethiopia and Somalia engaged in an inter-state war; a long-drawn-out civil war also engulfed Angola (Jackson 2010, 26-40). Southern Africa was no different. Indigenous groups in South Africa and Zimbabwe were also involved in struggles that demanded majority rule against colonial rulers and European settlers (Brownell 2008, 591-610). All these clashes and friction occurred within the Cold War's context, and the great power competition and alliances that were at play on the continent directly or indirectly influenced them.

There were a few alliances that prosecuted this competition in sub-Saharan Africa. As previously alluded to, there was the Western bloc comprising the United States and her European allies, mainly the colonizers. Key amongst them were Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Portugal. The Eastern bloc had the USSR at the forefront, allied primarily with the Cubans. The USSR, on occasions, either cooperated with or opposed the Chinese in various instances within the region (CIA 1972). Also pronounced during the era were the African states that belonged to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The NAM did not officially affiliate with any of the two blocs (Braveboy-Wagner 2012, 308-324). The convergence of the national instruments of power of the nations and alliances in these coalitions had many repercussions on the continent, including supporting and countering independent movements in the era of sub-Saharan Africa's independence drive.



Another sort of competition was the struggle for the ideological inclination of the newly independent sub-Saharan African countries. Some newly independent states were either leaning West or East for ideological inspiration. The Eastern bloc continued to seek a model communist state in sub-Saharan Africa; the Western bloc thwarted its efforts. As a result, there were waves of coup d'états in sub-Saharan Africa with direct or implicit involvement of the key actors. For instance, Patrice Lumumba of the DRC was overthrown and assassinated in 1961, a few months after becoming Prime Minister over his alliance with Cuba and the USSR (BBC 2016). Also, Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah, leaned eastwards and was overthrown in 1966 by a pro-West junta. Several other coups dominated the sub-Saharan Africa landscape within the context of the Cold War.

Fast-forwarded into the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Berlin Wall had tumbled down, and the USSR had disintegrated under immense internal and external pressure. The United States and her allies were victorious; the large *dragon had been slain* in *Woolseyan* speak. In sub-Saharan Africa, most countries were democratizing rapidly and adopting Western models of development, albeit amidst several challenges. Some of the challenges include poverty, corruption, ethnic tensions, and conflicts.

Amid the aforementioned improvements and challenges, there appears to be another form of great power competition that stresses the post-Cold War status quo and shapes the diplomatic, informational, military, and economic environment in sub-Saharan Africa.

Russia has emerged from the ruins of the old Eastern bloc and is making aggressive inroads into sub-Saharan Africa. An example is signing a military cooperation

agreement with the Central African Republic in 2018 (Kelly 2018). Also, China is ubiquitously present in sub-Saharan Africa with a renewed zeal greater than ever before. Beijing has penetrated many facets of sub-Saharan African society. The challenge posed to the international norm in sub-Saharan Africa by Russia and China and its associated second, and third-order effects are against the backdrop of the many challenges in the region. This *Colder War or Competition* represents perhaps what James Woolsey describes as the *bewildering variety of poisonous snakes* that confront the unipolar world order which the United States leads.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the pattern and trends of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa by comparing the Cold War and the Post-Cold War era with the thrust of proffering ways to guide sub-Saharan African countries. The study aims at impacting the policies of sub-Saharan African countries, Regional Economic Communities, and the African Union as they grapple with ensuring a coordinated strategy of engagement with great powers in the sub-region of sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the existing literature on the subject matter.

#### Problem Statement

Sub-Saharan African countries struggle with a coordinated strategy to engage great powers in the subregion. The lack of coordination has persisted from the Cold War era to date. During the Cold War era, it was against the backdrop of competing ideology and proxy wars by the superpowers in many areas of the subregion. The contemporary situation is arguably more complicated with Russia's resurgence and China's rise. The

second and third-order effects of the clashing interests of the great powers superimposed on existing structural challenges confronting sub-Saharan African countries and the absence of coordination have resulted in many challenges. This absence of harmonization on the part of the sub-Saharan African countries, coupled with the great power competition's repercussions, ought to be systematically explored to proffer lessons for the future.

#### Primary Research Question

The primary research question's rationale is to guide sub-Saharan African countries to navigate the terrain of great power competition in the sub-region and generate ideas on how challenges arising from it could be managed and mitigated. It reads: How should sub-Saharan African countries deal with challenges that arise from increased competition between established global powers?

#### Secondary Research Questions

To pursue a response to the primary question, the study laid context by seeking to understand the nature of great power competition during the Cold War and the post-Cold War era. Additionally, to gauge both periods' intensity, it was essential to compare and contrast both periods before distilling the lessons that countries within the region could learn from the competition. The specific secondary questions were:

1. What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the contemporary characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?

3. How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?
4. How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in sub-Saharan Africa?

### Assumptions

The following were some of the assumptions that guided the research:

1. Great powers would continually seek their individual national and alliance interests within sub-Saharan Africa.
2. The interests of the great powers within the sub-Saharan Africa region may be similar in some cases but would most likely conflict with one another.
3. Sub-Saharan African countries would deal in piecemeal with great powers.

### Conceptual Clarifications

Some concepts utilized in the research include:

Sub-Saharan Africa. The general area of the continent of Africa south of the Sahara Desert. It includes countries in the Horn of Africa, Mauritania, and Sudan.

Great power. It is a nation with exceptional military and economic strength that consequently plays a significant, often decisive, role in international affairs (Dictionary.com n.d.).

Regional Economic Community (REC). International organizations formed in various parts of sub-Saharan Africa to promote economic cooperation, peace, and security. Examples include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Détente. A period that tensions between the USSR and the United States eased. Generally, between 1967 to 1979 (Britannica 2020).

Nationalism. Generally, it refers to an awakening of the African population to political consciousness coupled with peaceful and non-peaceful efforts to secure independence. Some were spontaneous movements of resistance against European occupation in colonies (Coleman 1954, 404).

Competition Continuum. The competition continuum describes a world of enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict. The continuum also describes the environment in which countries deploy their national power instruments (diplomatic, informational, military, economic) to achieve national/alliance objectives (JCS 2018, 2).



Figure 1. Image Depicting the Elements of the Competition Continuum

Source: LeMay Center 2020.

#### Limitations

The study was limited to some key global powers as follows:

1. The research focuses on the United States, the USSR, Cuba, and China in the Cold War period discussions.
2. In the post-Cold War era, the study was limited to examining the United States, Russia, and China within sub-Saharan Africa.
3. The study was restricted to the usage of secondary data and a lack of funding.

### Delimitations

Some delimitations of the study included:

1. The duration of the CGSC constrained the research time.
2. The study gathered data up to April 2021. It was because great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa would continue after the research is submitted.

### Research Methodology

The study was qualitative and utilized cross-case studies to shed light on the great power competition in DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe. It used the Realpolitik international relations theory. Realism provided a lens for explaining the competition and interaction of nation-states within the global environment in general and sub-Saharan Africa.

Additionally, the study employed the national power instruments (Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic, or DIME) to sift data. The DIME served as a good categorization tool through which the study viewed the activities and efforts of the great powers.

### Significance of Study

The main thrust of the study was to examine great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa. Exploring the great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa in the Cold War and post-Cold War era will help understand its nature, scope, and limitations in the subregion. It will also shed light on the strategy or lack of the sub-Saharan African countries in dealing with the competition and the conditions within the region that aided or facilitated the competition. This would lay the foundation for distilling valuable lessons that will guide the foreign policy of the sub-Saharan African countries, their RECs, and the African Union as they seek to manage and engage great powers for their benefit. The study will also contribute to knowledge in the field.

### Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has made a conscious effort to offer a synopsis of the great power competition that characterized the sub-Saharan African geopolitical environment in the immediate aftermath of WWII. The study highlighted the current geopolitical rivalry among the great powers, and the subregional conditions that encouraged this competition. Primarily, the study aims at inquiring how sub-Saharan African countries could deal with great power competition. The next chapter would tackle existing literature in the field. It aims to shed light on existing knowledge about the thematic areas of the research.

CHAPTER 2  
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

When two elephants fight, the grass suffers.

—African Proverb

This study sought to understand the pattern and trends of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa in the Cold War and post-Cold War era. The core aim was to proffer ways to guide sub-Saharan African countries in their interaction with great powers. This chapter's crux examined pertinent literature that explained the patterns and trends of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa in the stated periods. The researcher perused books, book chapters, reports, scholarly and newspaper articles, journals, magazines, websites, documentaries, and other electronic resources in line with the research's purpose.

The literature review aligns with the primary and secondary research questions of the study. The primary research question was: How should sub-Saharan African countries deal with challenges that arise from increased competition between established global powers? Sequel to this, the secondary research questions included:

1. What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the contemporary characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
3. How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?



4. How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in sub-Saharan Africa?

The review first highlighted the Realism theoretical framework and the Instruments of National Power. Additionally, the chapter sheds light on the setting and context within which the great power competition occurred in sub-Saharan Africa during the Cold War era by describing the socio-economic and political situations before delving into the pertinent themes in the reviewed literature. Also, the chapter examined the contemporary setting in sub-Saharan Africa before tackling the modern characteristics of superpower competition through the lenses of the authors. Finally, the chapter explored literature about how sub-Saharan African countries leveraged their relationships with the great powers to their benefit.

### Theoretical Frameworks

#### Realism

Realism is the most dominant school of international relations. It is also known as Realpolitik. Key proponents of the Realist school include Thucydides, Hans Morgenthau, and Kenneth Waltz. According to Waltz, Realism provides the most compelling explanation of power, competition, conflict, and war in the international system (Waltz 1979). Realpolitik posits that the international system is anarchic (there is no central global authority regulating nation-states' actions). Thus competition, conflict, and war among nations are inevitable (Morgenthau 1967). According to Realists, a security dilemma results from nation-states' need to survive in the anarchic environment. The dilemma drives nation-states to accumulate power (hard power) to guard and protect their interests and to prevent others capable of harming them from doing so. The critique of

Realpolitik is that it could lead to an arms race amid efforts by nations to accumulate more hard power as they seek to balance one another's power. Realpolitik offers a good explanation as to why the United States and the USSR were in a constant effort to balance each other's power during the Cold War. Examples include the nuclear arms race and the competition for ideological dominance in many parts of the world. In sub-Saharan Africa, this resulted in several contests along the competition continuum between the two global powers. The alliances formed during the Cold War were also indicative of nation-states balancing one another's strength in an *anarchic* global environment.

Realism also advances that interaction within the international system is a zero-sum game with no room for morals (Waltz 1979). The theory is pessimistic about human nature, which it describes as evil, selfish, and domineering (Morgenthau 1967). It argues that nation-states are the principal actors in the international system. Realpolitik argues that politicians have to pursue their state's interests at the expense of their personal moral beliefs (Waltz 1979). One fundamental weakness in Realpolitik is that several examples exist that buttress the argument that states cooperate within the international system and the relationship is not necessarily zero-sum. For instance, the United States provides aid packages to countries. It also led to the formation of the United Nations (UN), an avenue for global cooperation in addressing challenges and security dilemmas. The interactions are therefore not explicitly zero-sum and require a more nuanced view. That notwithstanding, Realpolitik offers a robust explanation of the competition between the United States and the USSR and their allies in sub-Saharan Africa in the Cold War and

post-Cold War era. The competition for influence, ideological projection, and proxy wars in the region were classic examples of Realism at play.

### Instruments of National Power

Another lens that provides a suitable means of observing, analyzing, and describing nation-states' activities is by focusing on employing their national power instruments to pursue their interests. According to US Armed Forces Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations*, national power instruments are national level means that countries and their leaders apply to achieve strategic objectives (JCS 2018, X). Others opine that a nation's power to impose its will and achieve its national goals emanates from its instruments of national power (Farlin 2014, 2). There are four of them: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic, collectively referred to by the acronym DIME (Farlin 2014, 2).

Many refer to the *diplomatic* instrument as soft power. It comprises the principal means of engaging other nations to promote a country's interests and values or solicit support for the nation state's actions (JCS 2018, x). It represents the prime means that nations build alliances with others. It also serves as a means of negotiating or mediating nations' interests and communication of their intent. The two superpowers, their allies, proxies, and sub-Saharan African countries, used their diplomatic instrument during the Cold War. For instance, be diplomatic endeavors could be directly linked to the formation and expansion of alliances that prosecuted the competition within sub-Saharan Africa.

The *informational* instrument refers to actions planned or executed, words spoken or written, and images displayed or relayed by states to create, strengthen or preserve the

conditions favorable for advancing their interests, policies, and objectives (JCS 2018, XI). It refers to how a nation uses information to shape the global environment on a long-term basis to support its national interests (JCS 2018, XI). For instance, the communist actors within sub-Saharan Africa during the period exploited the relationship between the United States and the European colonizers in the region. They portrayed the United States as a ‘pro-colonizer,’ which won them sympathizers in sub-Saharan Africa.

The *military* instrument of national power represents the military might of a nation. It is frequently tagged as hard power. DIME’s military component is associated with the ‘last resort’ due to its kinetic nature (Farlin 2014, 2). It is, however, sometimes used in concert with the other instruments to create the necessary effects for the attainment of national interests (Farlin 2014, 2). The emphasis that the key protagonists in the Cold War in sub-Saharan Africa placed on the military instrument provide insight into their key lines of effort within the region and the effects that emanated from it.

The last instrument of national power is the *economic* instrument. It deals with a nation’s economic resiliency and its economic influence on other countries (Farlin 2014, 2). These include an assortment of efforts ranging from embargoes, debt forgiveness, and foreign aid, etc. The economic instrument is quite crucial since it affects practically all the other instruments of national power.

The first few paragraphs of this chapter examined the Realism theoretical framework and the instruments of national power. It lay a foundation for understanding the nature of nation-state interaction within the international system and the instruments they employ to achieve their national strategic goals. The next paragraphs provide an

overview of sub-Saharan Africa to set the context for exploring literature about the competition.

### Overview of Pre-Cold War Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa, before colonization, had numerous tribes, ethnicities, and a diverse population. The tribes occasionally fought one another and consolidated territories. Examples of some dominant tribes include the Asante and Hausa in West Africa and the Zulu of southern Africa (Aidoo 1977, 24-27). Around this time, Europe comprised several nation-states engaged in wars and other forms of competition. Spurred by a competitive environment in Europe and sailing technology, countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Britain explored many parts of the globe to trade and establish territory.

The Portuguese, for instance, were the first Europeans to arrive in the then Gold Coast (now Ghana and hereafter referred to as such) in 1471 (Hallet 1970, 164). In 1482, the Portuguese founded their first permanent trading post in Western Africa at Elmina, present-day Ghana, to consolidate their gold, spice, and ivory trade interests (Brivio 2017, 31–47). This post was to protect their trade interests in the region and ward off other European competitors. They were engaged in battles with the Dutch and the British to maintain their trading posts. In Southern Africa, the Dutch East India Company established a port in present-day Cape Town by 1647 (Noble 1896, 141). According to Noble (1896, 141), this port served as a place ships could shelter and re-stock supplies. Over time, the Europeans established protectorates and controlled all major trade within these territories. The Gold Coast, for instance, became a British protectorate in 1874; Botswana in 1885; and South Africa in 1795 (Lange, Mahoney, and Vom Hau 2006, 7-8). The industrial revolution served as a catalyst that intensified the fierce competition

between the European colonizers as Africa was a source of raw materials that fed European industries. There was clearly a need for the regulation of the competition.

Many historians posit that the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) and its subsequent agreements partitioned Africa among the Europeans and set the tone for the ‘Scramble for Africa’ by the colonizers (Katzenellenbogen 1996, 21-34). Africa and, by extension, sub-Saharan Africa was aggressively partitioned and colonized in the years that followed the Berlin Conference. Great Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, and Italy secured territories in sub-Saharan Africa. King Leopold of Belgium, for instance, left the Conference with the Congo as his personal property (Hochschild 1999).

Germany and Italy lost control of their territories (Togoland, Namibia, Tanzania and Burundi, and Somalia) to Allied countries after WWI. By the advent of WWII, Great Britain and France controlled territories such as present-day Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and the Ivory Coast. The colonial powers mobilized forces from sub-Saharan African colonies for employment in WWII. The British mobilized local African units in West Africa under the Royal West African Frontier Force. These African soldiers operated alongside other Allied forces primarily in the Burma campaign against Japanese troops as part of WWII (Slim 2000).

By the time WW II was over, many of the African soldiers who had returned did not receive war bonuses owed them, which fueled anger and protests in cities such as Accra and Lusaka (Tembo 2017, 195-216). Their arrival coincided with the return of many Western-educated Africans who had become increasingly interested in politics. The likes of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania are examples. The convergence of these two factors (the veterans and the western-educated elites) coupled

with the protests and anger about colonial occupation and rule soon led to a demand for independence and self-governance. One should note that this was the post-WWII period, and most of the European colonizers were facing a myriad of challenges ranging from economic to social. It may explain in part the reluctance of some of the colonizers to grant independence to the colonies. The map below sheds light on the colonial powers and the areas they controlled within the region.

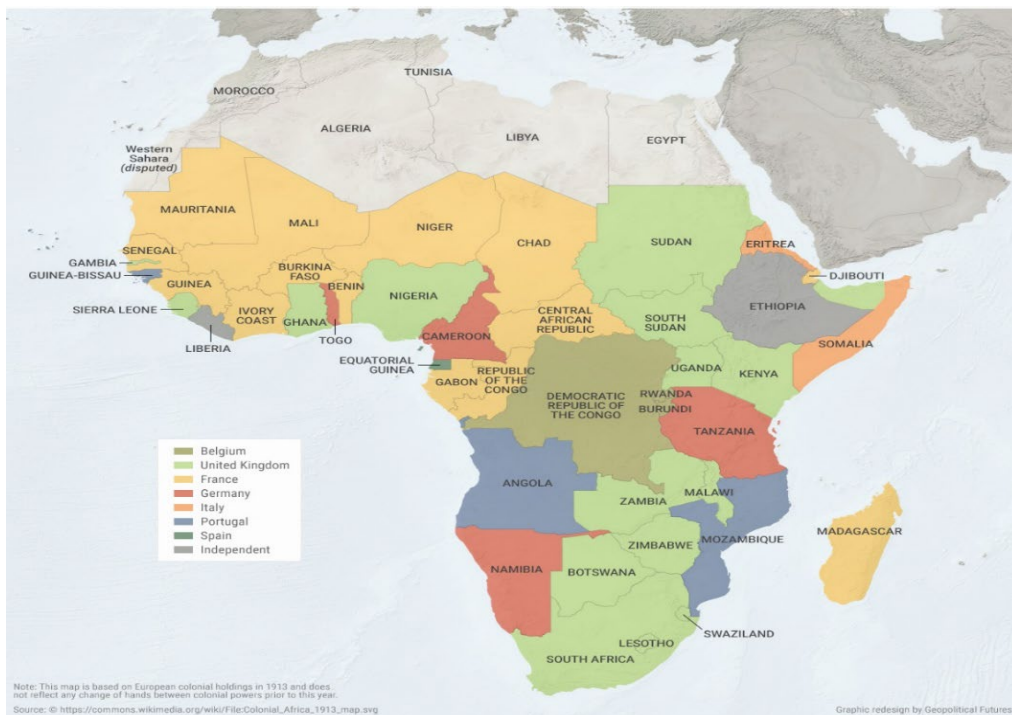


Figure 2. Map Showing Territories Controlled by Colonial Masters (1913)

Source: Geopolitical Futures n.d.

Ghana became the first nation in Sub-Saharan Africa to achieve independence in March 1957, following a series of civil disobedience actions triggered by the colonial

administration's killing of three African WWII veterans (Israel 1992, 359-368). The veterans were marching to demand their war bonuses from the British colonial administration (Israel 1992, 361). By the end of 1960, countries such as Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Central African Republic, Madagascar, and Senegal had gained independence either peacefully or through armed rebellions. The Cold War had gained momentum by this time. With most Western countries viewed as *oppressing* the indigenous Africans in their quest for self-governance, the USSR sought to be on the side of the indigenous nationalist groups demanding independence. This drew the lines between West and East (the two *elephants*) in sub-Saharan Africa (the *grass*), resulting in competition between ideology and influence between the United States and USSR and their allies.

#### Characteristics of the Cold War Superpower Competition in sub-Saharan Africa

Several literary works touched on the competition's characteristics in sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the ideas are reviewed in the subsequent paragraphs using the key protagonists' DIME instruments guided by Realism's postulates.

The United States, USSR, and most of their allies employed their *diplomatic* instrument of national power during the period under review. For instance, Daniel and Nagar (2016) posit that the US policy towards Africa often ignored basic democratic principles and socio-economic development and focused instead on resisting the spread of communism in Africa by supporting autocratic client regimes. For instance, the United States supported Mobutu Seseke of the then Zaire (hereafter referred to as DRC) even though he came to power through a coup. The reviewed text sheds light on how the long-term geopolitical interests of the United States shaped its interaction with some countries



in sub-Saharan Africa. Daniel and Nagar (2016) also indicated that the communist bloc countries provided support to national liberation struggles in African countries such as Guinea Bissau, South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Namibia (then South West Africa). The Los Angeles Times reported that Nelson Mandela thanked Fidel Castro during his visit to Havana after his release for supporting the cause of South Africa's freedom with resources (Boudreaux 1991). During the visit, Mr. Mandela received Cuba's highest decoration, the Order of Jose Marti. The Western press heavily criticized Mandela for this (Boudreaux 1991).

The quest for *diplomatic* recognition was one of the main drivers for Chinese involvement in sub-Saharan Africa. China intensified its engagement with sub-Saharan Africa to promote *One China* in opposition to Taiwan's efforts and to gain the support of countries in the subregion for its admission into the UN (Rich and Recker 2013, 62). Mao Zedong was said to have indicated that Africa was a partner in the *struggle against imperialism* as an attempt to tie diplomatic recognition to an ideological cause (Zedong 1998). As a result, the rate of recognition of Taiwan stalled. Between 1960 and 1963, thirteen independent African countries recognized Taiwan. By the end of the 1970s, forty-four newly independent countries were on board with One China (Rich and Recker 2013, 63). Despite these characteristics, the text focuses only on the Cold War era, making its contemporary significance limited.

*Informational* instrument-wise, Fidel Castro's Cuba used race and solidarity as a motivator for the Island's involvement in sub-Saharan Africa. Multiracial Cuba was a former colony of Spain, and many of its citizens were former slaves who traced their

ancestry to the African continent (Ralston 1983, 148). Castro famously remarked during the 15th Anniversary of the Bay of Pigs that:

We are a Latin African people. African blood flows through our veins. Many of our ancestors came from Africa. We are brothers and sisters of the people of Africa, and we will fight on their behalf in keeping with the duties noted in our principles, ideology, and our very own blood. We shall defend Angola and Africa. No country of black Africa has anything to fear from Cuban military personnel. (New York Times 1976)

This is more Fidel Castro's attempt to explain Cuba's strong presence in the region. It was a tailored message framed to convey an understanding of the challenges faced by sub-Saharan African countries. Additionally, a vital component of the over 50,000 Cubans deployed to about twenty countries in sub-Saharan Africa were technical advisers, teachers, physicians, and agriculturalists (Ralston 1983). This technical expertise lacked in sub-Saharan Africa and thus served as a tool that increased the positive perception of the Cubans.

The United States and her allies in sub-Saharan Africa portrayed communism in several facets in films, the print, and electronic media. Before the Cold War, Western movies portrayed the Soviet Union as the West's foe, which worsened during the competition (Brook 2014). Coupled with this, the USSR was depicted as an *evil empire* by President Ronald Reagan at a National Association of Evangelicals Convention in 1983 (History 2021).

The Cold War period was one of the *scrambles for Africa* (Wengraff 2018). The author identified three scrambles. The first was the 19th Century scramble for colonies that Balkanized the continent into over fifty states. According to the author, the second was the ideological Cold War rivalry of the immediate post-WWII period. The last is the

current rivalry between China and the United States on the continent (Wengraff 2018). This text sheds light on a contemporary aspect of the competition.

The *military* instrument of national power seemed to be the most utilized by the protagonists. It was within the framework of the *Containment Policy* by the United States to check the expansion of communism. According to Jackson (2010), by August 1977, the USSR supported Somalia with weapons against Ethiopia in the Ogaden War (Jackson 2010, 27). The author indicated that about 4,000 Soviet advisors supported Mohamed Siad Bari's troops (Jackson 2010, 27). The author added that Admiral Stansfield Turner, then director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), communicated that a Soviet General named Vasiliy Petrov was actively assisting the Ethiopians with the support of over 10,000 Cuban troops (Jackson 2010, 31). Somalia initiated the Ogaden War by seizing and occupying the Ogaden region. The Organization of African Union (now African Union) condemned this act. It highlights that some sub-Saharan African countries took advantage of the Cold War setting to pursue their geopolitical objectives. The support of both warring countries by the USSR also speaks volumes about the Soviet's interests within the region. Jackson (2010) further indicated that Somalia expelled the Soviets and called on the United States for help. Due to 'Détente,' the request was not honored (Jackson 2010, 31). After Somalia withdrew from the Ogaden, President Carter's National Security Advisor indicated that 'Détente' died in the sands of Ogaden (Jackson 2010, 37).

In other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, there was a prominent communist military presence. Cuba, for instance, was involved in seventeen African countries and three insurgencies (Zelbert 1986, 31). Cuba deployed over 65,000 *military* and civilian advisers

to the seventeen countries at an estimated cost of 11 percent of its annual budget (Zelbert 1986, 1). Falk (1987, 1086) indicated that Cuba's third-largest *military* assistance program was in Mozambique in support of FRELIMO. Aside from the 2,500 Cubans and 300 Soviet advisers supporting FRELIMO, China also backed the socialist movement (Falk 1987, 1086). The support to the group was to defend the country against South Africa-backed RENAMO. It is pertinent to highlight that South Africa was led by an apartheid government around this time. Many on the continent and beyond viewed the white minority rulers of South Africa pro-West. Like others, this text sheds light on the past, and there remains a void regarding the contemporary military trends of the great powers in sub-Saharan Africa.

Between 1974 and 1976, approximately 15,000 to 45,000 South African troops were deployed to Namibia, according to Dale (1980, 66–67). It was mainly to counter the threat posed by an insurgency launched by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), an indigenous Namibian group pursuing independence. Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola aided the South Africans. The two rebel groups were pro-Western forces fighting against the USSR-Cuba alliance, supporting the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Dale 1980, 66–67).

Still, on the *military* instrument of national power, Portuguese troop presence was pronounced in Guinea Bissau and Mozambique to deal with the USSR-Cuba alliance. Dhada (1998, 572) accounts that Portugal committed about 2,000 elite forces to Guinea Bissau to capture Como, a resupply point held by guerillas loyal to Amilcar Lopes Cabral during the struggle for independence against Portugal. The USSR, China, and Cuba

supplied Cabral's forces with arms and advisors (Karibe 2006). Cabral's soldiers also received training from Algeria and Czechoslovakia (Karibe 2006). These maneuvers shed light on how intense the great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa was. It also points to kinetic military operations as one of the characteristics of the Cold War great power.

The United States and the Soviet Union, and their allies used the *economic* instrument of national power in the contest. Dagne (2009, 1) posits that America's bilateral aid to Africa rose in the early 1960s when many African countries attained independence. The author notes that this period coincided with the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union. The US aid effort to sub-Saharan Africa reduced around the 1980s following calls for a reduction in the US budget deficit. Policymakers tied aid to human rights and commitment to economic reforms, which saw support to major Cold War aid recipients like the DRC and Liberia fall sharply (Dagne 2009, 2).

Brautigam (2009) sheds light on Chinese premier Zhou Enlai's visit to Ethiopia, Somalia, Ghana, Guinea, Sudan, and Mali between 1963 and 1965. During the visit, he committed China to 120 million aid in US dollars (USD) (Brautigam 2009). The Peoples Republic of China committed USD 1.9 billion aid to twenty-nine African countries between 1970 and 1977. This highlights the usage of foreign aid as one of the characteristics of the great power competition during the Cold War (CIA 1978).

### Overview of the Contemporary Sub-Saharan African Environment

This segment provides a birds-eye view of the contemporary situation in sub-Saharan Africa. It is to lay context before exploring pertinent literature shedding light on the modern nature of great power competition.

According to World Bank data, sub-Saharan Africa consists of forty-eight independent countries with varied languages, ethnicities, and histories (World Bank Sub-Saharan Africa). Signé and Gurib-Fakim (2019) posited that six out of the ten fastest-growing economies are African countries. Sub-Saharan Africa provides the bulk of the countries that have formed the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, the largest free trade area in the world after the WTO (Signé and Gurib-Fakim 2019). The region also has a population of 1.1 billion (Statista 2021), and the UN projects that the people of the area would double by 2050 (UN n.d.).

The subregion also abounds in numerous minerals, including strategic mineral deposits. For instance, Ghana and South Africa have been consistently ranked among the top ten gold-producing countries globally (World Gold Council 2020). Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for about seventy percent of global cocoa production (Make Chocolate Fair n.d.). According to the South African Oil and Gas Alliance (n.d.), the region accounts for 6.52 percent of the world's oil and Sixty percent of global coltan<sup>1</sup> reserves based on 2008 figures (Australian Institute of International Affairs n.d.). The DRC alone accounts for over seventy percent of the worldwide cobalt reserves (Baumann-Pauly 2020).

The subregion is also geo-strategically located between the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. It offers the critical infrastructure for any great power seeking to project power to either side of the globe. With the demise of the USSR, countries within the region have adapted Western reforms and democratized rapidly. Aside from sub-Saharan

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<sup>1</sup> Used for the production of electronic devices ranging such computers, tablets and cell phones.

Africa's positives, numerous fragile states, ungoverned spaces, governance deficits, and structural challenges continue to haunt the region. For instance, of the thirteen UN peace operations worldwide, six are located in sub-Saharan Africa (UN Peacekeeping Where We Operate).

These challenges notwithstanding, the subregion possesses great potential for success and risk that may militate against its success. The growing population represents a huge market base for goods produced by the great powers. The number of independent countries represents an extensive collection of influence used in multilateral engagements in the UN and other international bodies. The geostrategic location of the subregion also makes it prime real-estate for any great power. According to Keohane (2005), every hegemon or rising power requires four basic things as the source of its power and influence. These include raw materials (strategic minerals), capital (credits, grants, and investments), markets (internal and external), and the production of high-value goods and services. Sub-Saharan Africa abounds in these strategic resources. Its population also presents a ready market for high-value goods. In the future, influence over the bloc of countries within the region represents key diplomatic sources of support in multilateral organizations. These perhaps shed light on how the competition within the subregion in the post-Cold War era is 'colder' than that of the Cold War. Countries like Russia and China seeking global influence and economic ventures have increased their activities in the subregion.

## Contemporary Characteristics of Great Power Competition in Sub-Saharan Africa

As previously indicated, sub-Saharan Africa's socio-cultural and geopolitical environment has drastically changed from the Cold War era. For instance, all the subregion's countries are independent, and almost all are democratic. This segment reviews pertinent literature to distill how the great powers employed their DIME instruments to pursue geopolitical interests. The subsequent paragraphs navigate the characteristics and nature of modern competition in sub-Saharan Africa.

The employment of the *diplomatic* instrument of national power by the United States, Russia, and China is very pronounced in the modern competition in sub-Saharan Africa. All three powers have held conferences with sub-Saharan African countries in recent times. For instance, there was an extraordinary China-Africa Summit during the Coronavirus pandemic. It was addressed by the Chinese Leader, Xi Jinping, on June 17, 2020 (China Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2020). He stressed the importance of solidarity with the African continent in the fight against the pandemic. He emphasized China's desire to support the continent in the pandemic response effort (MFA PRC 2020). Almost all leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), attended this virtual summit (MFA PRC 2020). Under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), there have been three major summits with almost all African countries. All sub-Saharan African countries and the African Union Commission are members of the FOCAC (FOCAC n.d). The intensity of the Chinese involvement in the subregion had made the Chinese ubiquitous in sub-Saharan Africa in contrast with the Cold War era



when their engagement was cautious and calculated in concert with the USSR and Cuba. The strength of their economy has emboldened their drive in the region.

Russia has intensified its *diplomatic* engagement with the subregion. Following the 2006 visit of President Vladimir Putin to Africa, he appointed a special adviser to Africa. The appointment has remained a constant feature of his approach to engaging the continent and, by extension, sub-Saharan Africa (Fedotov and Sidorova 2010, 71). Arnaud (2019, 10) highlighted that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited Namibia, Angola, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique in 2018. He reportedly promoted three strategic goals—first, the revival or increase in military and security cooperation. Second, opening the mentioned countries to Russian investment and lastly, relaunching cultural and university exchanges (Arnaud 2019, 10). Russia hosted the first Russia-Africa Summit and Economic Forum in October 2019 (Roscongress n.d.). Forty-three heads of state from Africa, including thirty-seven, from sub-Saharan Africa, attended (Roscongress n.d.). Gershkovich (2019) of the *Moscow Times* posited that President Putin stressed that Russia was willing to offer assistance to sub-Saharan African countries without preconditions and respect for their sovereignty, emphasizing that Russia would not blackmail countries within the region. These efforts represent a paradigm shift in the Russo-Sub-Saharan Africa relations after the collapse of the USSR following the Cold War.

The United States had enjoyed dominance in sub-Saharan Africa following the retreat of the USSR, Cuba, and China after the Cold War. The United States' activities during the Cold War and its ongoing interaction with the subregion could be related to the wave of democratization and acceptance of Western development models in the

region. Okbazghi (2002) posited that the United States all but retreated from Africa following the Cold War. He thinks the George H. W. Bush Administration was preoccupied with Eastern Europe and the oil-rich Middle East (Okbazghi 2002, 23-44). He identified a shift with the Clinton Administration, indicating that President Clinton's 1998 visit to sub-Saharan Africa was the longest by a US president (Okbazghi 2002, 23-44). The administration nurtured a new partnership with Africa based on equality, mutuality of interests, and respect (Janes Defense Weekly 1999, 18). Under President George W. Bush, the 9/11 Attacks and subsequent Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) marked another stage in the relationship. The 2002 National Security Strategy identified the threat that the United States faced from failed, failing, and fragile states (US President 2002). This meant a lot more focus on states that could aid or inadvertently harbor terrorists, which increased security engagement with countries within sub-Saharan Africa.

Washington also held a US-Africa Leaders' Summit in August 2014 under the Obama Administration (US President 2014). It represented the largest gathering of African leaders with the United States (US President 2014). The summit's thrust was on trade and investment in Africa and America's commitment to Africa's security, democratic development, and welfare of the African people (US President 2014). Forty-eight countries from sub-Saharan Africa attended the summit, which was a follow-up to President Obama's visit to Africa in 2013 (US President 2014). These *diplomatic* engagements by the United States, Russia, and China shed light on the intensity of the diplomatic drive by the great powers. It is worth noting that the summits were tilted in

favor of great powers inviting sub-Saharan African countries rather than the other way around.

The *informational* instrument has been quite active in the new great power competition. Gvosdev and Marsh (2013) posited that Russia is motivated by the fact that it is *unaccepted* in the West. Thus its energy is geared towards building and shaping a coalition of rising non-Western powers in the Middle East, South Asia, Africa, and Latin America to counterbalance the Euro-Atlantic West and a rising China (Gvosdev and Marsh 2013). As Gershkovich (2019) reported, President Putin indicated that Russia would not *blackmail* Africa during the Russia-Africa summit in a bid to draw the line between Russia and the West and take advantage of sentiments in the subregion about the conditionalities associated with the Bretton Woods institutions. Segments of the Russian Press promoted that Russia was not one of the subregions' colonizers and did not demand prerequisites such as democracy and liberal markets (Kulkova 2019).

China has established numerous Confucius Institutes in the subregion. Einashe (2018) believes that China was leaving a cultural footprint with the establishment of fifty Confucius Institutes in Africa, with the bulk in sub-Saharan Africa. The institutes mainly teach Mandarin to job seekers and represent a medium of promoting Chinese culture (Einashe 2018). China also endeavored to portray itself as opposed to preconditions for aid and economic packages to sub-Saharan African countries. Conteh-Morgan (2018, 43) argued that China's non-adherence to universal human rights and its *communist capitalism* place it in a position where it did not embrace rules and regulations that guided aid, trade, and investment. The minimum requirements needed for economic assistance endear China to many governments in sub-Saharan Africa.

In stark contrast with the Chinese strategy, America promotes the rule of law, ethical governance, transparency, human rights, and press freedom. These are good ideals. However, as Conteh-Morgan (2018, 43) pointed out, the US alignment with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank's preconditions and other ethical yardsticks as prerequisites for engagement with countries in the region had alienated some countries and tilted them to China. China's laissez-faire approach appears to have endeared it to many sub-Saharan African states.

Mackinnon (2020) reported that Russia struck a *military* deal with Sudan to establish a naval base in the country. It was a twenty-five-year deal that allowed Russia to station up to four ships and about 300 *military* personnel in the geostrategic Horn of Africa (HOA) region (Mackinnon 2020). China had also built its first overseas *military* base in Djibouti, also in the HOA. It is significant to note that within the same region in Djibouti is the base of the US Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. It places the three great powers in the proximity of one another to project hard power to affect the strategic Bab-El Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea. It is also important to note that the United States established the Geographic Combatant Command for Africa: AFRICOM in 2007 (USAFRICOM n.d.). Conteh-Morgan believed that the formation of a geographic combatant command by the United States elevated Africa from a non-geostrategic region to one that was central to US national security (Conteh-Morgan 2018, 49).

In August 2018, Russia signed a *military* deal with the Central African Republic. Before the agreement, Russia had seconded a group of *military* advisers to the country's president (Kelly 2018). It already had a training detachment in the country focused on

training the *military* of the Central African Republic (Kelly 2018). Deputy Defense Minister of Russia, Colonel General Alexander Fomin, highlighted that the agreement focused mainly on training assistance to the country and the exchange of delegations and mutual visits (Kelly 2018).

*Economically*, Ndinga-Muvumba and Corkin (2007) reported that China announced a USD 5 billion fund via the China Development Fund to encourage Chinese investment in Africa. Conteh-Morgan (2018, 50) believed that the United States had been trying to match China's attention towards Africa, starting with the Clinton Administration and the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). The Bush Administration reportedly continued this engagement with the Emergency Plan for AIDS relief. The more recent Obama US-Africa Summit and the Power Africa Initiative aimed to provide electricity to 600 million Africans on the continent (Conteh-Morgan 2018, 50). America's AGOA Act passed in May 2000 provided access to the American market for selected African goods. African apparel exports to the United States amounted to USD 100 million in the first seven months of 2002. The AGOA also resulted in about 200,000 new jobs between 2000 and 2002 (Ndinga-Muvumba and Corkin 2007, 29).

China's *economic* engagement has also been in the field of infrastructure. They built the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for gratis at USD 200 million (Marsh 2018). They also pledged to construct the headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja at the cost of USD 32 million (Marsh 2018). Many Chinese projects require significant investment and long pay-back terms that traditional donors are reluctant to provide (Sun 2014). This has undoubtedly endeared the Chinese to sub-Saharan African countries. Ighobor (2013) highlighted that

China surpassed the United States as Africa's biggest trading partner in 2009. As of 2011, trade between China and Africa amounted to USD 112 billion (Ighobor 2013). The Chinese have built railways, schools, stadia, and malaria treatment centers in Angola in exchange for oil. Copper, coal, and iron ore have were traded for infrastructure in Zambia, South Africa, and Gabon (Ighobor 2013).

Gvosdev and Marsh (2013) highlighted that Russia forgave about USD 20 billion in debt that African states incurred during the Cold War in 2007. The bulk of Russia's investments in Africa historically was in strategic resources (Vahtra 2007, 13). Moscow hopes that this drive would enable Russian companies to extend their resource base by acquiring exploration and production licenses in sub-Saharan Africa (Vahtra 2007, 13).

#### Efforts by Sub-Saharan African Countries to Benefit from the Competition

This portion of the chapter sheds light on literature regarding how sub-Saharan African countries leveraged their relationships with the great powers to their benefit. As with the other segments, it highlights the situation as it existed in the Cold War and the Post-Cold War era.

The Cold War great power competition facilitated the drive for independence. Except for Ethiopia and Liberia, which did not experience colonization (Iweriebor n.d.), all the countries in sub-Saharan Africa were under colonial rule when WWII ended. With most of the colonizers, Britain, France, Belgium, and Portugal, grappling with the economic effects of WWII and post-War reconstruction (Amadeo 2020), the drive for independence by the sub-Saharan African countries met resistance (Hargreaves 2014). Guinea-Bissau received military supplies and advisers from the USSR, China, and Cuba to launch a protracted guerilla war against the Portuguese that eventually led to its

independence (Paul, Clarke, Grill, and Dunigan 2013, 235). Falk (1987, 1086) accounts that Cuba supported the independence struggle of Mozambique with 2,500 troops. The USSR also provided 800 soldiers and 300 advisers to forces loyal to Samora Machel,<sup>2</sup> which facilitated Mozambique's independence (Falk 1987, 1086).

Most sub-Saharan African countries were members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Lüthi (2016, 98) posited that the NAM was a loose association formed in 1961 to grant members a collective voice in international relations. Presidents Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania were founding fathers of the NAM. Lüthi (2016, 99-100) advanced that the thrust of the NAM was to guarantee that the joint influence of the members was greater than the sum of their individual, uncoordinated policies. The author added that the NAM was supposed to engage both the United States and the Soviet Union by virtue of its mission. As a result, the organization became a party in the Cold War and achieved the opposite of what it set out to do (Lüthi 2016, 100). For instance, according to the *New York Times* (1960, 1) cited by Lüthi (2016, 120), NAM countries called on the superpowers to disarm during the UN General Assembly in the Fall of 1960. They did not, prompting the NAM to send President Nkrumah of Ghana and Prime Minister Nehru of India to Moscow for talks with the Soviet leader, Khrushchev (Lüthi 2016, 100). After China had developed its nuclear bomb, some prominent members of the NAM, such as Tanzania's Nyerere, reportedly believed that it made the world a safer place (Lüthi 2016, 125). This shows that while the

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<sup>2</sup> Leader of FRELIMO, a local nationalist movement that opposed Portugal militarily and later first president of Mozambique.

NAM worked on one hand to limit nuclear proliferation, other members did the opposite. The second-order effect of NAM's efforts made it counterproductive.

Some sub-Saharan African countries took advantage of the international bi-polar contest to pursue their geopolitical interests. Onslow (2009, 1) posited that the superpowers' ideological struggles transcended beyond the main protagonists in Southern Africa. The author suggested that local actors were more concerned with their interests than with the competition between the United States and the USSR. The author singled out South Africa<sup>3</sup> and highlighted that it postured itself for Western solidarity, which facilitated its access to Western nuclear technology and research (Onslow 2009, 4). The Ford and Carter Administrations later terminated the assistance program (Onslow 2009, 4). Still, in Southern Africa, anti-Communism narratives were used by Prime Minister Ian Smith of Rhodesia (hereafter referred to as Zimbabwe) against independence-seeking indigenous nationalist movements (Onslow 2009, 4).

In the modern era, economic gain is one way that some countries in sub-Saharan Africa have benefitted from their association with the great powers. According to Jeffrey James (2016), the Chinese government pays an annual rent of USD 20 million to Djibouti for hosting its base in the country. The United States pays Djibouti USD 63 million annually, Japan and France pay 30 and 33 million Euros, respectively, to the same country for hosting their bases (Cabestan 2020, 737). With a gross domestic product of USD 2 billion, harsh weather, and few natural resources (World Bank Djibouti), Djibouti

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<sup>3</sup> The country was under the apartheid system of governance.



has leveraged the geopolitical competition to its advantage due to its geostrategic location.

The government of Djibouti has also utilized its relationship with great powers to avoid pariah status and sanctions. President Ismael Omar Guelleh and his clan have ruled the country since 1999, and the government also does not have a good human rights record (Cabestan 2020, 737). The president was re-elected for the fourth time in 2016 with a reported landslide of 87 percent of the polls cast (BBC 2016). According to the US State Department (DOS 2019), significant human rights issues such as arbitrary killings by government agents, life-threatening prison conditions, unjustified arrests, considerable corruption, and violence against women and girls with inadequate prosecution accountability exist in Djibouti. Despite these actions, President Guelleh's government is rarely condemned or sanctioned.

### Conclusion

This chapter reviewed pertinent literature associated with the nature and characteristics of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa and how the countries leveraged their relationships with great powers to their benefit. The study used Realism and DIME as theoretical and analytical lenses to sift the volume of data available on the subject matter. The literature perused indicated that the US interests in sub-Saharan Africa had fluctuated over time. It was in ascendancy during the Cold War but waned after it. There was a re-energized effort under the Clinton and Bush (Junior) Administrations. The latter was due to the global war on terrorism. Washington again raised the stakes through the establishment of the United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM). The USSR all but retreated out of sub-Saharan Africa after losing the

Cold War, but Russia has commenced engaging sub-Saharan African countries, mainly through military and other security cooperation deals. Chinese interests in the region during the Cold War appeared quite calculated. China was allied with the Soviet Union and Cuba in sub-Saharan Africa during the Cold War. Their extent of engagement in the region has since been re-energized.

The great powers utilized conferences and forums to advance their geopolitical objectives. China used Confucius institutes as an *informational* tool to influence perceptions and promote ideologies and narratives that benefited its interests in the region. Kinetic *military* operations (armed conflicts/confrontations) were also a significant feature used to counter the spread ideologies and prop up proxies within the subregion. *Economically*, the great powers traded in strategic minerals, offered financial aid, debt cancellation, and grants as a means of fostering their interests.

Some sub-Saharan African countries benefited from the great power competition. South Africa and Zimbabwe postured themselves as anti-communists and pro-West to gain support for their geopolitical agenda. Countries such as Djibouti have earned significant money by capitalizing on their geostrategic locations and leasing land to great powers to establish military bases.

Irrespective of the body of knowledge in the field, there has not been a conscious attempt to investigate how sub-Saharan African countries leveraged the relationships with the great powers to their benefit. Furthermore, no attempt has been made to examine the intensity of competition between the Cold War and the Post-Cold War periods. Again, the other studies have not attempted to expound on how sub-Saharan African countries

could deal with this competition, thus necessitating the need for this study. The next chapter addresses the research methodology that was employed in this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

The crux of this research was to understand the pattern and trends of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa in the Cold War and post-Cold War era. The study's thrust was to distill ways sub-Saharan African countries could navigate their interactions with great powers. The primary research question was: How should sub-Saharan African countries deal with challenges that arise from increased competition between the established global powers? The secondary research questions were:

1. What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the contemporary characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
3. How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?
4. How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in sub-Saharan Africa?

The subsequent paragraphs of this chapter generally focused on the research methodology employed in the study. It highlights the research design, data collection, ethical assurances, case studies, data analysis, and presentation. Additionally, the chapter sheds light on validity and reliability.

## Research Design

The study was Qualitative. Creswell (2007, 36) posited that Qualitative researchers studied phenomena in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people brought to them. Holliday (2007, 2) was also of the view that Qualitative research sought to describe actions within a specific setting and invites rather than control the possibility of a rich array of variables. Pursuant to these, Merriam (2009, 14) highlighted four features of Qualitative research. They were the inductive nature of Qualitative research, the researcher being the main instrument of data collection and analysis, the utilization of a process to understand and make meaning of the data, and the descriptive nature of the final product (Merriam 2009, 14).

Data for this research were gathered from several sources by the researcher per Merriam's (2009, 14) view that the researcher was the main instrument of data collection and analysis. A conscious effort was made to ensure a balance in the sources and interrogate the background of the resources utilized to sift any inherent biases. Additionally, evaluation criteria were filtered from the literature review and advanced to evaluate and analyze the data before presenting the findings and recommendations.

The study stuck to the disciplined process of inquiry associated with the Qualitative approach to research. The research was methodological and guided by the epistemological outlook related to the qualitative field. The study posed primary and secondary research questions, followed by an examination of applicable theories and a review of pertinent literature available in the field to discern the body of knowledge already in the public domain while highlighting gaps that existed therein. The research

used case study methodology and content or document analysis to explore the various resources to describe the nature of great power competition in the sub-Saharan Africa region. The competition within the subregion under review was mainly a human endeavor coupled with their contextual circumstances. Thus, the qualitative approach offered a way that delved into this human activity to understand, describe, and assess it within the highlighted time frame.

#### Data Collection and Ethical Assurances

The researcher collected data from secondary sources. These sources ranged from books, book chapters, articles, reports, electronic books, websites, journals, documentaries, and peer-reviewed articles. The study employed purposive sampling to categorize and use literary works from a vast pool covering the study's themes and sub-themes. Also, all works consulted were presented without alteration and appropriately cited. The researcher also differentiated opinions and deductions from facts in the analyses of the data.

#### Case Studies

The research used case and cross-case studies to highlight the competition by the great powers within sub-Saharan Africa. Yin (2003, 179) described a case study as research that comprised an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon with a real-life context that used multiple evidence sources. Creswell (2007, 73) suggested that single or multiple case studies granted the researcher an opportunity for an in-depth and comprehensive examination of single or multiple cases within a

period. Following these stipulates, the research selected specific case studies within time frames in specific geographical areas in the sub-Saharan Africa region.

The study ensured a balance in its focus by examining the same cases during the Cold War and post-Cold War era. It thus provided an opportunity for juxtaposing the two settings. Specifically, the study selected the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe. These cases allowed the researcher to decipher the nuances of both periods in order to compare the competition that occurred. The cross-case studies also allowed the researcher to take an in-depth dive into the two situations in the two varying periods to study and compare the phenomena (competition by the great powers) in the three countries.

#### Data Analysis and Presentation

Document or content analysis was employed in this research. Babbie (2007, 350) defined content analysis as the study of recorded human communications. He saw it as a coding operation for transforming raw data into standardized forms (Babbie 2007, 350). Because document analysis is related to studying recorded human communication, it allowed the researcher to explore the vast array of resources in the field concerning the study's primary and secondary research questions. Content Analysis was flexible in the sense that it offered access to existing literary resources. Thus, it presented a practical option for the research due to the time and resource constraints of the US Army Command and General Staff College environment.

The pertinent variables regarding this study were operationalized and appropriately coded. It afforded the researcher the opportunity to peruse the purposively sampled text to sift the relevant details relating to the subject matter. It allowed the researcher to scrutinize data and categorize it into the requisite themes to carry out a

conceptual, relational, and trend analysis to recognize patterns that answered the study’s questions.

The study advanced a set of criteria to serve as a basis for analyzing and comparing the great power competition within the periods under review. The researcher selected the criteria to reflect themes within the DIME framework that the great powers employed within the subregion. The criteria are below.

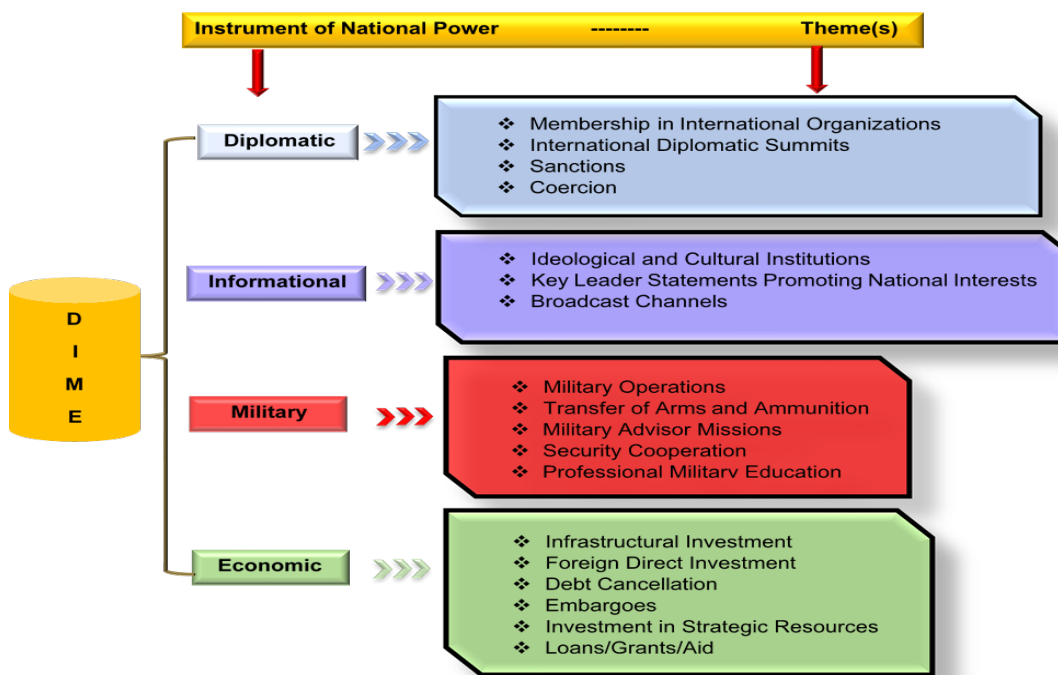


Figure 3. Evaluation Criteria for Assessing and Analyzing Great Power Competition in Sub-Saharan Africa

Source: Created by author.

### Subjective Measurement of Themes

The themes identified within the DIME elements shown in figure 3 guided the further subjective measurement and analysis of the acquired data. The researcher utilized



a straightforward method to determine if a theme was present or not. Furthermore, the themes were rated subjectively depending on how frequently they appeared in the cases. These subjective evaluations used high, medium, and low valuations. A high valuation applied subjectively to an identified theme that consistently remained pronounced and saw an ascendancy within the case study. The researcher assigned a low valuation when a theme dwindled with time, and a medium valuation was assigned to a theme that the researcher judged as being in the midpoint between high and low valuations.

#### Reliability and Validity of Data

Babbie (2013) posited that reliability and validity in research underpinned the strength of data collected and fortified the conclusions. Pursuant to this, the study employed a wide array of resources from African, European, American, Russian, and Asian authors to get a sense of the different perspectives. Additionally, the research employed the yardsticks of Paul and Elder's elements of thought to identify the authors' purpose, concepts, motivation, and points of view (Elder and Paul 2012).

#### Summary

This research's primary thrust was to understand the nature of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa and how the region's countries could deal with the competition. It was qualitative and utilized the case and cross-case study methodology. The DRC, Zimbabwe, and Angola were selected as the focus areas for the case studies because they served as good examples for highlighting the nature and intensity of the modern and Cold War great power competition in the subregion. The research gathered data from secondary sources and used purposive sampling and content analysis to sift the

data into the relevant themes needed to compare the relations and analyze the trends in the competition.

Evaluation criteria were advanced to assist in the analysis and comparison. The criteria comprised variables from the DIME national power instruments. Diplomatic engagements and the establishment of ideological institutions were some of the variables selected as the metrics for gauging the great powers' efforts in the diplomatic and informational instruments. Additionally, military operations and arms transfer, as well as economic interventions like aid and debt cancelation, were selected as some of the variables for gauging the efforts of the great powers in the military and economic instruments, respectively.

The next chapter takes an in-depth dive into the three cases selected for the study. It would highlight the great power competition in the DRC, Zimbabwe, and Angola in the Cold War and post-Cold War eras. It would answer the primary and secondary questions related to this study and proffer lessons that would assist sub-Saharan African countries in dealing with the great powers.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS

I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.

—Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

#### Introduction

The Hobbesian dictum is central to the great power contest in sub-Saharan Africa. The superpowers sought to obtain, retain, and maximize their power within the region. Therefore, the crux of the research was to understand the nature and trends of this power competition in sub-Saharan Africa to distill lessons that would assist sub-Saharan African countries in their interactions with the great powers. Sequel to this, the primary research question for the study was: How should sub-Saharan African countries deal with the challenges that resulted from great power competition. To answer the primary research question, the secondary areas of inquiry targeted were:

1. What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the contemporary characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
3. How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?
4. How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in sub-Saharan Africa?

This segment of the thesis focused on the three case studies. It took an in-depth dive into Cold War and post-Cold War great power competition in the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe. The research first highlighted the macro-level strategic outlook of the great powers before delving into the specific cases. The study tracked the beginning of colonialism within each case, how the countries attained independence, and the challenges that confronted their leaders. It further zoomed into the competition and used the DIME as a guide to handrail the activities of the great powers in each case. The Chapter also examined the contemporary great power competition in the countries in the post-Cold War era and answered the secondary and primary research questions.

#### Post-WWII Strategic Outlook of the Great Powers

The United States and USSR emerged as the two superpowers after WWII. The subsequent paragraphs take a macro-level birds-eye view of the strategic outlook of the two superpowers and their key allies to paint a picture of the background within which they competed in sub-Saharan Africa.

The US Truman Doctrine and National Security Council (NSC) Document 68 guided most of its actions. The Truman doctrine was presented to Congress in March 1947 and had the primary aim of *containing* Soviet influence with means short of armed confrontation and assistance to regimes/nations around the world threatened by communism (McCullough 1992). The NSC 68 was the bedrock of US foreign policy in the Cold War. One basic assumption that guided this document was that the Soviet Union did not distinguish military from other forms of aggression. Its thrust was to weaken the position of the United States (Gaddis and Nitze 1980, 166). In response to this, the United States also had an obligation to ensure the USSR suffered indignities (Gaddis and Nitze

1980, 166). The NSC 68 put forth that *containment* was to achieve four goals. First, block further Soviet power, and second, expose falsities of Soviet pretensions. Additionally, it was to foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system and, lastly, induce the retraction of the Kremlin's control and influence (NSC 1950, 21).

The USSR reaction to *containment* was varied. It ranged from armed support to countries around the globe and economic programs such as the *Molotov Plan* of 1947. Berger (1984, 17-18) puts forward that the Molotov Plan predated the US Marshall Plan and had the core aim of gaining economic and political control of some European economies and establishing the Kremlin's alliances in Europe. The USSR also devoted technical, military, and diplomatic efforts in countries such as Greece, China, North Korea, and Vietnam to thwart US efforts at supporting regimes and groups in those areas.

The preceding paragraphs reveal that sub-Saharan Africa was another stage in the competition between the two superpowers during the Cold War. The setting was a classic example of an anarchic international environment where the two superpowers sought to balance each other in terms of political, military, and economic influence to guarantee their survival. Caught in this web were the sub-Saharan African countries whose allegiance the great powers sought. The subsequent paragraphs navigate the situation in the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe against the backdrop of this strategic milieu.

### The Cold War Great Power Competition in the DRC

The present-day DRC is the second-largest country in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of landmass (Muanda, Ndongo, Messina, and Bertrand 2017). It is not to be confused with the Republic of Congo, its western neighbor (see figure 4). Both countries derive their name from the River Congo. The DRC lies in the Great Lakes Region of

Central and Eastern Africa and is one of the wealthiest countries on the continent in terms of strategic mineral resources. Its capital is Kinshasa, in the Western part of the country. Nine countries border the DRC. The key ones are Angola, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, and Uganda (see figure 4). It is home to one of the unique river systems of the world: the River Congo. The river is the second-longest in Africa and the second highest in terms of discharge volume (next to the Amazon) in the world (Oberger, Shelton, Gardiner, and Jackson 2009, 1). The image below shows the topographical details of Congo.

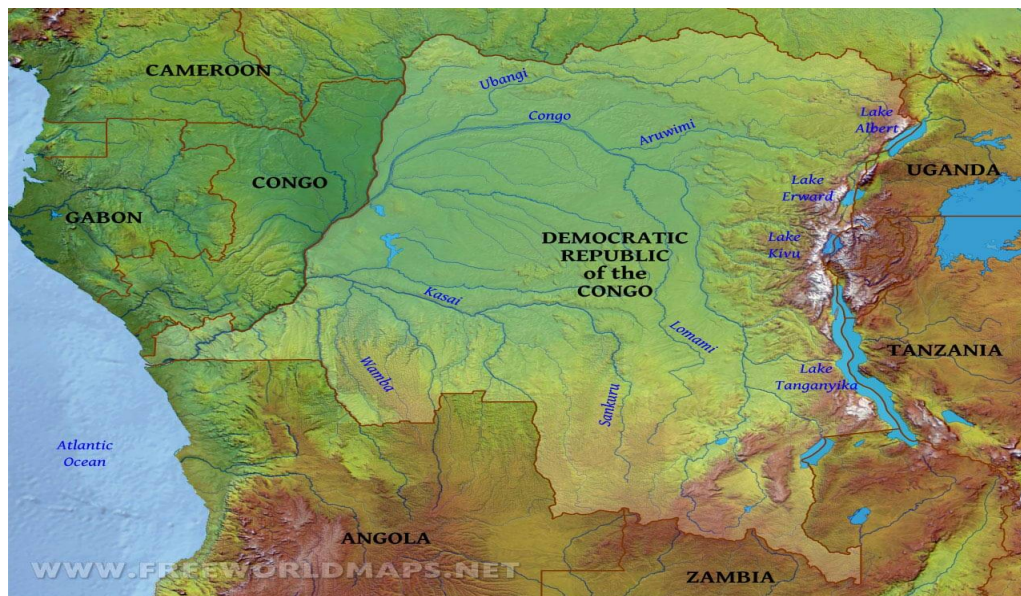


Figure 4. Map of Post-independent DRC

Source: Free World Maps n.d.

The country traces its roots to the ancient Congo Kingdom, which made contact with Europeans in 1482 (Boya 2010, 18). By May 1885, the Berlin Conference had granted King Leopold II of Belgium his wishes to make the territory his private possession, which he renamed the Congo Free State (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 1). By

1891, the King's law required villages to supply ivory, rubber, and other mineral resources to his agents. The agents subjected villages unable to meet the quota to mutilation, arson, and murder (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 22). During King Leopold's *owned* the Congo Free State, an estimated ten million people died or were killed in the territory. Hochschild (1999, 226-229) revealed that the deaths resulted from murder, starvation, exhaustion, and disease. A plummeting birth rate also accounted for the population decline. Following widespread condemnation for the atrocities, King Leopold II handed the territory to the Belgian government in 1908, and it was re-christened the *Belgian Congo* (Hochschild 1999, 259).

Congo attained independence on June 30, 1960, from Belgium following mass acts of civil disobedience in cities such as Leopoldville (Boya 2010, 78). Belgium granted Independence under a complex constitutional arrangement. There was to be a president elected by the legislature, a premier elected by the people, and a mineral-rich Katanga Province that would be autonomous. This resulted in Prime Minister Lumumba, elected by the people, a pro-Belgium President Kasavubu, selected by the legislature, and the pro-Belgium leader of the mineral-rich autonomous Katanga Province - Moise Tshombe (Natufe 1984, 361-363). By the time independence was granted, there were less than thirty university graduates in the country; the number of Congolese in leadership positions in the Army was also insignificant. Only three Congolese were employed in the colonial administration's five thousand management positions (Hochschild 1999, 301).

The turning point in the Congo's history was when King Baudouin of Belgium, during a speech granting independence, praised his great grand uncle, King Leopold II, and emphasized that the Congo's independence was the culmination of King Leopold's

civilizing mission (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002, 38). The King added that “It is now up to you gentlemen to show that you are worthy of our confidence” (Hochschild 1999, 301). The statement drew a sharp response from the new Prime Minister, Patrice Lumumba. Lumumba left the Belgian King humiliated after cataloging King Leopold’s horrific deeds in the country. The subsequent events in this nascent state after Lumumba’s defiant speech will be categorized using the DIME framework.

Barely a month after attaining independence, the mineral-rich autonomous Katanga province attempted to secede with support from Anglo-Belgian mining companies and the Belgian military (Mockler 1987). Lumumba undertook a *diplomatic* trip to the United States and called on the UN to expel the Belgians and assist the Congolese Army in tackling the secession and restoring security (Kuklick 2014, 144). He also arranged a meeting with the Eisenhower Administration regarding events in his country (Kuklick 2014, 148). Mr. Archibald Herter, President Eisenhower’s Secretary of State, received Lumumba in July 1960. Lumumba stayed in the famous Blair House, within the vicinity of the White House. The Belgian Prime Minister reportedly summoned the American ambassador to Belgium and complained about the preferential treatment given to Lumumba in Washington and questioned why the Eisenhower administration accommodated him in the Blair House, where the administration housed King Baudouin during his visit to Washington a year earlier (Kuklick 2014, 149). Lumumba’s trip to Washington and the UN was not fruitful since he could not secure the help he sought. As a result, he turned to the Soviet Union and requested technical and military assistance to deal with the secession, much to the scorn of many Western governments (Britannica 2021). By this time, the Soviet Union had carved an image for



itself as being anti-imperialism. For instance, it aggressively led a call for decolonization at the United Nations and initiated a resolution adopted at the XV session in 1960 to that effect (Natufe 1984, 357).

The competition between the two blocs in the DRC manifested itself through the *informational* domain during the Cold War. The Soviet Union and China condemned what they saw as neocolonialism by Belgium supported by the United States in the DRC. After the UN refused to heed Lumumba's request to tackle the Katanga secession, Soviet leader Khrushchev highlighted that the USSR could not support an organization that assisted colonialists and worked against liberators (Heiss 2015, 84). The Soviet Union also assembled facts to buttress Western colonialism's exploitative nature and requested the international community to empower the UN General Assembly to abandon it (Heiss 2015, 84). To counter this, the United States devised a theme, highlighting what it called Red Colonialism. The United States portrayed the USSR as controlling and colonizing the Baltic republics, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe, which was no different from Western colonization (Heiss 2015, 82). The Soviets did not relent. During the 15th General Assembly in September 1960, Nikita Khrushchev introduced the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*. He posited that the colonial system deliberately and artificially perpetuated economic backwardness of the colonies, hindering their industrialization and rational utilization of their resources (Khrushchev 1960, 2-7).

The Soviet Union established the Peoples Friendship University of Russia in 1960 to educate students from newly independent African countries and make them sympathetic to the Soviet cause (BBC 2010). After Belgium-backed secessionists

executed Lumumba, the Soviets renamed the institution after him on February 22, 1961. In 1961, China organized a demonstration in Peking in which about 100,000 people protested the execution of Lumumba. They flew flags at half-mast to honor the slain leader and blamed his death on Belgium and the United States (British Pathe 1961).

The *military* domain was busy with many activities. Almost immediately after independence, many soldiers within the Congolese Army wanted a drastic *Congolization* of the Armed Forces.<sup>4</sup> It led to widespread riots, and Belgium responded by deploying soldiers into the country ostensibly to protect its citizens. The troops were deployed into the country in July 1960 without consultations with Congo's government (Rosoux 2014, 24). Taking advantage of the chaos, Premier Tshombe of the autonomous Katanga province declared the province's secession and requested Belgian *military* assistance (Kaplan 1967, 240). Lumumba asked for UN military assistance to defeat the secession movement and pushed for the withdrawal of the Belgian soldiers. The UN deployed a peacekeeping mission of about 19,000 personnel, but the mandate was to maintain law and order. The UN under Dag Hammarskjöld refused to tackle the secession and argued that it was an internal Congolese issue that would jeopardize the impartiality of the international force (Zeilig 2008, 116). As a result of this, Lumumba drifted towards the Soviets for *military* assistance to tackle the secession, leading to being labeled as a communist.

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<sup>4</sup> In most colonies, key leadership positions in the Armed forces immediately after independence were filled by officers and Non-Commissioned Officers from the colonizers. Majority of the junior-ranked soldiers were locals.

The Soviet Union sent about 1,000 *military* advisors to assist in the restoration of order and tackling the secession (Zeilig 2008, 116). The advisors and about 2,000 Congolese Army troops conducted offensives in South Kasai after that province also attempted to secede (Zeilig 2008, 116). After being pressured by the Belgian Minister for African Affairs, Harold d'Aspremont Lynden, President Kasavubu sacked Lumumba over the invitation of Soviet troops (Vanderstappen 2018). Lumumba, in turn, announced the firing of Kasavubu. Amid the confusion, Colonel Mobutu, the Army's Chief, placed Lumumba under house arrest and later handed him to the Katanga secessionists, who tortured and executed him (Rosoux 2014, 24). The CIA had also planned to overthrow Lumumba's regime owing to reports that he was a communist (Vanderstappen 2018).

During Lumumba's execution, the self-declared Katangese *President*, Tshombe, two Katangese ministers, Belgian officials, and police officers were present. Captain Julien Gat of the Belgian Army commanded the firing squad (Vanderstappen 2018). The Katanga secessionists received *military* aid and assistance from the United States. For instance, Washington dispatched four C-130 transport planes to aid Tshombe in his fight with forces loyal to Lumumba (New York Times 1964) in August 1964. The execution of Lumumba was widely condemned globally and possibly served as a rallying call to many countries to support the Congo's struggles. One of those countries was Cuba.

Che Guevara reportedly led a team of 200 Cubans with arms and ammunition to train forces of the National Council of the Revolution, which fought against the Katanga secessionists and mercenaries hired by mining companies in Katanga (Guevara 2015). He remained in the country from April to December 1965, training the guerillas and leading them in battles. The overall command and control of the National Council of the

Revolution was vested in Laurent Kabila, a pro-Lumumba fighter (Guevara 2015). The bane of the DRC was classic realpolitik power balancing efforts and contest for influence shrouded in ideology that cost the lives of 100,000 people (Vanderstappen 2018).

*Economically*, there was fierce competition in Congo between the great powers and some multinational corporations. The Congo is rich in strategic resources, with Katanga Province being one of the most well-endowed in the country. Technology for nuclear power and rockets that delivered warheads relied on minerals such as Uranium and Coltan<sup>5</sup> that were only available in the Katanga Province (Villafaña 2012, 5). The DRC held eighty percent of the world's coltan and the largest known deposits of uranium (Villafaña 2012, 5). Indeed, Shinkolobwe Mine in Katanga produced the minerals for Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs (Villafaña 2012, 5). Furthermore, the country has sixty-five percent of the world's cobalt utilized in defense and aerospace technology (Villafaña 2012, 5).

Reportedly, an Anglo-Belgian mine company called Union Minière du Haut-Katanga instigated the Katanga rebellion and secession. At the time, the company was the biggest copper mining company globally and was involved in financing the *military* and *paramilitary* operations against the Lumumba government (Mockler 1987). Belgium used the funding to back the secession in Katanga and South Kasai to control a large quantum of the Congo's minerals and cut Lumumba's government from those strategic resources and funds (Vanderstappen 2018).

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<sup>5</sup> Coltan contains Niobium and Tantalum, which are widely used in manufacture of most electronic gadgets (Foreign Policy 2015).

Colonel Mobutu staged a coup and deposed President Kasavubu in 1965, he stabilized the country and became pro-West. It made him receive many *economic* packages from the United States and its allies. He received about USD 150 million from the CIA (Kwitny 1984, 56-70). Mobutu was also crucial in using the DRC, which he renamed *Zaire* as a base for countering communist activities in neighboring countries such as Angola. President Reagan reportedly asked that US aid be doubled to Zaire because Mobutu sent troops to support a US-backed government in Chad (Askin and Collins 1993, 80). Mobutu stayed in power for over three decades and became one of the most corrupt leaders in Africa (Krauss 1990). By the early 1990s, the US Congress refused to authorize USD 4 million in military aid to Zaire and directed that USD 40 million economic aid be funneled via humanitarian agencies not affiliated with the Zairian Government (Krauss 1990). It was due to his poor human rights record and corruption. He reportedly had an estimated fortune of USD 2.5 billion (Krauss 1990).

Table 1. Themes Identified in the DRC

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization			X	
	Sanctions	X			
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion		X		
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions				X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	National Broadcast Channels	X			
Military	Direct and Proxy Military Operations				X
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition				X
	Direct and indirect Military Advisor Missions				X
	Security Cooperation	X			
	Professional Military Education	X			
Economic	Infrastructure Investment	X			
	Foreign Direct Investment	X			
	Debt Cancellation	X			
	Embargoes	X			
	Investment in Strategic Resources				X
	Loans/Grants/Aid			X	

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

It is also pertinent to note that the competition occurred after WWII, when Belgium faced political, economic, and military challenges, which made giving up the Congo economically unwise. Despite these challenges, it had a dependable ally in the United States, and within the context of NSC 68, Lumumba's invitation to the Soviet Union undoubtedly attracted the United States to focus efforts to counter the Soviets. Making the rich Katanga Province autonomous within a nascent sovereign state created the conditions for friction. Amid this confusion, it is relevant to underscore that Lumumba's initial attempt for assistance was Washington, but the Eisenhower

Administration turned him down. Out of desperation and faced with the imminent collapse of his country, he sought help from the Soviets. This effort by Lumumba, when situated within the broader scheme of the competition, was a substantial geopolitical gamble by a young and inexperienced leader. The DRC was caught in the middle of an international contest between East and West, aggravated by a colonizer determined to keep the country bound to its apron strings. One could argue that Congo was dead at birth due to global power politics, internal wrangling, and rivalry. Sanctions were absent in this instrument. The three themes that were present ranged from low to high. The study measured the utilization of the diplomatic instrument of national power as medium.

#### Informational

The use of information as a tool of influence intensified after the execution of Lumumba. The communist messaging theme of *anti-colonialism and vilification* of the alleged perpetrators of the Lumumba murder was arguably more potent because evidence existed in DRC of the atrocities and exploitation of colonialism. The legacy of King Leopold and the activities of Belgium in the country energized the communist messaging themes. The existence and impact of Jim Crow Laws in the United States, which enforced segregation of the black minority, bolstered the communist narrative that the United States was no different from the colonizers. It thus dented America's moral standing and strategic narrative. The establishment of the Friendship University, and the subsequent renaming of it after Lumumba, was a practical strategic step in the struggle to win hearts and minds, which gave the Soviets significant mileage.

As noted, DRC lacked the requisite professionals to man critical sectors of their economies and governance machinery at independence. It was because Belgium had not

prepared the country for independence. Moscow saw the vacuum and attempted to remedy it with professional education. The added advantage was that it allowed them to inculcate Soviet values into the African students. As the foregoing suggests, information was weaponized by the protagonists in the competition to gain influence, solidarity and shape public opinion. The employment of this instrument in the DRC was assessed as high. The themes that were present consistently gained ascendancy throughout the period.

### Military

Undoubtedly, the military contest was intense within the DRC. It is worthy of note that most of the competition resulted from the power arrangements within the nascent state when Belgium granted the country independence. The DRC thus became a turf for the superpowers and their proxies to wrestle. The atmosphere of distrust between inexperienced local politicians coupled with competing ideologies juxtaposed with the interests of the great powers and a former colonizer was a recipe for implosion. Direct and indirect military operations via proxies and overt and covert schemes by the great powers characterized this instrument. The UN also got entangled in the armed hostilities and had challenges regarding being an impartial actor. The murder of Premier Lumumba was orchestrated and executed via this instrument. Overall, very high and intense utilization of this instrument by the protagonists.

### Economic

The link between multinational firms, governments, and friction within the international system became evident in this study. In the DRC, the Anglo-Belgian mine company, Union Minière du Haut-Katanga, was widely involved in the Congo's politics



and conflict. The Belgian state did not limit its actions and actively participated in training paramilitary forces against the forces of the duly-elected Lumumba Administration. Undeniably, Belgium could not completely sever economic links in Congo due to its mineral endowment and alliance obligations to the United States, especially regarding the nuclear project.

The US interests in the country were strategic, primarily since the Katanga province provided the minerals for the Manhattan Project, and it was thus critical that the United States maintained access to the minerals and impede Soviet Union access to the country. It in turn, sheds light on CIA involvement and the military assistance that America offered to the secessionists and Mobutu. Undoubtedly, the strategic resource factor raised stakes in Congo, so the United States and its allies had to ensure that the Congo did not lean towards the Soviet Union. The global power and ideological struggle between the East and West significantly impacted the Congo and changed the dynamics within the country. Two out of six themes came to the fore in the case study, and the study collectively assessed the utilization of this instrument by the protagonists as medium. There was an interesting overlap in the themes. The majority of economic initiatives could also be related to maintaining military endeavors.

#### The Cold War Great Power Competition in Angola

Portuguese explorers established contacts with the indigenes in the territory now known as Angola in 1484 (Baynes 1878, 45). By 1617, they had set up forts along the coastal areas and traded in slaves. They shipped them mainly to Brazil and Cuba (Fleisch 2004, 131–133). The Portuguese fought several wars, signed treaties with the indigenous people, and competed with the Dutch until the Berlin Conference established modern-day

Angola as a Portuguese colony (Corrado 2008, 11-13). Angola is on the Southwestern coast of sub-Saharan Africa. Its neighbors are the DRC, Zambia, and Namibia. See figure 5 for further details.



Figure 5. Map of Angola

*Source:* CIA n.d.

### Angolan War of Independence

The Portuguese colonial system experienced friction in the early 1960s due to revolts by the locals regarding dropping cotton and coffee prices and their maltreatment (Cornwell 2000, 48). The Portuguese colonial government brutally suppressed the uprising. They used brute force against locals in Luanda (the capital) who attempted to free prisoners. The colonial police, vigilantes, and military summarily executed about 3,000 people alleged to be associated with the attempt in February 1961 (Cornwell 2000,

49). The struggle grew into a full-fledged war of independence spearheaded by three armed groups. They were the Peoples Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA)<sup>6</sup> led by Agostinho Neto, the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) led by Holden Roberto, and the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) led by Jonas Savimbi (Guimarães 2016, XV-XVI). The groups had diverse support and alliances but unified their efforts in seeking decolonization.

The MPLA operated around Luanda and drew its support from the Mbundu ethnic group. Additionally, it was socialist in orientation and associated itself with the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Bas Kongo ethnic group, found in both Congo and Angola, supported the FNLA. Its leader, Holden Roberto, was the brother-in-law of Mobutu, who had consolidated power in DRC (Guimarães 2016, 48-50). The United States, Mobutu's Zaire, and China supported the FNLA. The UNITA group broke off from the FNLA in 1966 and became associated with the apartheid South African government. The UNITA drew its support from the largest ethnic group, the Ovimbundu (Guimarães 2016).

After the Portuguese military overthrew the Estado Novo regime in Portugal's Carnation Revolution in April 1974, they identified some critical areas for Portugal. They wanted to institute democratic reforms and economic well-being and abolish long colonial wars in Portuguese colonies such as Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and Angola, draining their Army and resources (Varela and Alcantra 2014, 152-154). Pursuant to this, the three Angolan armed groups signed the Alvor Agreement on January 15, 1975, for an election to decide the fate of who would lead the country. The agreement also set up a

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<sup>6</sup> The groups were known by their Portuguese abbreviations: MPLA, FNLA and UNITA.

transitional government comprising the armed groups before the elections and set the Independence date for November 11, 1975 (Wheeler 1975, 21).

Portugal's domestic circumstances facilitated the independence course of Angola. However, the formation of the liberation movements along ethnic identities was worrying and represented an avenue that could undermine the country's unity and affect its political future. The groups' ideological alignments were even more problematic, which certainly brought them into the spotlight of the global contest between East and West within a charged geopolitical ecosystem. The liberation groups invariably drew the battle lines before independence was granted and set the stage for a contest over whether the new state would lean East or West. The factions were a group of irreconcilable movements banded together by a struggle for liberation, and once independence was on the horizon, it was only a matter of time before they turned their guns on one another.

### Angolan Civil War

The civil war saw the pronounced footprints of the superpowers in Angolan affairs. It became apparent that the Portuguese working together with the various parties could not organize the elections envisaged under the Alvor Agreement before Independence Day, which led to further mistrust and internal wrangling within the interim government. The MPLA controlled the capital and consolidated its positions to control it symbolically and became the de facto government on Independence Day. Its leader, Agostinho Neto, thus became the first President of Angola.

Several *diplomatic* moves and countermoves were undertaken at various stages of the civil war by the actors. For instance, the MPLA made several contacts with American and Cuban officials to secure support. In 1962, Agostinho Netto of the MPLA visited

Washington to request assistance for the independence war against Portugal. The United States declined the request due to oil interests in the Country secured under the Portuguese colonial administration (Walker 2004, 146-148). By 1965, Netto had met Che Guevara and started receiving assistance from Cuba (Abbott 1988, 10).

After the Cuito Cuanavale military clash, the United States pressured the key parties involved in the conflict into talks in June 1988. It was held in Egypt and attended by diplomats and representatives of the Angolan government, Cuba, and South Africa (Friedman 1988). The crux of the talks was to reach an agreement for the withdrawal of over 40, 000 Cuban troops and granting of independence to Namibia (Friedman 1988), a colony of South Africa located on Angola's southern border. Savimbi's UNITA was not invited to the peace negotiations, which is worth noting. On December 22, 1988, the parties signed the Tripartite Agreement at the UN Headquarters in New York. It granted independence to Namibia and laid down a framework for the withdrawal of the Cuban forces from the Country (UNSC 1988).

The leader of UNITA, Jonas Savimbi, also made some significant strides in the *diplomatic* arena. On two occasions, he visited the White House and met with Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. Bush. Savimbi discussed support for UNITA and peace talks with the MPLA government. President Bush reportedly assured Savimbi of US support and urged him to participate in a Mobutu-led peace effort to pave the way for elections in Angola (Ottaway 1989).

Angola was a member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union or AU. The OAU communicated that Savimbi was an agent of Apartheid South Africa and had committed crimes against civilians and destabilized the country. It

also conveyed that American involvement with him was a hostile act (Wills 2002). The UN passed Security Council Resolution 864 in September 1993, imposing a package of sanctions that included an arms embargo on UNITA (SIPRI n.d.).

The key actors employed *information* to pursue their geopolitical and national objectives in the civil war. For instance, Moscow granted several scholarships to Angolan students to study in Moscow's higher education institutions. One of such key graduates was Eduardo Dos Santos, who replaced Netto as president of Angola after his death. Moscow awarded Netto the Lenin Peace Prize in 1977 (Klinghoffer 1980, 21).

The other belligerents tagged South Africa as agents of imperialists. This was amidst widespread international criticism of the apartheid system of governance. After Fidel Castro had sent troops to aid the MPLA government in Angola following South Africa and UNITA military advances, his speech at the 1975 UN General Assembly centered on imperialism. He said:

The imperialists ask themselves why Cuba is helping the Angolans. What are Cuba's interests? They are accustomed to thinking countries act only in search of oil, diamonds, copper, and other natural resources. No! Our interests are not materialistic, and it is only logical that the imperialists cannot understand that. Their criteria are based solely on chauvinistic, nationalistic, egoistic reasons. We are carrying out our international duty in helping the people of Angola. (El Schnorro 2015)

Between 1975 and 1991, Cuba committed close to 500,000 of its citizens ranging from soldiers, doctors, and teachers to other requisite professionals who partook in the civil war, nation-building, and consolidation (Hatzky 2005, 159). The name of the support to Angola was also strategically chosen. It was called *Operation Carlota*. Carlota was a female slave that led a revolt in 1843 in the Matanzas Province of Cuba (Hatzky 2005, 159). It is pertinent to reiterate that the Portuguese shipped slaves from Angola to Cuba

during the colonial period. Castro thus used this historical link to Angola and emphasized that the assistance to Angola was “In the fulfillment of our duties which arise from our principles, our ideology, our convictions, and our very own blood, we have an obligation to defend Angola” (Hatzky 2005, 159).

Jonas Savimbi of UNITA was another shrewd actor who manipulated *information* to his advantage. He hired the services of a political lobbying firm named Black, Manafort, Stone, and Kelly and paid them USD 600,000 to shape American public opinion in his favor in 1985 (Peterson 2018). The firm, owned by Paul Manafort, was to posture him as a *freedom fighter* and the West’s man who was confronting Communism in a vital battleground country. Some American media houses highlighted his widespread human rights abuses, but the majority portrayed him as worthy of American support (Peterson 2018). The MPLA ensured that professional education was used as a medium in the *information* domain to inculcate Marxist ideas in the youth to guarantee a continuous cycle of loyal leaders to the ideology. Eduardo Dos Santos replacing Agostinho Neto is an example of this continuity.

The *military* domain was quite busy as the key protagonists and their backers prepared for confrontation. To assist the FNLA, China supplied arms and ammunition and 120 Chinese instructors to its Kinkuzu Base. Mobutu, a key Western ally in the Cold War, committed 100 paratroopers to assist the Chinese as they trained about 15, 000 FNLA fighters (Wright 1997, 58-60). The FNLA controlled Northern Angola and launched a military offensive to take the capital supported by 1,200 Congolese troops (Wright 1997, 60). The MPLA defeated them with Soviet and Cuban support. The MPLA benefitted from Soviet equipment and Cuban manpower (Gleijeses 2002, 9). Between

October 1975 and April 1976, 30,000 Cuban military personnel deployed into Angola and conducted operations against the FNLA and UNITA (Gleijeses 2002, 9). The Cuban efforts intensified after South Africa committed forces to fight with UNITA to take the country (Gleijeses 2002, 9). The MPLA had been sympathetic to armed groups such as the South-West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) in Mozambique and the militant wing of the African National Congress (Mandela's group), so the South Africans did not want the MPLA established as the government of Angola (Hallett 1970, 350). South Africa was thus, in the country for its national interest but sought to align itself with the United States within the Cold War context (Hallett 1970, 350).

Cuito Cuanavale, a large-scale *military* operation in Angola, was one of the most defining military endeavors in the civil war. It involved South Africa, Angola (MPLA), Cuba, and UNITA and was conducted intermittently from August 1987 to March 1988. It involved about 28,000 UNITA fighters (Weigert 2011, 85-153), up to 3,000 South African forces (Holt 2005, 1-18), and about 9,000 heavily equipped Cuban and Angolan forces (George 2005, 195-212). All the sides claimed victory. The aftermath triggered diplomatic efforts to end the conflict.

The key actors in the Cold War proxy conflict in Angola employed their *economic* instrument of national power. The United States covertly provided USD 300,000 support to the FNLA in January 1975 to support its operations against the MPLA (Hallett 1978, 355). Marcum (1976, 416) also noted that America supported both the FNLA and UNITA with USD 30 million to aid their operations against the communist-backed MPLA. After the MPLA defeated the FNLA, Savimbi's UNITA became the primary recipient of US aid. The Reagan Administration offered him USD 15 million in



covert military assistance, and the Bush Administration offered him another USD 15 million (Wills 2002). US assistance for UNITA was estimated at USD 50 million under the Bush Senior Administration (Edsall 1989). By supporting UNITA, Wills (2002) noted that the United States brought itself into an alliance with South Africa, which it cautiously wanted to avoid due to the bad press associated with the country in the subregion and globally.

The United States also had *economic* interests in strategic resources. Chevron had invested USD 1.3 billion in offshore oilfields in the Cabinda enclave that included two hundred offshore wells, which pumped 190,000 oil barrels a day and provided sixty percent of Angola's foreign exchange (Brooke 1986). Ironically, the Angolan government (the MPLA) tasked Cuban troops to protect the 180 American workers and facilities of Chevron from armed groups such as the US government-backed UNITA (Brooke 1986).

The Soviet Union also made significant *economic* efforts in Angola. By the end of 1974, it had given approximately USD 54 million in aid to the Agostinho Neto-led MPLA (Vanneman and Bridgland 1976, 94). The Soviets also made investments into Angolan infrastructure and mega projects. In 1984, after a meeting with Angolan and Cuban officials, it provided up to USD 2 billion in military aid to Angola in that year (Falk 1987, 1090-1091). Also, a Soviet firm known as Technoexport commenced building the Capanda dam on the Kiwanza river in 1987 (Somerville 1984, 84). The estimated cost of the project was USD 4 Billion (World Heritage Encyclopedia n.d.). The table below highlights the themes identified in the case study.

Table 2. Themes Identified in Angola

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization			X	
	Sanctions			X	
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion	X			
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions				X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	National Broadcast Channels	X			
Military	Direct and indirect Military Operations				X
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition				X
	Military Advisor Missions				X
	Security Cooperation				X
	Professional Military Education	X			
Economic	Infrastructure Investment			X	
	Foreign Direct Investment	X			
	Debt Cancellation	X			
	Embargoes	X			
	Investment in Strategic Resources				X
	Loans/Grants/Aid				X

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

The evidence presented indicates that Agostinho Netto of the MPLA like Lumumba, also attempted to seek the support of the United States but was turned down, which led him to the Soviets and Cubans. The interaction between the actors in the Angolan civil war was not necessarily zero-sum. America at a point in time encouraged talks between the actors. The US position shifted per its interests in the conflict. The *diplomatic* negotiations that ended the violence appear to have been a strategic gain for the Cubans. They were able to use the *diplomatic* instrument to secure South Africa's withdrawal from Angola and negotiated for the independence of Namibia as a

precondition for their departure. Also, Savimbi's ability to meet two US presidents and the US friction with OAU was an indicator of his ability to use the *diplomatic* instrument to remain relevant in Washington and sheds light on the impotence of supranational organizations in the face of powerful states or geopolitical actors. Mobutu continued to strive to remain a relevant player in the region with his offer to mediate in the conflict. His initial support to the FNLA compromised ab initio, his position as a mediator. Overall, as table 2 indicates, the actors' use of the diplomatic instrument was assessed as medium

#### Informational

Fidel Castro's rule in Cuba had survived the US-sponsored Bay of Pigs operation in 1961. This could have motivated him to counter US and Western efforts in Angola. His remarks about the Angolan situation and the historical linkage he established between Cuba and Angola may be an attempt to shore up domestic support and win admiration in sub-Saharan Africa. Cuba's efforts to keep South Africa in check were undoubtedly welcome to many due to the negative publicity the South Africans had in the subregion regarding their colonization venture in Namibia and apartheid governance. Savimbi was a shrewd character. He was initially receiving support from China with the FNLA, then broke off and formed UNITA and switched to South African support. He probably foresaw that the American media was aware of his past. Hiring Manafort's firm to shape public opinion in the United States paid off since he secured meetings at the highest echelons of government and received several economic support packages. The data gathered and measured by the study suggests the intensity of usage of the informational instrument was high.

## Military

Mobutu's Zaire made itself significant to the West during the Angolan civil war and used his country as a launchpad for *military* operations against communism in the region. He also had an interest in the conflict because he was related to the FNLA leader. Most importantly, however, it strengthened his relationship with the United States and assisted him in consolidating power in his country. Other actors also postured themselves within the broader geopolitical struggle to obtain the support they needed to achieve their political goals. South Africa was a case in point. Fidel Castro's *military* support was critical to the MPLA and arguably the most crucial factor that assisted them in defeating the FNLA and maintaining control of the greater part of the country. With the Soviet Union getting drained and bogged down in Afghanistan at several stages during this civil war, it seemed Cuban had stepped up to the plate for the communist agenda. As table 2 shows, all the pertinent themes identified in this domain remained consistently high. As noted in the evidence, even most economic assistance offered to the actors directly correlated to the *military* instrument. It was the preferred instrument in this competition and is generally assessed as high.

## Economic

The evidence paints a vivid picture of the interplay between the key protagonists, allies, and funds. Funding was key to sustaining the operations of the proxies in the war. The text also revealed how Savimbi's efforts at constructing a good image himself yielded substantial economic dividends. Undoubtedly, Chevron's interests in Angolan oil influenced and shaped the US posture towards the MPLA and is what Castro points out as the 'oil interests of the imperialists.' This notwithstanding, under the auspices of NSC

68, a drift to the East was going to warrant Washington's response. The Soviet Union's investment in a mega hydroelectric infrastructure project is undoubtedly a project that they can point to as having benefitted many people for generations. This instrument's usage is overall assessed as high. The study noted an overlap between the economic and military instruments because some financial assistance directly related to supporting military operations.

### The Cold War Great Power Competition in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a land-locked country in southern Africa within the same region as South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, and Mozambique. Below is a map of Zimbabwe.



Figure 6. Map of Zimbabwe

Source: OrangeSmile n.d.

Zimbabwe was occupied mainly by the Shona and Ndebele people before the arrival of the British. King Lobengula of the Ndebele and a British expedition signed a concession called the *Rudd Concession* in 1888. It included ceding mining rights and

granting settlement rights to the British (Dube 2017, 137). The king reportedly did not understand what he had signed. Waves of British settlers under the auspices of the British South Africa Company commenced settling in the territory and began extensive mining and taxing the indigenous people (Frankema 2011, 136-149). The indigenes that were unable to pay the taxes had to do forced labor.

The British settlers quelled series of uprisings, mainly from King Lobengula and his people, to consolidate their grip on the land. The settlers named the colony Rhodesia after the British South Africa Company's leader, Cecil Rhodes (Maylam 2002, 138). The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 ensured that the minority white population occupied the rich fertile lands (Floyd 1962, 568). The British position after WWII was that independence would only be granted based on majority rule (Cefkin 1967, 14-17). Many of the white-minority settlers in Rhodesia disliked this. As a result, under Prime Minister Ian Smith, the colony unilaterally declared independence on November 11, 1965, with Portugal and South Africa's support (Onslow 2006, 129-131). After the unilateral independence declaration, there was an appetite for armed struggle by the majority black population due to lack of participation in the governance process, which aroused the interest of some great powers, ushering in the Zimbabwean Bush War.

### The Zimbabwe Bush War

The war was between the minority rulers and two indigenous nationalist groups organized along tribal lines. The Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) comprised the Shona people. Their military wing was known as the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). They were aligned with China and led by Robert Mugabe (Pettis 2008, 2). The Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) comprised the Ndebele

people. Its military wing was known as the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). It was aligned with the Soviet Union and led by Joshua Nkomo. It is pertinent to note that China and the Soviet Union had tense relations at this moment (Pettis 2008, 2). The minority-white government was supported mainly by South Africa and led by Prime Minister Ian Smith, a conservative from the Rhodesian Front Party (Pettis 2008, 2).

Through the *diplomatic* instrument, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 232 in December 1966 and barred member states from transactions with the Rhodesian government (UNSC 1966, 1-9). It included a ban on arms and ammunition sales to the government. The resolution referred to Ian Smith's government as a *racist colonial regime* that member countries should not deal with (UNSC 1966, 8). The US *diplomatic* position was aligned with Britain and the UN and favored majority rule. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger held meetings with Ian Smith and South Africa and convinced Premier Smith to abandon minority rule (Sebenius 2018, 59). The parties to the conflict also attended the Lancaster peace talks in Britain, culminating in the Lancaster Peace Agreement that cleared the path for independence.

The belligerents in the Bush War keenly contested the *information* domain. The Rhodesian government portrayed the conflict as a race war to gain empathy from Western countries (Sebenius 2018, 58). Additionally, Premier Ian Smith asserted that "The white man is master of Rhodesia. He has built it, and he intends to keep it" (Sebenius 2018, 58). In March 1976, he underscored that "I don't believe in black majority rule ever in Rhodesia, not in a thousand years" (Sebenius 2018, 58). His government also used print media to advertise in Western countries for people to emigrate to Rhodesia. Some government posters were headlined as "Come with Rhodesia

into the Future,” “Opportunity in Rhodesia,” and “Farming in Rhodesia.” The timing reportedly coincided with the period of low emigration (Msindo 2009, 669). The government also portrayed Rhodesia as a target of international communism. Ivor Benson, the information adviser to the government, reportedly led this drive (Msindo 2009, 672).

The nationalists were also active in the *information* contest. The Zimbabwe Review newspaper attempted to carve ZAPU’s Joshua Nkomo as a spiritual figure with rainmaking powers and magic to overcome Europeans (Msindo 2009, 678). About forty percent of households in the country had radios, so listeners tuned in to broadcasts from Cairo, Moscow, and Peking, which were used as mediums by the nationalists to incite violence and civil disobedience (Msindo 2009, 678). Radio Zambia and Tanzania broadcasted segments with ZAPU and ZANU’s exiled leaders who incited the populace (Msindo 2009, 678). A British Broadcasting Corporation transmitter in Francistown, Botswana, also facilitated reception in Rhodesia. The most dominant theme transmitted was that the Rhodesia government was a privileged white minority, led by an extremist clique that exploited the majority (Msindo 2009, 680).

The Zimbabwean Bush War was mainly a *military* operation (insurgency) that ZANLA and ZIPRA launched against the Rhodesian government forces during the Cold War, with great power influence. For instance, China provided Mugabe’s ZANLA guerillas with weapons and funding (Hilsum 2005, 419). At its peak, the ZANLA had 35,000-40, 000 fighters and claimed to be conducting a Maoist Revolutionary War (Evans 1991, 3). They set up bases in neighboring states, notably Tanzania, where they received training from Chinese, Romanian, and Tanzanian military advisers (Evans 1991,



3). Other neighboring states like Zambia and Mozambique provided them with material and logistics support (Paul et al. 2013, 287).

The ZIPRA numbered up to 20,000 and received training from the Soviet Union and East German instructors (Evans 1991, 3). They also benefitted logistically from the neighboring states. The Rhodesian government forces, unlike the nationalists, suffered from staffing challenges despite being the most professional and efficient military actor. They relied on a draft to fill their ranks, and by 1973, only half of the 3,000 eligible white males called up honored it (Brownell 2008, 601). The situation was worsened by 1978, with under 500 honoring the call (Brownell 2008, 601). The government resorted to mercenaries' services, which introduced groups such as the ex-Vietnam veterans known as the Crippled Eagles into the conflict (Churchill 1980). South Africa also provided *military* support to the Rhodesian government. It committed about 2,000 paramilitary police to support Ian Smith's government in August 1967 (UCA n.d.). In 1979, Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha acknowledged the presence of South African forces in Rhodesia but was emphatic that they were there to protect South African interests (Murphy 1979). Most attacks in the Bush War were small-scale guerilla-styled ambushes, raids, and sabotage operations.

*Economically*, the sanctions had a crippling effect on the Rhodesian government. UN Security Council Resolution 232 directed member states to desist from importing essential Rhodesian produce like sugar, tobacco, copper, and animal-related products. It also included an embargo on oil and oil products (UNSC 1966, 1-9). Effectively, Ian Smiths' government was economically isolated. The United States and United Kingdom (UK) abided by the terms of the sanctions. China and the Soviet Union supported the

nationalist movements, which meant that the minority government had to rule out economic support from them as well. Table 3 below captures the significant themes identified in the study.

Table 3. Themes Identified in Zimbabwe

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization	X			
	Sanctions				X
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion			X	
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions	X			
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	National Broadcast Channels				X
Military	Direct and indirect Military Operations			X	
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition			X	
	Military Advisor Missions			X	
	Security Cooperation	X			
	Professional Military Education			X	
Economic	Infrastructure Investment	X			
	Foreign Direct Investment	X			
	Debt Cancellation	X			
	Embargoes				X
	Investment in Strategic Resources	X			
	Loans/Grants/Aid	X			

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

The United States appeared to have intensified its efforts through the *diplomatic* instrument in this scenario. The evidence does not show its direct or indirect support to the belligerents. The rationale for doing that was low because it aligned with its ally, the UK policy for majority rule. Furthermore, the communist front also appeared divided

with the Russo-Sino schism. It made strategic sense to allow them to compete amongst themselves. Clearly, the diplomatic sanctions had resulted in Rhodesia's pariah status. It also applied pressure on the Rhodesian government to yield to the *diplomatic* offers that the United States and UK had presented. Practically, Rhodesia's options had become limited, and Kissinger's involvement of South Africa in the talks paid off since it was the main backer of Rhodesia and exercised leverage over it. The diplomatic instrument was overall the most active instrument pursued in this contest, supported most especially by the information and military instruments.

### Information

The Rhodesian government's tap into the central East-West ideological rift was strategic. Portraying the government as fighting communism and linking it to a race war was designed to attract support from western countries. In the face of falling populations, the government's *information* effort was an attempt to entice more whites to emigrate to Rhodesia. Notwithstanding these efforts, the willingness of the key western countries such as the United States and Britain to back majority rule meant the efforts would be futile. The anti-communist theme could have also been an attempt to divert attention from the core issues in Rhodesia. Undoubtedly, the nationalist's strategy paid off. They did not have the disadvantage of sanctions, and the key western nations did not support Ian Smith's government. Overall, the employment of the *informational* instrument was assessed as high, and it played a crucial role in mobilizing support for the nationalists and applying pressure on the minority government.

## Military

The imminent change in the power dynamics in the country was a critical factor in *military* clashes. Ian Smith's minority white government was bent on holding on to power despite Britain's position on granting independence based on majority rule. The manpower challenges that faced Ian Smith, as opposed to the large recruitment pool available to the nationalists, meant that it was only a matter of time for the minority rule to succumb. The *military* intervention of South Africa might be regarded primarily in terms of self-interest. The situation in Rhodesia mirrored what transpired in South Africa, and victory for the nationalists could boost the ANC (which represented the majority-black populace of South Africa) in its struggles against the apartheid government in South Africa.

The friction between China and the Soviet Union also came to the fore in this contest. Despite their ideological alignment and a common adversary (the United States), they did not present a unified effort due to the divide. Moreover, the motivation for the United States to intervene was low since the two leading communist nations were competing with each other. The study rates the *military* competition as medium-intensity overall. This was primarily owing to the differences expounded above.

### Consolidated Thematic Table for Cold War Great Power Competition

Table 4 denotes the presence or absence of the relevant themes across the cases studied during the Cold War great power competition. It reveals some general trends in the Cold War competition. It shows that most of the themes were present in Angola, followed by the DRC and then Zimbabwe. The two superpowers were actively opposed to each other and engaged in direct and indirect military actions against each other in

both DRC and Angola. Due to Cuba’s considerable commitments and South Africa’s interest in the contest, Angola was probably more pronounced. Zimbabwe saw the least amount of themes because the US posture towards it relied more on the use of the diplomatic instrument.

Table 4. Consolidated Thematic Presence: Congo, Angola, and Zimbabwe

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Congo	Angola	Zimbabwe
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization	X	X	
	International Diplomatic Engagements	X	X	X
	Sanctions		X	X
	Coercion	X		X
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions	X	X	
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests	X	X	X
	Broadcast Channels			X
Military	Direct and indirect Military Operations	X	X	X
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition	X	X	X
	Military Advisor Missions	X	X	X
Economic	Infrastructure Investment		X	
	Embargoes			X
	Investment in Strategic resources	X	X	
	Loans/Grants/Aid	X	X	

Source: Created by author.

What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition in Sub-Saharan Africa?

This portion of the chapter answers the first secondary question. The data gathered sheds insight into the characteristics of the great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa. The characteristics that emerged were: 1) Political Instability, 2) Weak States and Institutions, and 3) Strategic Dilemmas at National Birth. The paragraphs below shed light on these characteristics.

1. Political Instability. Politically, instability was a recurring theme that characterized the Cold War great power contest. The superpowers prepared and competed with either direct military presence or assisted armed groups aligned in ideology to wage active military operations in the subregion. It resulted in deaths, displacements, regime overthrow, unease, and increased tension as the great powers, proxies, and non-state actors contested for space, power, and influence.
2. Weak States and Institutions. Most of the states and institutions were immature. Experience in public service for indigenes ranged from very low to non-existent. State structures barely existed as only colonial structures were in place. Coupled with this, the early politicians were inexperienced and did not possess the requisite tact and institutional know-how to navigate the turbulent waters of the Cold War. It was the first attempt in public office for the sub-Saharan African leaders, and their actions and inactions carried extreme ramifications that tended to throw the countries into chaos.
3. Strategic Dilemmas at National Birth. All the nascent states studied faced a strategic dilemma at birth. They had to choose sides in a bipolar world contest along the competition continuum. Superimposed on this were colonial masters, with negative and mixed legacies that aligned their interests with the United States and remained keen on exercising control within their spheres of influence. It was a very turbulent time to attain

independence. Their stories could have been different if the timing and circumstances were not as tense.

### Post-Cold War Strategic Outlook of the Great Powers

The strategic environment within sub-Saharan has changed drastically since the Cold War. Sub-Saharan Africa and the world have moved from a bipolar world to a unipolar one dominated by the United States. Aside from US presence in the region, China's prominent presence is challenging US dominance. Russia has also deepened its activities in the area. The subsequent paragraphs describe a macro-level view of the strategic outlook of the three great powers.

China has had four main strategies. The Revolution (1949-1977), Recovery (1978-1989), Building Comprehensive National Power (1990-2003), and the Rejuvenation strategies (ANI 2020). The Rejuvenation strategy was from 2004 till date. President Xi of China, through the Rejuvenation strategy, is gearing the country to be economically prosperous, technologically advanced, militarily capable, and socially stable under the Chinese Communist Party (ANI 2020). China launched the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013. It aims at infrastructural connectivity and economic cooperation across six key geopolitical regions. China, Mongolia, and Russia; Eurasia; Central and West Asia; Pakistan; Indian sub-continent; and Indochina (OECD 2018, 3).

At the 2007 Munich Security Conference, President Putin highlighted that Moscow was uncomfortable with the US-dominated international order. He stressed that Russia had to defend its interests and expressed reservations about the European security architecture and NATO expansion. He also condemned what he claimed was disregard by

the United States for international norms and accused America of destabilizing the world (Franco 2021, 2).

The *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance* (2021) of the United States highlights the potential threat posed to America by China and Russia. It acknowledged China's current posture of assertiveness on the global stage and identified it as the only competitor with the capability of mounting a sustained challenge to the United States (US President 2021, 7-8). The contemporary geopolitical environment remains competitive despite US dominance as the sole hegemon. Several examples on the global scale indicate how the three great powers have employed their national power instruments for their strategic ends, sometimes directly opposing one another. Syria and the South China Sea have been areas of significant friction. Undoubtedly, the stage has been set by the strategic outlook of the three powers for competition again. The subsequent paragraphs will highlight the situation in the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe.

#### Post-Cold War Great Power Competition in the DRC

Mobutu ruled DRC (he called it Zaire) for thirty-two years, from 1965 to 1997 until Laurent Kabila, a pro-Lumumba fighter launched a rebellion which overthrew him in May 1997 (McNulty 1999, 53). Recall that Laurent Kabila's forces benefitted from the training of Che Guevara during his efforts to take on the Katanga secessionists in the heat of the Cold War. A bodyguard assassinated Kabila in January 2001, and his son, Major General Joseph Kabila, succeeded him (Kabuya-Lumuna 2002, 619). Mr. Felix Tshisekedi replaced President Kabila in January 2019 after an election.

The DRC has engaged in several *diplomatic* endeavors in the post-Cold War era. Under Kabila's presidency, the United States invited the DRC to the US-Africa Leaders'



Summit in 2014. About fifty African countries attended the Summit (Eagle 2014). It was the largest gathering of African leaders in Washington. President Obama announced a USD 14 billion American corporate investment venture and stressed that good governance, the rule of law, and regulatory reforms on the part of Congo and the other African countries were prerequisites for participation in the venture (Ramirez 2014).

The Chinese President, Xi Jinping, received the Prime Minister of DRC, Bruno Tshibala, to the third Beijing Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in September 2018. President Xi assured the Premier that China would deepen its collaboration with the DRC in win-win cooperation (Xinhua 2018). He emphasized the desire of China to support the DRC translate its resources into development advantages. Xi also highlighted China's commitment to the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the DRC (Xinhua 2018b). The Congolese Premier informed President Xi of his country's willingness to deepen cooperation with China via the BRI (Xinhua 2018b).

The DRC also attended the first Russia-Africa Summit hosted by Moscow in October 2019. President Putin stressed that Russia had made significant contributions to the formation of young African states through the support of African economies and the anti-colonial national liberation movements (President of Russia 2019). Mr. Putin emphasized that Russia would use its permanent status at the UN Security Council to strengthen peace and stability on the continent (President of Russia 2019).

After President Tshisekedi took over power from Joseph Kabila, his first trip abroad was to Washington. He endorsed the Trump Peace Plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East (Deutsche Welle 2019). He was reportedly encouraged by the Trump Administration to clamp down on corruption in the government

and the military (Deutsche Welle 2019). Many in the Congolese Armed Forces have committed human rights violations, especially in the ongoing civil war in the country's volatile East (Deutsche Welle 2019).

Washington deployed the *informational* national power instrument in 2014. In acknowledging China's efforts in the region, President Obama stressed that African leaders had to be wary that Chinese roads and bridges did not lead from African mines to Shanghai. He also encouraged the African leaders to ensure that Chinese projects employed African workers (US President 2014).

Beijing established a Confucius Institute in the DRC in August 2018 (Shenggao 2018). Wang Tongqing, the Chinese Ambassador to DRC, said the institution was a result of exchanges between the two countries. It was to be jointly managed by the Central South University of China and the Foreign Affairs University of DRC (Shenggao 2018). China establishes the institutes to drive its educational, political, and economic agenda (Xiang and Huang 2015, 9-11). The institutes teach the Chinese language and culture, and Beijing uses it to promote and generate political influence, such as the Chinese government's position on issues like Taiwan and Tibet. They also facilitate interest in trade and foreign direct investment (Xiang and Huang 2015, 9-11).

In 2018, Russia's *information* added heightened tensions to efforts to curb the tenth Ebola epidemic in DRC. At the crux of the confusion was that a US pharmaceutical company, Merck, had supplied the DRC with a vaccine that had ninety-seven percent efficacy. After that, TASS (Russia News Agency) announced Russia's intentions to deliver a revolutionary Ebola vaccine to the DRC. The DRC Ministry of Health announced the country's intentions to stick to the Merck vaccine (Pfannenstiel and Cook

2020, 24-25), which created the impression that it had opted for the US vaccine over the Russian one. Over time *information* spread wildly on WhatsApp and other platforms that the US-made vaccines were counter-productive and were instead an instrument for spreading Ebola. This made the WHO and local health officials become targets (Aizenman 2019). The government suspended elections in the worst affected areas like Beni due to the epidemic, this fed rumors that the government's support for the US vaccine was to limit the chances of the opposition candidate and secure Western aid (Aizenman 2019). As a result of this, the WHO recorded 386 attacks, seven deaths, and seventy-seven injuries related to the misinformation and disinformation about the US-made Ebola vaccines (WHO 2019).

The Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, and President Tshisekedi met in January 2021 in Kinshasa, the capital of the DRC, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation on the BRI. The DRC is the 45th country in Africa to sign the BRI MoU (China News 2021). The Minister used the opportunity to pass *information* to advance China's position. He remarked that Beijing never attached political strings to its assistance to Kinshasa and did not interfere in countries' internal affairs (China News 2021).

Several efforts by the great powers characterized the *military* line of endeavor. Beijing has close *military* ties with the DRC. In June 2008, China notified the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee that it was dispatching a sixteen-man team to the DRC for a one-year training program (AI n.d., 30). The Security Council imposed targeted sanctions on several groups within the DRC in 2003 due to acts of violence against civilians and undermining international humanitarian law. The sanctions focused

on leaders of the various factions in the conflict in the East, such as the Lord's Resistance Army and the M23 rebels (AI n.d., 7). A considerable portion of the DRC's arms and ammunition are Chinese-made. Almost half of its tanks, Types 59 and 62, were procured from China and delivered in May 2009. The delivery coincided with the Chinese training program for the Congo Armed Forces (AI n.d., 30).

Two years after the Chinese announced the training mission to the country, the Russian Ambassador to DRC, Anatoly Klimentko, announced in January 2010, after meeting with Charles Muando Nsimba, the Minister of Defense, that thirty Congolese military students would proceed to Russia for professional military education. He said the offer was to improve professionalism in the DRC armed forces (ACP 2010).

In August 2019, President Tshisekedi committed the DRC to a Military Cooperation Agreement with America. It involved the training of Congolese military personnel in US Armed Forces training facilities (Deutsche Welle 2019). Also, a USAFRICOM delegation led by Ambassador Andrew Young and Rear Admiral Heidi Berg, the Deputy to the Commander of USAFRICOM for Civil-Military Engagement and Director of Intelligence, respectively, visited the DRC in January 2021. Issues relating to security cooperation and enhancing the professionalism of the Congolese Armed Forces were discussed (USAFRICOM Public Affairs 2021). The USAFRICOM delegation held discussions with President Felix Tshisekedi, Marie Tumba Nzeza, the Foreign Minister and Defense Minister Aime Ngoy Mukena, and General Celestin Mbala Munsense, the Chief of Staff of the DRC Armed Forces (USAFRICOM Public Affairs 2021).

Chinese investors and the DRC government signed an *economic*-related bilateral agreement in September 2007 estimated at USD 6.5 billion. The China Exim Bank

financed it. The crux of the investment was on constructing railroads and roads (Marysse and Geenen 2009, 371-372). Under the agreement, China and the DRC would create a Congo-Chinese joint venture to extract copper for payment of the loan (Marysse and Geenen 2009, 371-372).

In 2015, Russia offered to help the DRC with infrastructure and investment in the country's natural resources (Foreign Policy 2015). The Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, sighted areas of collaboration to include building hydroelectric power dams, roads, and railways (Foreign Policy 2015). The United States played a crucial role during the tenth Ebola outbreak in DRC in 2018. It provided the government of DRC and its neighbors with more than USD 569 million to assist in curbing the tide of infections (BAA 2020). Additionally, the US Department of State Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration supported gender-based violence prevention and response and other health-related ventures. Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the US government utilized approximately USD 68 million in bilateral funds in the country in 2019 (BAA 2020). Following the Coronavirus pandemic, China canceled a USD 28 million debt owed by the DRC in 2021. The gesture was to help the country to deal with the Corona pandemic (AFP 2021).

Table 5. Themes Identified in Post-Cold War DRC

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization			X	
	Sanctions			X	
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion	X			
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions				X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	National Broadcast Channels	X			
Military	Direct and indirect Military Operations	X			
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition			X	
	Military Advisor Missions		X		
	Security Cooperation				X
	Professional Military Education			X	
Economic	Infrastructure Investment				X
	Foreign Direct Investment				X
	Debt Cancellation				X
	Embargoes	X			
	Investment in Strategic Resources				X
	Loans/Grants/Aid				X

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

The evidence showed that China initiated conferences involving all the African countries before the United States and China. While the others were hosting their first, Beijing was hosting its third. The summits were used as a vehicle by the great powers to advance their interests in the subregion. As the data points out, the United States has tied its relationship with the DRC to its adherence to tenets of human rights, while China and Russia do not demand them. Generally, the study assesses the utilization of the diplomatic instrument by the great powers as medium. The only prominent theme was the summits. It is worthy to note that the great powers initiated all the conferences, and the

DRC attended. It is an indicator that the country was adhering to the agenda set for it by the great powers and not the other way around.

### Informational

Most of the key variables within this instrument were on the ascendancy. The leaders made statements that sought to promote their interests and subtly criticize their competitors. Mr. Obama used history to take a jab at the Chinese infrastructure projects and deals in the DRC. He suggested a repetition of history by his reference to Chinese infrastructure linking Africa to Shanghai. Many colonialists established infrastructure for military domination of Africa's interior and shipping out resources than for genuine interconnectivity (Jedwab, Kerby, and Moradi, 2017). China and Russia countered the US theme by emphasizing America's insistence on conditions as prerequisites for economic assistance. With the DRC having attained independence, usage of *information* to gain influence was more pronounced than coercion. Generally, the evidence suggests that the use of the *informational* instrument was high.

### Military

Themes other than direct military confrontations and utilization of mercenaries characterized the employment of *military* instrument. The study noted military cooperation, professional military education, and transfer of arms and ammunition as the key themes. The evidence suggests China is the most active in arms and ammunition sales to the country. The study assessed the employment of the military instrument as medium.

## Economic

All but one of the themes in the economic instrument were present. The data reveals that the great powers concentrated most of their efforts on the *economic* instrument. With primarily agrarian economies characterized by unemployment and deficient infrastructure, it is evident that one of the country's main areas of need is infrastructure. Despite Chinese claims of not attaching conditions to aid, Beijing required the DRC to adhere to its *One China* policy and not give formal political recognition to Taiwan (Marysse and Geenen 2009). With mineral resource reserves valued at USD 25 trillion, which are primarily untapped (BAA 2020), it is without a doubt that the DRC will continue to attract the attention of the great powers. Generally, the use of the economic instrument was very pronounced and assessed as high.

### Post-Cold War Great Power Competition in Angola

President Eduardo Dos Santos stayed in office following the death of President Netto from 1979 to 2017. During his tenure, Savimbi's UNITA rebels remained a potent force that waged guerilla military operations in the country (SAHO 2019). UNITA signed a peace deal with the government to end the civil war, integrate into the country's armed forces and become a political party in November 1994 (UNSC 1994). Despite the agreement, the fighting only ended after Savimbi was killed by government forces in February 2002 (SAHO 2019). Joao Lourenco became president of the country in September 2017 (AFP 2017). By all indications, Angola is doing well economically. Economic growth was boosted by record-high oil prices coupled with an increase in its non-oil sector. Inflation fell from over 300 percent in 1999 to twelve percent in 2006 (IMF 2007, 1).



The Angolan government has had many *diplomatic* engagements with the United States. President Jose dos Santos visited the United States on four different occasions between 1991 and 2004. He met with President Bush for bilateral talks in the 1991 meeting (FSI n.d.). Angola also participated in the 2014 US-Africa Summit hosted by the Obama Administration (Eagle 2014). President Obama stressed human rights, good governance, and the rule of law as fundamentals for economic engagement with Angola and the other African countries (Ramirez 2014). In 2018, President Joao Lourenco attended the 2018 Beijing Summit, the China-Africa Forum. He met with President Xi and indicated Angola's willingness to sign up for the Belt and Road Initiative. Mr. Lourenco thanked China for its contributions to Angola's reconstruction and socio-economic development and underscored that Angola upheld the *One-China* policy (Xinhua 2018a). President Xi commended Angola for its economic diversification drive and stressed that China would assist Angola without political conditions (Xinhua 2018a). President Putin hosted Angola as part of the African countries invited for the first Russia-Africa Summit in October 2019. President Putin's message centered on the assistance the Soviet Union provided Angola during its struggles with colonialism and the subsequent proxy war (President of Russia 2019).

Angola's Minister of Education, Antonio Burity da Silva, visited China in October 2007. Issues relating to the Chinese and Angolan educational curriculum were the objective of the visit (Campos and Vines 2008, 4). Through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) auspices, America selected Angola as one of the President's Malaria Initiative beneficiaries in 2011. Through the program, the mortality rate for children under five years dropped by twenty-three percent, a piece of *information*

well received by the populace (USAID 2019a). In pursuant of China's *informational* objectives, Beijing inaugurated a Confucius Institute in Luanda, the capital of Angola, in September 2016 (UAN n.d.). The institute is within the Agostinho Neto University and focuses on teaching Mandarin, culture and serving as a vehicle to convey Chinese policy (Xiang and Huang 2015, 9-11).

The Voice of America launched a program called *Angola, Fala So* meaning *Angola, Just Say It* in March 2011. The program aimed at creating a national conversation in Angola and uses SMS, mobile, and Internet platforms to gather questions from around the country for a call-in radio show aired for thirty minutes on Fridays in Portuguese (USAGM 2011). Russia's *information* centered on making itself appear as a country that supported Angola's anti-colonial efforts. Russia has also communicated that it is not interested in laying down prerequisites for assistance. That was Moscow's key theme during the Africa Summit in 2019 (President of Russia 2019). In March 2021, China made a donation of its Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines to Angola. According to Angolan officials, China was the first country to provide Angola with pandemic support. A gesture that was well received and appreciated by the government of Angola (Xinhua 2021).

In April 1993, during *military* operations against UNITA, a row ensued when Angolan government forces captured light and medium Chinese-made artillery pieces from UNITA (Campos and Vines 2008, 3). A 1993 US military intelligence report also highlighted that UNITA used Chinese-made weapons. China's Ambassador to the country refuted the allegations (Campos and Vines 2008, 3). After relations improved with China, Angola became China's second-largest trading partner in Africa after South

Africa. Defense spending accounting for the majority of the exchanges (Campos and Vines 2008, 3). To deepen the defense ties between the two countries, Mr. Kundy Payama, Angolan Defense Minister, visited China in May 2000, and the Angola Armed Forces Commander, General Agostinho Nelumba Sanjar, also visited Beijing in June 2005 (Campos and Vines 2008, 4).

In December 2000, Russia agreed to provide *military* aid and training to the Angolan government to defeat UNITA. The information was disclosed by the Angolan Defense Minister, Kundi Paihama, in Luanda (Reuters 2000). The deal included training Angolan military personnel in Russia and dispatching military advisors to train Angolan military personnel (Reuters 2000).

Under the auspices of the US *military* program named the African Partnership Station, the Angolan military received training from the US military in combatting smugglers, traffickers, and extremist groups in 2006 (Sullivan 2017). According to the US State Department, Angola benefits from the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which sponsors Angolan military personnel for professional military education in US training facilities. The US military also supported Angola with its maritime security efforts (BAA 2019). Before becoming the President of Angola, Joao Lourenco was the Defense Minister of the country. He visited Washington in May 2017 and met with Secretary of Defense Mattis at the Pentagon. They signed an MoU acknowledging the strategic security partnership between the two countries (Sullivan 2017). The MoU focused on the continued professional military education, English language training, and addressing HIV/AIDS within the Angolan military (Sullivan 2017).

Russia maintains an *economic* relationship with Angola. The Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Ilya Klebanov, signed a bilateral agreement with President Eduardo dos Santos in 2000. The deal was on the exportation of diamonds. Angola exports up to USD 1 billion in diamonds annually (Reuters 2000). In October 2019, President Putin announced to Angola and other African countries that Russia had canceled the USD 20 billion debt that the African countries, including Angola, owed to the USSR (Yegorov 2019).

Angola is the third-largest *economic* partner of America in sub-Saharan Africa due to petroleum exports. That has made it eligible for preferential trade benefits under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (BAA 2019). Between 2001 and 2005, the USAID focused on post-war humanitarian assistance, food security, democratic governance, and maternal and child health estimated at USD 1 billion (USAID 2019b).

The Industrial and Commercial Bank of China granted a USD 4.5 billion loan to Angola to construct the Caculo Cabaca Dam, the largest power project in Angola (GCR 2016). The agreement was finalized in Beijing in November 2016 by Archer Mangureira, Finance Minister of Angola (GCR 2016). In March 2004, the China Export-Import Bank pledged USD 2 billion oil-backed loans to Angola to fund infrastructure throughout the country (Campos and Vines 2008, 3). The projects included the rehabilitation of the 444-km Luanda Railway and electricity networks.

Table 6. Themes Identified in Post-Cold War Angola

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership in International Organization			X	
	Sanctions	X			
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion	X			
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions				X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	National Broadcast Channels			X	
Military	Direct and indirect Military Operations		X		
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition			X	
	Military Advisor Missions		X		
	Security Cooperation				X
	Professional Military Education			X	
Economic	Infrastructure Investment				X
	Foreign Direct Investment				X
	Debt Cancellation				X
	Embargoes	X			
	Investment in Strategic Resources				X
	Loans/Grants/Aid				X

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

*Diplomatic* engagements between the Angolan government and the United States were directly opposite of what they used to be during the Cold War. Exchanges occurred at the highest levels due to the normalization of ties. Like the DRC, Angola participated in all the diplomatic summits organized by the great powers. The great powers used the conferences to engage Angola and to communicate their interests. Tensions between China and Angola over UNITA's China-made weapons did not seem to have affected the relations. The evidence suggests that international diplomatic engagements between Angolan leadership and the great powers were consistent and on the ascendancy. Like the

DRC, the great powers initiated the summits Angola attended. Generally, the study subjectively measured the intensity of usage of this national power instrument as medium.

### Informational

The donation of the Coronavirus vaccines in the time of scarcity and *vaccine nationalism* certainly had a positive influence on the perception of the Angolans of the Chinese. Irrespective of the negative reportage that China gained as the source of the pandemic, their ability to beat it early and posture themselves to support Angola gained them mileage in the contest for influence. US use of USAID also delivered impacts that affected the ordinary Angolans and improved their perception of America. All the themes in the *informational* domain were present and observed to be on the ascendancy within the period reviewed. Key leaders of Russia and China always highlighted their non-attribution of conditions as prerequisites for assistance, and the United States always referred to conditions the country had to meet. Overall, the employment of this instrument in Angola was assessed as high.

### Military

The military instrument saw an ascendancy due to the civil war but began to stabilize and eventually lose momentum after Angolan government forces killed Savimbi. With the end of the Cold War, the appetite for military competition by the great powers and their proxies was undoubtedly low. Military operations have shifted in favor of military sales, security cooperation, and professional military education. The purchase of Chinese military equipment was very pronounced. There were significant high-level

military interactions between Angolan, United States, and Chinese defense officials reported. The study assessed the preference of this instrument as medium.

### Economic

China was arguably the most aggressive in the usage of the economic instrument in Angola. It made bold and extensive investments in infrastructure under the auspices of the BRI such as road and railways which goes to resolving day to day practical challenges of Angolans. Moscow's debt forgiveness was also key since Angola was one of the key beneficiaries of Soviet aid because of the intensity of the Cold War competition in the country. Only one of the themes, *embargoes*, was absent in this case study. The study assessed the themes that were present as high based on the evidence available. Overall, the use of the economic instrument by the great powers was rated by the study as high, and it seemed to be the most favored method of engagement with Angola.

### Post-Cold War Great Power Competition in Zimbabwe

Irregularities marred Robert Mugabe's presidency in Zimbabwe. He could not monitor former Bush War combatants who went on a killing spree, murdering white minority farmers. Due to the exodus of seasoned farmers, the country gradually lost its reputation as Africa's breadbasket (Martens 2012). He clamped down heavily on the opposition and triumphed in flawed elections in 2008 and 2013 (Ncube 2013, 99-110). The military overthrew him in November 2017 after he sacked his Vice President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, and attempted to hand power over to his flamboyant wife, Grace Mugabe, nicknamed *Gucci Grace* for her high-end shopping sprees (Hodgkinson 2019).

Mr. Mnangagwa assumed the presidency after winning the 2018 elections. The subsequent paragraphs navigate the story of Zimbabwe through key activities within the DIME framework.

Zimbabwe's foreign policy and, by extension, its *diplomatic* posture following the imposition of sanctions by the United States and other Western countries was *Look East*. *Diplomatically*, this meant deepened cooperation with China and Russia. America and the UK advanced a UN Security Council draft resolution for targeted sanctions against Zimbabwe. The president and thirteen other government and security officials were to be subjected to an arms embargo, a travel ban, and a financial freeze by the Resolution. Russia and China vetoed the draft resolution in July 2008 (UN 2008). The Obama Administration did not invite Zimbabwe to the Africa Summit in 2014. Mr. Jonathan Moyo, Zimbabwe's Information Minister, dismissed it as insignificant. He stressed that America had intensified its engagement of sub-Saharan African countries due to unease about the headways made by China (BBC 2014).

Signs of *diplomatic* relations between Zimbabwe and China intensified with President Xi Jinping visiting Zimbabwe in 2015 and President Mugabe visiting Beijing in January 2017 (Vines 2017). During Mugabe's visit, the Chinese leader reportedly urged him to stabilize his economy and reduce his reliance on Chinese loans (Vines 2017). Zimbabwe participated in the China-Africa Summit in 2018. President Xi told President Mnangagwa that he hoped Western countries would improve relations with Zimbabwe (Xinhua 2018c). President Xi said China and Zimbabwe were *all-weather friends* and highlighted their collaboration from the years of the Zimbabwe Bush War. He stressed that they had to support each other irrespective of how the geopolitical environment had



changed (Xinhua 2018c). The two countries signed bilateral agreements related to economy, agriculture, technology, and human resources.

In January 2019, President Mnangagwa paid his first visit to Moscow, where he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin (Shaban 2019). Mr. Mnangagwa pleaded with Russia to assist Zimbabwe in its growth. Mr. Putin expressed his hope that the two countries' partnerships will help Zimbabwe and Russia (Shaban 2019). Zimbabwe also participated in the Russia-Africa Summit in October 2019. As with the other countries that were present, the message from the Russian President centered on debt forgiveness, non-interference in Zimbabwe's domestic affairs, and non-attachment of conditions for financial support (President of Russia 2019).

*Informational-wise*, a Confucius Institute was established within the University of Zimbabwe in August 2006. As of September 2019, it had graduated about 3,000 students. Fifty with master's degrees and three with PhDs. The institution focuses on teaching Mandarin, spreading Chinese culture, and consolidating the friendship between China and Zimbabwe (China Embassy 2019). During Mugabe's tenure as president, his most preferred medium for relating to the United States and other Western countries was through the *informational* instrument. In 2017, he told packed supports in a Chinese-built stadium in Harare that Zimbabwe had turned *East*, where the sun rose from and given its back to the *West*, where the sun sets. (Vines 2017).

China donated 200,000 doses of its Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine to Zimbabwe in February 2021. According to President Emmerson Mnangagwa, this kind gesture attested that China was indeed a true friend of Zimbabwe (Reuters Staff 2021). In February 2021, Alrosa P.J.S.C., a Russian diamond producer, announced that it would

donate the Sputnik V coronavirus vaccines to Zimbabwe to help in its inoculation program. Alrosa said the vaccines would arrive in the second half of March (Ndlovu 2021).

A Chinese ship loaded with arms and ammunition bound for Zimbabwe was prevented from offloading its cargo for further transportation by a South African judge in April 2008 (Zimbabwe is landlocked and uses South African ports). Following human rights groups' appeals that the arms could be used against demonstrators in Zimbabwe, the ship left the port after four days. This occurred during the standoff between opposition candidate Morgan Tsvangirai and Robert Mugabe over the results of elections in March 2008 (BBC 2008). A Chinese state construction firm built the National Defense College of Zimbabwe at USD 100 million (Vines 2017). Under the *Look East* policy, Zimbabwe also purchased Hongdu JL-8 jet aircraft, JF-17 Thunder fighter aircraft, and assorted vehicles and radios (Vines 2017).

Russia signed a *military* cooperation agreement with Zimbabwe in October 2015. Under the agreement, Russia would supply weapons and other military products (Reuters Staff 2018). During President Mnangagwa's trip to Moscow in January 2019, he expressed the wish for Russian training opportunities for the Zimbabwe Armed Forces. He expressed the desire to purchase modern Russian arms when the country's economic situation improved (Greibenkina 2019).

In 1999, Britain, Italy, Japan, and Holland imposed *economic* sanctions on Zimbabwe (UCA 2021). The United States introduced its Zimbabwe sanctions program in March 2003 (OFAC 2013, 3). The biting sanctions led to a massive depreciation of

Zimbabwe's national currency and further strengthened the country's resolve to *Look East* (Greibenkina 2019).

China is Zimbabwe's fourth-largest trading partner and its most significant source of investment (Vines 2017). China agreed to fund the USD 1.5 billion Hwange Thermal Power Station expansion, the USD 153 million Mugabe International Airport expansion, and the USD 100 million Parliament Building (Xinhua 2020). Additionally, China and Zimbabwe signed an agreement to build a USD 3 billion coal power plant in Sengwa, northern Zimbabwe. The project would generate 2,800 megawatts and could erase the power deficit of the country (Olander 2020).

Russia and Zimbabwe signed the Bilateral Investment Protection and Promotion Agreement in October 2012 (ZIMFA n.d.). The agreement paved the way for Russian investments in the country. Many Zimbabwe-Russia business ventures cropped up after the deal. They included DTZ, OZGEO, Telecel Zimbabwe, Great Dyke Investments, URALCHEM, and Alrosa. Their investments are in precious minerals, agriculture, and telecommunications (Kachur 2020, 26-40). In 2012, the Russian newspaper, *Kommersant*, claimed that the trade agreement was to secure a platinum-for-arms deal reached in April of that year. In exchange for the helicopters, Russia was allegedly given the right to mine platinum in Zimbabwe (Kachur 2020, 25).

Table 7. Themes Identified in Post-Cold War Zimbabwe

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Absent	Low	Medium	High
Diplomatic	Membership of International Organization			X	
	Sanctions				X
	International Diplomatic Engagements				X
	Coercion	X			
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions				X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests				X
	Establishment of National Broadcast Channels	X			
Military	Military Operations	X			
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition				X
	Military Advisor Missions	X			
	Security Cooperation				X
	Professional Military Education				X
Economic	Infrastructure Investment				X
	Foreign Direct Investment				X
	Debt Cancellation				X
	Embargoes	X			
	Investment in Strategic Resources				X
	Loans/Grants/Aid				X

Source: Created by author.

### DIME Analysis

#### Diplomatic

The United States and its allies used the *diplomatic* instrument to constrain and restrict Zimbabwe's options within the international system. As a result, Zimbabwe's drift to the East to Russia and China was predictable. The relationship paid off when Russia and China vetoed the US and UK-sponsored sanctions in the Security Council. Because of Zimbabwe's dependency on Russia and China, its diplomatic endeavors were more intense and focused on maintaining those relationships. Overall, the utilization of the diplomatic instrument was assessed as high.

### Informational

Undoubtedly, the Zimbabwean government used this medium to whip up anti-imperialist themes to sustain its stay in power in the face of biting sanctions. It was also used to support their foreign policy, which focused on the East. Their stance was consistent with the anti-imperial themes of Russia and China. The establishment of the Confucius Institute in the University of Zimbabwe appears strategically calculated to attract the youths of Zimbabwe. The coronavirus vaccines no doubt cemented the positive impressions of Zimbabweans about the Russians and Chinese. Generally, the usage of the informational instrument was assessed as high.

### Military

Military operations were absent in this phase, but the transfer of arms, military equipment, ammunition, security cooperation, and professional military education was quite pronounced. Again, due to the sanctions, these exchanges were mainly with Russia and China. The evidence revealed that in Zimbabwe, specific economic and military themes overlapped. An example was the construction of the National Defense College and the exchange of minerals for military equipment deals with China and Russia, respectively. Overall, the study assessed the employment of the military instrument as medium.

### Economic

The study discovered most of the economic themes in the case study. Additionally, they were on the ascendency throughout and did not show any indication of slowing. China is the most dominant player in this field with the construction of

megaprojects and provision of financial support that more or less sustained the Zimbabwe government in light of the severe sanctions. The Russian efforts through this instrument were focused more on rare earth minerals, whereas China’s reach was broader. The themes were consistent and generally assessed as high. Again, the economic instrument of national power appeared to have been the most preferred in this engagement.

Table 8. Consolidated Thematic Table for the Post-Cold War Great Power Competition

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Congo	Angola	Zimbabwe
Diplomatic	Membership of International Organization	X	X	X
	International Diplomatic Engagements	X	X	X
	Sanctions			X
	Coercion			
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions	X	X	X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests	X	X	X
	Broadcast Channels		X	
Military	Military Operations		X	
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition	X	X	X
	Military Advisor Missions	X	X	
	Professional Military Education	X	X	X
Economic	Infrastructure Investment	X	X	X
	Embargoes			
	Investment in Strategic resources	X	X	X
	Loans/Grants/Aid	X	X	X
	Foreign Direct Investment	X	X	X
	Debt Cancellation	X	X	X

Source: Created by author.

The data reveals that the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe, and the great powers utilized their diplomatic instrument to pursue their national objectives. Aside from bilateral meetings recorded, the great powers initiated most of the engagements with the countries by inviting them to summits where they shared their visions, communicated

their interests, and used their narratives against one another. The sub-Saharan African countries in question did not initiate any such forums, and thus one could argue that their control over the agenda was limited. China commenced the mass engagements, which the United States and Russia followed.

The informational instrument was critical in this competition. The narratives differed, with the Russo-Sino narrative being similar and directly opposed to Washington's. Military operations were minimal across the board. Although none of the great powers were directly involved in proxy wars, they increased weapons sales, professional military education, and security cooperation. The economic instrument stands out as the most pronounced. Almost all the themes were present and on the ascendency across the board. The answer to the second secondary research question follows.

What are the Contemporary Characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?

Three glaring Characteristics of the contemporary competition are 1) The Primacy of Geoeconomics, 2) The Challenge to the International Rules-Based Order, and 3) Impartial Participation. They are detailed below.

1. The Primacy of Geoeconomics. The economic instrument was the most critical in this competition. Loans, grants, developmental projects, and debt forgiveness characterized this competition and the interactions. The leaders of DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe focused on their economies and postured themselves for the multiple offers. Natural resources were used

as collateral to secure mega-infrastructureal deals to cure infrastructureal deficits.

2. The Challenge to the Rules-Based International Order. Carte blanche economic assistance with barely any conditionalities, indifference to domestic affairs such as adherence to human rights by Russia and China characterize this competition. This is in direct contrast to the Western-led fundamentals and conditionalities that had become the norm of relations.
3. Impartial Participation. The data revealed that Angola and the DRC did not take sides in the competition. Though they may have preferences, one cannot decipher them. The countries postured themselves to interact and conduct diplomatic, economic, and military activities with all the great powers. Concerning Zimbabwe, the sanctions forced it to concentrate on China and Russia. The new competition is not allegiance-centric. The great powers focused on persuading nations of the benefits associated with them, leaving the countries to make their own decisions.

How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?

Despite being the turf for the Cold War and post-Cold War competition, the sub-Saharan African countries also benefited from the competition. Two of these benefits are that the Cold War offered 1) Strategic Options and served as a 2) Rallying International Outcry Against Colonialism.

1. Strategic Options/Alternatives. In the Cold War era, most of the colonial powers were allies of the United States, and the data shows that



Washington leaned towards the colonial powers. For instance, the United States did not assist both President Netto and Prime Minister Lumumba but cooperated with the Belgians and Portuguese. The Soviet Union offered the nationalists an alternative to Washington. The USSR helped the independence drive with manpower, materiel, and funds. In the modern era, the strategic option offered by Russia and China has ensured that the countries in question benefit from assistance from all the great powers. In the case of Zimbabwe, national survival would have been challenging without the alternative. Individuals like Mobutu and Mugabe clung to power and fed off the competition to perpetuate their stay in power.

2. Rallying International Outcry against Colonialism. Some African states used their relationship with the superpowers to bring colonialism and independence struggle to global attention. There was solidarity and international outcry against colonialism. The Soviet Union, Cuba, and China used their platforms to decry colonialism and called for it to cease. The circumstances surrounding the murder of Lumumba represented a watershed moment in the competition. Cuba and the Soviet Union condemned it at the U.N., and demonstrations against it occurred in Peking. Fidel Castro cited South Africa as an imperialist and intervened with Cuban forces in the Angola civil war. It culminated in the withdrawal of South African troops and Namibia's independence. The evidence also

highlights that Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique offered their countries support bases for Zimbabwean nationalists.

How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Table 9. Cold War and Post-Cold War Thematic Presence

Instrument of National Power	Theme(s) Identified	Congo	Angola	Zimbabwe
Cold War				
Diplomatic	Membership of International Organization	X	X	
	International Diplomatic Engagements	X	X	X
	Sanctions		X	X
	Coercion	X		X
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions	X	X	
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests	X	X	X
	Broadcast Channels			X
Military	Military Operations	X	X	X
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition	X	X	X
	Military Advisor Missions	X	X	X
Economic	Infrastructure Investment		X	
	Embargoes			X
	Investment in Strategic resources	X	X	
	Loans/Grants/Aid	X	X	
Post-Cold				
Diplomatic	Membership of International Organization	X	X	X
	International Diplomatic Engagements	X	X	X
	Sanctions			X
Informational	Ideological and Cultural Institutions	X	X	X
	Key Leader Statements Promoting National Interests	X	X	X
	Broadcast Channels		X	
Military	Military Operations		X	
	Transfer of Arms and Ammunition	X	X	X
	Military Advisor Missions	X	X	
	Professional Military Education	X	X	X
Economic	Infrastructure Investment	X	X	X
	Investment in Strategic resources	X	X	X
	Loans/Grants/Aid	X	X	X
	Foreign Direct Investment	X	X	X
	Debt Cancellation	X	X	X

Source: Created by author.

Table 9 reveals the differences between the two periods. During the Cold War, the competitive environment was politically, ideologically, and militarily charged, whereas the current competition is less tense by those same subjective metrics. Under the auspices of NSC 68, a drift to the East was enough to warrant direct covert or overt military action from Washington, leading to instability in the countries examined. America and the Soviet Union were extremely sensitive to the allegiance of a state and its leaders and the ideologies that they adhered to. The superpowers were willing to invest militarily supported by other instruments of national power to ensure that the sides they helped prevailed. In the contemporary era, after the defeat of the Soviet Union, that sensitivity to allegiance has lessened. The countries are independent and free to relate as they see fit with the great powers without dire repercussions.

The data indicate that military intervention received more weight during the Cold War, but economic policies now dominate the competition. The M-focused policies led to extensive weaponization of proxy forces, transfer of arms and ammunition, and direct military operations in all three countries leading to devastating consequences. On the contrary, the E-focus of the current competition has populated themes like foreign direct investment, investment in strategic resources, infrastructure, loans, debt forgiveness, and grants. Due to its current economic strength, China has particularly made massive inroads into the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe, with a critical focus on the economic themes mentioned above. Additionally, following independence, the countries have become more economically centered, and the great powers have adapted accordingly.

An interesting thread that connects the two periods is the trends of the themes in the *informational* contest. During the Cold War, messaging focused on ideology and

imperialism. In the contemporary era, America has placed a greater emphasis on human rights, the rule of law, and good governance, as well as a warning that the Russo-Sino bloc was primarily concerned with resources. On the other hand, Moscow and Beijing emphasized autonomy, non-interference, and unconditional economic partnership and collaboration. However, this was not sacrosanct as Beijing required *One China* as a prerequisite for cooperation with the three countries. One of Beijing's most preferred tools for the *informational* contest was the Confucius Institutes.

### Summary

The chapter navigated great power competition from the Cold War era through to the post-Cold War era. It focused on the three case studies and utilized the DIME framework to sift and analyze data. It also answered the primary and secondary questions of the study based on the data gathered and analyzed. The next chapter focuses on presenting conclusions, findings, and recommended lines of action for sub-Saharan countries to deal with great power competition.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to understand the pattern and trends of great power competition in sub-Saharan Africa by comparing the Cold War and the Post-Cold War era. The primary research question was: How should sub-Saharan African countries deal with the challenges that resulted from great power competition? The secondary questions were:

1. What were the characteristics of the Cold War great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the contemporary characteristics of great power competition within sub-Saharan Africa?
3. How did Sub-Saharan African countries leverage the relationships with great powers to their benefit?
4. How does the Cold War competitive environment compare to the current environment in sub-Saharan Africa?

The previous chapter answered the four secondary questions. This chapter presents the key findings, conclusions, and responds to the primary research question. The chapter also offers recommendations to guide the three countries.

#### Findings and Conclusions

The economic instrument of power in the contemporary competition in the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe is the key to sustaining geopolitical influence. This is because most of the needs of the sub-Saharan countries were basic infrastructure and human

security-related requirements. Positive impressions of a great power directly correlate with the impact of infrastructure projects and disease alleviation to mention a few.

US informational themes were weak in the Cold War and continue to be so in the post-Cold War era. During the independence struggles, the United States sided with the colonial powers in both the DRC and Angola. In Zimbabwe, the US focus was more on the employment of its diplomatic instrument of national power, which was consistent with Britain's position. It had Jim Crow laws running alongside the decolonization struggles in sub-Saharan Africa. At a point in time, its messaging focused on *Red Colonization* in Eastern Europe, a part of the world many in the three countries hardly knew. The Soviets kept it simple. They painted imperialism as bad. This was convincing because the sub-Saharan African countries had experienced it for years. The Soviets then pointed to the United States as being with the colonizers.

In the contemporary era, the United States has focused on adherence to the rule of law, good governance, and human rights as prerequisites for economic assistance. While these values are good, the Chinese and Russians offer unconditional assistance and remind the countries of their help during the colonial struggles. China backs the theme up with its Confucius Institutes, which it collocates in universities to attract the youths to Chinese culture and language.

The DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe negotiated economic agreements separately without parameters to guide their collective negotiations. The evidence gathered indicate that some similar and differing terms of the agreements exist. This lack of uniformity created exploitable room for some of the great powers. The subsequent segment responds

to the primary research question by identifying some challenges and proposing how these challenges could be addressed.

### Response to the Primary Research Question

Tracking great power competition historically in the three countries and the nature of the competition revealed specific lessons that could guide the three sub-Saharan African countries as they grapple with great power competition. The paragraphs below identifies the challenges and discusses lessons that could address them.

The most glaring challenge is that all three countries during the Cold War and Post-Cold War era handled the relationships with the great powers in piecemeal. As a result, there was no collaboration to present a unified front among the nationalists in the colonial era. Indeed, they supported one another and formed alliances of convenience as and when it was required. In the modern era, the evidence suggests that the countries acted piecemeal again in their interactions. For instance, the great powers planned the Africa summits with key objectives they had to achieve. The great powers sent individual invitations to the representatives of the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe.

The lesson to be distilled from this is to have an umbrella body, most possibly the Regional Economic Community (REC), set out broad parameters for engagements that would serve as a general handrail to guide the states. The counter-argument is that the contexts are not the same, and each state has its own peculiar needs. While this may be true to an extent, the data points to some common themes across the board in all three cases. The desire for roads, railways, military and security equipment purchases were common. The evidence also indicated that all three states were involved in using their mineral wealth as collateral for the infrastructure projects. Though not highlighted, it is

difficult to determine if Angola gets the same returns on the same quantity of diamonds from Russia as Zimbabwe receives from those minerals from China. Coordination and broad guidelines could help with this.

The next challenge identified was a culture of dependency. For instance, the nationalists relied heavily on the great powers for military and financial support to sustain their operations. The evidence shows that the dependence continued into the post-independence era. The data suggests a lot of inflow of funds from the great powers. In the case of Zimbabwe, it is safe to say it is an overdependency.

The lesson to be learned from this is that dependency can be weaponized when the partner stops giving. Although negotiating for loans and grants with resources as guarantee may be appropriate, as argued, the states need to structure it. The examples of the DRC and Angola, where joint bodies controlled and monitored the terms of the agreements, could be adapted by Zimbabwe. Environmental conservation clauses, in particular, should be included in contracts to ensure that mining is safely done. At the core of the issue is that all the states in focus had economies that produced raw materials. Cooperating and setting an agenda for interacting with the great powers could empower the states en bloc to negotiate terms that led to technology transfer and the establishment of industries in the states to process and add value to the resources. This will yield more dividends and break the cycle of dependency.

### Recommendations

The DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe should form an umbrella body that would lay down broad parameters, general terms, and conditions to guide economic engagements with the great powers. Furthermore, the countries should agree on an agenda for



engagement and capitalize on their unity to negotiate for technology transfer and industries to be set up in their respective countries.

The study recommends the following areas for further inquiry:

1. A cross-case study of economic agreements between two sub-Saharan African countries and a great power to identify any relevant discrepancies that may exist and to determine where improvements may be made.
2. A focus on the dynamics of great and regional power contest in the Horn of Africa (HOA). The HOA is home to the US Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa. China has built its first overseas base in the same area, and Russia has signed a deal with Sudan (also in the HOA region) to establish a base. Turkey, a regional power, also has basing agreements in the region, and so does France and some gulf countries.

### Concluding Remarks

The study set out to distill lessons that could guide sub-Saharan African countries in their uncoordinated manner of engaging with the great powers. Additionally, it sought to determine the characteristics of the Cold War and post-Cold War contests and how sub-Saharan African countries leveraged their relationships with the great powers to their benefit. To a large extent, the study was able to achieve what it set out to do. It recommends an umbrella strategy by the DRC, Angola, and Zimbabwe to engage economically with all the great powers. The study further suggests similar studies focused on the HOA.

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