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*Cold War migration: Mozambican workers,
students and troopers in East Germany.
From the independence of Mozambique to
the collapse of the GDR*

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*„Vergiß nie deine Heimat, wo deine Wiege stand,
man findet in der Fremde kein zweites Heimatland“*

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Introduction

During the Cold War, a cornerstone of East German foreign policy was the policy of aid towards those Third World countries that had a socialist orientation. One of the many aspects linked to these forms of cooperation was the willingness for the GDR government to let the citizens of the aforementioned countries migrate in East Germany for reasons of work, study and military training. This migration took place by virtue of bilateral treaties concluded between the GDR and those countries, and was therefore regulated and controlled by these agreements, as was the stay of migrants in East Germany, which had limited time. According to a widespread vision in the Soviet bloc, solidarity against imperialism and neo-colonialism, economic and even military aid played a fundamental role in expanding its influence over developing states to defeat capitalism. In practice that objective translated into efforts to consolidate the new 'peoples' democracies' in Europe and Asia, and from the 1960s onwards increasingly in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to preferential trade arrangements and technical cooperation, education and training of those perceived likely to become key figures in their respective countries was a prominent strategy. The former German Democratic Republic was an important player in these efforts, seeking to create an 'emotional predisposition' towards socialism. Such policy of international aid towards Third World countries was functional to this goal, and the offer to spend a period of their lives in the GDR, both for study and for work reasons, for the population of these states was part of this policy; it was aimed to educate and form an elite that could become a bridge between the Soviet bloc and their country of origin. As numerous authors claimed, the ultimate goal would have been to educate such an elite and form it on the basis of socialist ideology.

The aid policy of the GDR has involved many Third World countries. One of the closest cooperation developed with the newly independent People's Republic of Mozambique from 1975 onwards. Such cooperation included an extensive contract-worker programme that entailed training and professional development components,

as well as a scheme offering education to students and training to troopers in the GDR. Mozambique is one of the most interesting cases because of the close intergovernmental relations that were created with the GDR, which developed even before the country obtained independence from Portugal, with the FRELIMO liberation movement. In addition, Mozambicans were, after the Vietnamese, one of the largest groups in the GDR.

Therefore, this paper aims to analyse in detail the mobility of Mozambican citizens towards the GDR, in the period that goes from 1975, the year in which Mozambique obtained independence from Portugal, to 1989-90, years of the collapse of the GDR and the German reunification. In particular, three different migrant groups from Mozambique will be taken into consideration, namely contract workers, students and soldiers who were trained in the GDR. The migratory movement that was taken in analysis constitutes a rather interesting movement, both from an historical point of view and from that of international relations. Basically, as already mentioned, Mozambican mobility in the GDR was based on a series of bilateral agreements between Mozambique and East Germany. Therefore, the field within which this work was carried out is that of the history of international relations. The approach used throughout the research was both historical and political, since it is not possible to focus on such migratory flow without taking into account the international relations between the two countries – East Germany and Mozambique – as they were the reason of the migratory movement itself.

Recently this topic has attracted the interest of many scholars and researchers. However, the focuses of their research were particular aspects of migration, while relations between Mozambique and the GDR have played a rather marginal role in the aforementioned research. The relevant treaties between the two countries were briefly mentioned, without making an in-depth description of the bilateral relations by virtue of which migration happened. Among the research carried out until now on this topic, clearly those written by German authors stand out, both because for their contribution, and because they make up the most literature about the issue. Therefore, from this point of view, this paper represents an effort to show in detail what happened prior and during the migration period. In other words, it aims to provide a complete picture of the migratory phenomenon of the Mozambican

population in the GDR, without leaving aside an accurate analysis of the relations between Mozambique and East Germany, and of course the goals that both states had set and what they aimed to achieve with such planned migration.

In order to reconstruct the relations between GDR and Mozambique, and the premises that led to the migration, the official foreign policy documents of the GDR were analysed, namely the *Dokumente zur Außerpolitik der DDR* of the years 1975-1985, available at the University library of the University Leipzig. After the German reunification, the official documents relating to the five-year period 1985-1990 were no longer published; therefore, the information concerning the period in question was derived from various newspaper articles of the newspaper *Neues Deutschland*. From 1946 to 1989, the newspaper was the central organ of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and as such published articles related to the government and its politics, as well as to meetings with representatives of other countries and treaties. The newspaper has proved to be a useful tool for reconstructing the relationship between the GDR and Mozambique. However, the articles were consulted critically; it should not be forgotten that the newspaper was still a propaganda tool in the hands of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. Another key element to derive the framework of relations between Mozambique and the GDR were the bilateral treaties between the two countries and the meetings between the respective representatives, which were analysed and taken into consideration within a broader historical framework.

For the focus of the thesis, that is the investigation on the migration phenomenon and its modalities, various and numerous sources have been used, in particular bilateral treaties that regulated the migratory flows from Mozambique towards the GDR. In addition, essays and monographs by various authors were consulted; the overwhelming majority of them were to be found only in Germany. On the one hand, the treaties provided a theoretical basis of how the permanence of Mozambicans in GDR should have been carried out. On the other hand, the authors showed profoundly conflicting views on how the permanence in DDR actually was like. Many argued that it was mere exploitation, operated by East Germany and its companies that needed cheap workforce, or advanced the hypothesis that the migration was functional to the political indoctrination of students. Others argued that it was a form of co-operation between states that actually benefited Mozambican

migrants, providing them with skills and, even temporarily, with a standard of living impossible to obtain in their country of origin. Both opinions will be presented in this work, but eventually, as will be seen through the consultation of interviews made to former migrants from Mozambique, one will prevail over the other. The interviews, then the direct experiences of the Mozambicans, represented another important source for the purpose of describing the phenomenon, given the fact that they allowed obtaining a privileged view of what the situation they experienced was like. Obviously it is not possible to think the experience of all Mozambicans in GDR are to be generalised in the sense proposed by the respondents. In any case, the sources considered for this research have led to one result rather than another, and this cannot be ignored. Unfortunately, during my stay in Leipzig it was not possible to find a Mozambican community that remained after the German reunification, and therefore the interviews taken into consideration were made by German authors, many directly in Mozambique to those migrants who returned to their country of origin after the German reunification.

With regard to the sources used, even if this research does not deal directly with linguistic and translation issues, the methodology used to write it required the use of linguistic skills, starting from the research and analysis of the sources. Without adequate competence and knowledge of the German language, it would have been impossible to consult the most literature that was eventually used for the analysis of the migration, in particular official documents and bilateral treaties. At this point a premise regarding the language chosen to write this thesis work is also necessary. The English language was chosen jointly with the rapporteur, Professor Elena Calandri, basically for two reasons. Firstly, Professor Calandri, although having a good knowledge of the German language, preferred to work in English, as she was able to follow the thesis work in a more thorough and immediate way, knowing the English language better. Secondly, on the international scene the problem has not been analysed until recently, so the literature on this subject is rather limited, although expanding. By writing the thesis in English, it may be possible to contribute to widening the international literature on the subject and bring to the surface this particular phenomenon that has remained in the shadows until recently. It follows that the thesis work was essentially also a translation work, not only with regard to

some articles of the bilateral treaties that will be presented as sources, the latter translated from German to English, but also for specific terms of the consulted documents that were systematically translated into English. The final result, i.e. the thesis, is presented in English, but the process of researching and consulting the sources required excellent competence in the German language, without which it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out a work of this kind.

Another determining factor for the success of the thesis was my stay in Leipzig, a city of the former DDR where numerous groups from Third World countries once worked and studied. In particular, in the law library of the University Leipzig it was possible to find the necessary sources that could support research, namely official documents and bilateral treaties concluded by the GDR. In addition, the stay in Leipzig enabled me to consult with experts within the field of history of the GDR, such as Professor Detlev Brunner, a research associate at the Department of German and European History, which ended up becoming the foreign supervisor of the thesis during my stay in Leipzig and helped me carry out this project during my stay in Leipzig.

Basically, the aim of the thesis is to provide a complete picture of the migration phenomenon regulated by bilateral treaties. Migration is here considered as the result of close intergovernmental relations between Mozambique and the GDR, and all the research has been carried out on the basis of this premise. In other words, there would have been no migration to the GDR if there were no agreements between the GDR and Mozambique that had promoted and supported it, and there would have been no such agreements between GDR and Mozambique if the two countries had not entertained intense international relations giving rise to these forms of cooperation. The thesis therefore starts from an accurate analysis of both the foreign policy of East Germany that has led to the search for international relations with socialism-oriented countries, both of the international relations themselves, and then to the analysis of migration and the terms dictated by the treaties to rebuild a clearer and complete picture of the situation.

In the first chapter the foreign policy of the GDR towards the countries of the third world will be introduced, in particular the policy towards the states of the

African continent, with particular attention to Mozambique. First of all, the role of the GDR within Soviet bloc will be clarified, ascertaining its relative independence from the latter. East Germany can be considered rather as an affiliate and not as a puppet state as many historians have claimed. After having clarified the East German position in the context of the Soviet bloc, its foreign policy towards African countries, the so-called *Afrikapolitik*, will be analysed, taking into consideration the rationale that pushed the GDR to seek cooperative relations with African countries. Finally, the early relations between GDR and the FRELIMO liberation movement prior to the independence of Mozambique will be presented. Indeed, it was in the period preceding the independence of Mozambique, namely during the struggle for independence against the colonial power, that the foundations for future intergovernmental relations were laid.

In the second chapter the bilateral relations between Mozambique and the GDR from 1975 to 1990 will be described. First of all, the premises for the realization of the cooperation between the two countries will be presented. The development of bilateral relations will be reconstructed starting from the independence of Mozambique. Through a systematic and thorough analysis of official documents, official visits, bilateral treaties and articles from the *Neues Deutschland* newspaper, it was possible to reconstruct in detail the bilateral relations between Mozambique and GDR. Particular emphasis will be placed on the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of 1979, which marked a turning point in the history of bilateral relations between the two countries. From this point on, the cooperation between the two states will become much more intense and this resulted in the treaties that regulated and encouraged the migration of Mozambicans to the GDR. The rationale behind the migration project for work, study and military training will also be clarified.

The very core of the thesis will be addressed in chapter three: the Mozambican contract workers and their stay in the GDR. First of all, some fundamental premises will be clarified in order to deliver a better understanding of the motives that have pushed the two states to elaborate such contract workers program in the GDR. Therefore, a short economic background of both states will be presented: on the one hand labour shortage in GDR, on the other hand the saturated job market in

Mozambique and the lack of experts to enhance economic growth. A particular aspect highlighted by many German authors, i.e. contract workers as a means of propaganda for the East German government, will be briefly introduced. The actual organisation of the contract work project in GDR will be then discussed. The main source used in this regard is the basis for the employment of the Mozambican contract workers in the GDR, namely the Agreement between the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises of the German Democratic Republic, which was signed the same day of Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, in February 1979. On the basis of the treaty, only a limited number of Mozambican citizens could have emigrated to the GDR in order to work as a contract worker, and then the criteria for the selection of contract workers will be presented. Once arrived in the GDR, the Mozambican workers had to comply with certain rules so that they could stay in the GDR, but also the companies in which they were employed had to observe some conditions: they had to comply with what was provided by the agreement. The control processes put in place by the East German government to ensure proper compliance with the treaty will therefore be illustrated. Indeed, the terms of the treaty provided that the workers should receive training in a specific profession; they had not to be employed as mere workforce by the companies of the GDR. In this regard, there are authors who argued that the employment of Mozambicans was not carried out as prescribed by the treaty, but that East German companies entrusted Mozambicans with simple tasks or with the one that German workers refused to assume. Eventually it will be shown how other authors and the interviewees have dismantled this conception. Then, the results that this contract work project has actually brought will be presented. After ten years of existence and implementation of the agreement, the contracting parties decided to draft a summary assessment. On the 24th February 1989 a document was drawn up by both states, which focused on the results of the program. During the guest worker program altogether 21,600 Mozambican workers spent time in the GDR between 1979 and 1989. Officially, the problematic aspects of the stay of Mozambican contract workers were not addressed in this official document, nonetheless there have been obviously some, and they will therefore be briefly

discussed. Finally, interviews with Mozambicans who worked contracted in the GDR will be taken into consideration, providing additional support to the literature that was consulted regarding how the project was actually carried on.

The fourth chapter will address the topic of young Mozambican students in the GDR. The experiment of the *Schule der Freundschaft* was taken as a case in point. Within this project, a total of 899 young Mozambicans went to the GDR, precisely in the city of Staßfurt, in order to undertake the educational project which lasted 6 years, from 1982 to 1988. Arguably, it can be considered one of the most ambitious educational projects in terms of education towards socialism. The reasons behind its creation were mainly two. On the one hand, the project was meant to educate an elite of socialist-oriented professionals who were to assume crucial positions in the future social, political and economic development of Mozambique. On the other hand, it was meant to train qualified personnel who would work in new joint ventures between East Germany and Mozambique. The objective of the chapter is to reconstruct the context within which migration took place and describe its modalities. Premises and reasons behind the realization of the project will therefore be presented, paying particular attention to the educational situation in Mozambique immediately after independence. The negotiations between GDR and Mozambique for the educational project will be decisive, even if the Mozambican leadership aimed at the education of a much greater number of students. The proposal came precisely from the Mozambican government, and the motives on the basis of which the GDR accepted such a form of cooperation will be explored. This will lead to the description of the organisation of the educational project, first of all by presenting the criteria agreed between the two countries for the selection of young Mozambicans who were eligible to attend the *Schule der Freundschaft*. The practical organisation of the project and the subjects of study will be presented. The composition of the staff of the *Schule der Freundschaft* will be illustrated, as the project saw the migration of Mozambican teachers in GDR, who could teach particular subjects such as Portuguese. Finally, the issues related to ideology and discipline that emerged from the educational project will be mentioned and some experiences of the Mozambican pupils during their stay in the GDR will be presented.

Besides economic, technical and educational cooperation, the GDR and Mozambique cooperated also in the field of military training, meaning that many Mozambican troopers stayed in the GDR to follow a military training. The fifth chapter will have to do with the military training that the Mozambican soldiers received in the GDR. In contrast to the other states of the Soviet bloc, the GDR did not provide large quantities of weapons and similar, but rather training for the army of Third World countries, either by sending experts on the spot, or by training their soldiers on their territory. The training of Mozambican soldiers on the territory of the GDR was made in virtue of two clauses contained in the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. The stay of Mozambican soldiers in GDR will be taken into consideration as well as the rules that the soldiers had to comply with during the time spent in GDR, which could last from 2 to 4 years, depending on the type of training they had to undergo. Particular emphasis will be placed on the objective of training, which was particularly permeated by socialist ideology, as will be discussed. The chosen location for the training, Prora, on the island of Rügen in the Baltic Sea, will then be discussed. Finally, data on the number of Mozambicans who received training and how long they stayed on East German territory will be presented. According to plans, a total of 289 Mozambicans had participated in military training in the GDR.

In the sixth chapter, some references to the situation of Mozambicans who were still on the East German territory after the dissolution of the Soviet bloc and German reunification will be made. The aim is to observe how the new German government managed the situation and to discuss the rather compulsory choice to which the remaining Mozambicans, about 15,100 in 1989, were subjected.

In conclusion, a comment on the results of these migration programs will be made, especially focusing on the lives of Mozambicans after their return to Mozambique and the problems they had to face.

1. East Germany foreign policy towards Mozambique and Africa from the 1960's

Since the earliest days after the German Democratic Republic was established, East German foreign policy has been concerned with its acceptance as a separate political entity, other than West Germany. Nonetheless, international recognition played a major role and was functional to the objective of being considered a fully-fledged sovereign nation. At the same time, East Germany provided accommodation to the Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, having signed the Warsaw Pact and being a member of the Comecon. The GDR was one of the Soviet Union's staunchest allies, therefore its foreign policy was extended to include global interest.

The foreign policy of the GDR was set out in its Constitution itself. Among the GDR Five principles, established in Article 6, East Germany was underlain to be perpetually and irrevocably allied with the Soviet Union¹. The principle of solidarity with liberation movements fighting for independence was endorsed in the Constitution as well:

The GDR supports in their efforts to achieve social progress those states and peoples which struggle against imperialism and its colonial rule, and for national freedom and independence (Constitution of the German Democratic Republic, Art. VI, §3, 1974)

East German foreign policy in Africa in the post-recognition period became motivated by factors not, at first sight, immediately akin to the quest for diplomatic recognition which had so dictated the GDR's manoeuvrings on the continent prior to 1972. Nevertheless, the continuing perceived need for Honecker to establish more firmly the legitimacy of the 'socialist' GDR remained a key determinant in the GDR's *Afrikapolitik*.²

¹ Constitution of the German Democratic Republic, Art. VI, §2, 1974.

² Winrow, G. M., *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 85.

In the years between 1973 and 1975, once obtained general recognition, East Germany focused its attention towards the European environment, where negotiations on issues of fundamental importance concerning political and military security were conducted, such as the Conference in European Security and Cooperation and the talks on Mutual Balanced Force Reductions in Central Europe.³ East Germany attention was shifted back to the African continent after the liberation of the Portuguese colonies in southern and eastern Africa, an event that offered further opportunities to increase the GDR leverage in the Third World.

1.1. The GDR as an affiliate of the USSR

East German foreign policy in Africa is worthy of serious analysis, as the GDR acted relatively independently from the USSR. As theorised in recent history studies, the GDR was not merely an appendage of Soviet activities on that continent.

East Germany managed to make itself economically and politically indispensable to the Soviet Union in a variety of ways, enough to be considered as an affiliate or junior partner, having earned a certain degree of independence. Indeed, the new Cold War history, which is based upon research conducted in the archives of East bloc countries, has rejected the traditional idea of the GDR being a mere proxy or surrogate of the USSR⁴. East Germany boasted the highest standard of living among the socialist countries of Eastern Europe as its economy was highly developed compared to the one of the other Comecon states. Thus, it was the first among the socialist economies to move into the field of high technology and other intensive forms of production. The importance of the GDR for the USSR was also enhanced for the reason East Germany could act as a conduit between the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon).

As argued by Gareth Winrow in his fundamental 1990 work on the GDR in Africa, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, the relations between GDR and

³ The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa, p. 85.

⁴ Lorenzini, S., "East-South relations in the 1970s and the added value of GDR involvement in Africa. Between bloc loyalty and self interest", in *The Globalization of the Cold War: Diplomacy and Local Confrontation, 1975-85*, M. Guderzo and B. Bagnato, London, Routledge, 2010, pp. 104-105.

USSR were rather based on an ‘asymmetric interdependence’.⁵ New findings have pointed out the degree of independence in GDR foreign policy, both in Europe and outside of it, although many western observers in the past were assuming that the GDR was compelled by the USSR to pursue an active *Afrikapolitik*; therefore, the degree of independence of the GDR regarding its *Afrikapolitik* has proved considerably difficult to assess, since the prevailing orthodoxy was maintaining the GDR role in Africa was simply that of a surrogate/proxy for the USSR.⁶

As Winrow observed, the GDR represented an affiliate state rather than a proxy or a puppet state. In fact, with the conscious pursuit of a strategy of affiliation, namely a policy carried out to demonstrate the GDR’s value as that of a faithful ally of the USSR, East Berlin succeeded in reaching a certain measure of freedom of manoeuvre and at the same time enhanced its leverage.⁷

To quote the international relations expert Holsti, the role of a faithful ally is “one in which the policy-makers declare that they will support, with all means possible, their fraternal allies. They are not so much concerned with receiving aid as with giving the appearance of committing aid to others”.⁸ As Winrow emphasised, the GDR was voluntarily and consciously pursuing a strategy of affiliation, where Soviet interests were supported in order to receive, in exchange, rewards and backing for its own initiatives and policies⁹. In June 1961, when establishing the guidelines for cooperation within the Comecon, each delegation had to present its vision. But all of them, and in particular the politically prudent members like East Germany, intended to leave the Soviet Union free. Sensing that the Soviets already had clear ideas and priorities that they were unwilling to renounce, the directive for representatives of the German Democratic Republic openly said that in the interest of good relations

⁵ See *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, pp. 9-14.

⁶ *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸ Holsti, K. J., *International Politics – a Framework for Analysis*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall International, 4th ed., 1983, p.119.

⁹ One must add though, that there is no concrete proof that, through such an affiliation strategy and the commitment in Africa, East German leadership attempted to secure preferential economic treatment or political support from the Soviets, as argued by Winrow. Actually, former East German politicians have denied such intention. See: Engel, U., and Schleicher, H., *Die Beiden Deutschen Staaten in Afrika: Zwischen Konkurrenz und Koexistenz, 1949-1990*, Hamburg, Hamburger Beiträge zur Afrika-Kunde, 1998.

with the Soviet Union it was not appropriate to criticize the intentions of the USSR.¹⁰ This deferential attitude must not, however, mislead.

The effectiveness of this strategy is not to be doubted, as it resulted in the gradual transformation of the GDR's status from that of a Soviet satellite to that of a junior partner, or ally. Indeed, as East Germany followed the Soviet political lead and continually tried to persuade other Soviet allies to make the same, Western observers described East Germany as the Soviet Union's 'junior partner' within the Warsaw Pact. In fact, the term 'junior ally' was first used by the political scientists Brezezinski, referring to the changing nature of the relations between USSR and East European–Comecon states, as the latter were able to secure increasing freedom of manoeuvre in the conduct of their policies. By the late 1970s, having pursued a successful affiliation strategy, the GDR was entitled to regard itself as the most important junior ally of the USSR.¹¹ However, even if East Germany was pursuing an affiliation strategy, it did not always maintain an equally condescending behaviour, as one may be lead to think. Within the Comecon, cooperation was often only partial and characterized by mutual agreement: it only took place if everyone agreed and limited to the common interests.¹²

East Germany's role as the Soviet Union's junior partner also came into play in the Third World, especially in the African continent. The GDR, in line with its general foreign policy, consciously adopted a strategy of affiliation with the USSR in Africa too. Once having secured international recognition, the East German leadership willingly embarked on an enhanced political and military involvement in Africa, its *Afrikapolitik*. As the Soviet leadership gradually perceived the GDR as an important junior partner, it was willing to accord it increasing autonomy in the conduct of its policies in Africa. One could also argue that the affiliation with the USSR facilitated the generating of legitimacy by promoting the differentiation of the foreign policies of the two Germanies, being the GDR provided with certain freedom of manoeuvre.

¹⁰ Direktive für das Auftreten der Delegation der DDR auf der 1. Sitzung der Ständigen Kommission des Rates für Gegenseitige Wirtschaftshilfe für die Koordinierung der technischen Unterstützung, BArchB, DL2 VAN 76, quoted by Lorenzini, S., *Una strana guerra fredda*, p. 116.

¹¹ *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 10.

¹² Wettig, G., *Community and Conflict in the Socialist Camp: the Soviet Union, East Germany and the German Problem 1965-1972*, London, C. Hurt, 1975, p. 150.

1.2. An overview on East Germany foreign policy towards Africa

East Germany promoted two foreign policy interests in the Third World. Firstly, between the late 1960s and 1970s the GDR, functioning as a divided state enjoying little international status as compared with West Germany, it aimed to gain recognition, and offered economic and technical assistance to the African states in exchange. Secondly, a propaganda campaign was launched by East Berlin addressing West Germany as the heir to Germany's imperial past, while representing itself as the German state able to offer all the positive qualities usually associated with Germans, but without the taint of a colonial past.

The architect and mind of *Afrikapolitik* was Werner Lamberz, a brilliant exponent of the German-Eastern Communist Party (SED), long-time Commissioner of the 'agitation and propaganda' and member of the Politbüro. He soon became a key figure in the new management of Erich Honecker. He was convinced that the GDR needed to integrate its foreign relations with the Third World in order to favour the development of the economic planning of East Germany, which eventually ran as an important partner for many African countries, ousting Czechoslovakia and placing itself in second place among the donors of Central and Eastern Europe after the Soviet Union.¹³

1.2.1. The 1960s and the seek for recognition

Prior to the 1970s, the securing of diplomatic recognition was the primary objective of East German foreign policy in Africa. Indeed, recognition would effectively squash the repeated Western accusation towards the so-called 'Soviet Zone', considered merely as an appendage of the USSR. Furthermore, in their quest for recognition, East German authorities were also attempting to render redundant the Hallstein Doctrine by denouncing West German 'neo-colonialist' policies and by discrediting Western involvement in Africa, a strategy which was at the same time complementary with Moscow's ambitions to acquire influence in the Third World.

¹³ Lorenzini, S., *Una strana guerra fredda: Lo sviluppo e le relazioni Nord-Sud (Studi e ricerche)*, p. 178.

Throughout the 1960s the GDR was actively engaged in Africa, having developed consular relationships and having established trade missions in several African states. In the endeavour to obtain diplomatic recognition, the GDR opened and expanded ties with African regimens also by other means. For instance, links were cultivated with national liberation movements, with the intention of harvesting potential future results. As a consequence, in such cases diplomatic recognition would have been secured, together with the possibility to exert political influence on the country.¹⁴ In fact, although the most pressing and immediate aim was recognition, East German officials were clearly aware of possible longer-term benefits that could emerge as a result of their condemnation of neo-colonialism and support of national and social liberation movements in Africa.¹⁵ In particular, one means used to initiate contacts and eventually gain recognition were gifts of solidarity, such as medicine, clothes, food and agricultural equipment, that were distributed to states at times of national disaster.¹⁶ The term ‘solidarity’ will often appear in this work. This term was largely used in all kind of documents and speeches, as socialist terminology directly appealed to the tradition of anti-imperialist solidarity. It therefore did not use the term ‘aid’, but rather spoke of cooperation on a footing of equality, or of ‘solidarity’. Solidarity involved different forms of aid, which were aimed to help and support both national liberation movements and the already independent states.

Cultural activities were used as well as means to denigrate the FRG’s role in Africa, which was depicted as a neo-colonialist state, as already mentioned. Actually, within the Comecon, cultural policy issues towards the third world had no place, whereas only East Germany and Czechoslovakia wanted to engage in this sense.¹⁷ This shows once again how the *Afrikapolitik* was, in fact, the result of freedom of manoeuvre of the GDR, and therefore it was not imposed by the USSR leadership as it was believed at the time.

The SED as well as social organisations, such as trade unions and women organisations, had a special responsibility in taking care of relations with national liberation movements. The youth organisation FDJ (*Freie Deutsche Jugend*) had a

¹⁴ Winrow, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 47.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 48

¹⁷ Politisches Archiv des früheren Ministeriums für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR.

special role in providing training and assistance. Especially noteworthy were the Friendship Brigades (*Freundschaftsbrigaden*) introduced in 1964; they were the East German version of the Peace Corps. The *Freundschaftsbrigaden*, the Peace Corps of the Eastern Bloc, were composed of young technicians from the GDR, men aged 21 to 30, skilled, unmarried and without first-degree relatives in West Germany, who were employed in the newly independent states with the purpose of "developing friendly relations among peoples and training personnel for future diplomatic missions".¹⁸ They helped in centres for training and apprenticeship or worked as mechanics on products provided by the GDR, so as to constitute a sort of technical assistance network for East German products in the African market. They also had full capacity for political representation and the accessory task of carrying out socialist propaganda. The first Brigades were sent in 1964 to Ghana, Guinea, Mali and Algeria.¹⁹ Moreover, the GDR offered scholarships and provided training and education in party organisation and trade union policies, and taught propaganda techniques. Cultural policies were considered essential in order to educate the future elite who would cooperate with socialist countries.

This kind of 'indoctrination' of Africa's future political elite was rather part of a long-term strategy; the aim was not only gaining recognition, but also securing a long-term influence on the continent.²⁰ Eventually, this policy of help and 'invective' against the neo-colonialist West appeared to impress certain African national liberation movements. Solidarity with these movements was emphasised, in order to influence political groups, which the GDR hoped were destined to lead future independent states.²¹

1.2.2. GDR international policy towards Africa in the 1970's

In the mid 1970s Africa became a major battlefield for East-West competition. Independence of the former Portuguese colonies and the developments in the Horn of Africa opened new perspectives for socialist countries. In the 1970s, East Germany

¹⁸ Politisches Archiv des früheren Ministeriums für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR, Kollegiumssitzung of 19 August 1963.

¹⁹ See Büschel, H., *Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe. Deutsche Entwicklungsarbeit in Afrika 1960-1975*, Frankfurt a. M., Campus Verlag, 2014, pp. 452-481.

²⁰ Winrow, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 48.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60

continued to pursue an active policy in the Third World, particularly in Africa, both because such strategy was part of its role as a Soviet ally, and because this vigorous policy could advance its own specific interests.

The liberation of the colonies, together with more than two decades of carefully cultivated relations with African countries and liberation movements, would finally aid Honecker in the endeavour to upgrade further East German contacts with the African continent.

From 1975 onwards, the GDR sought to strengthen the bonds of solidarity and friendship with certain Africa states, in order to impress upon the USSR and obtain, as Winrow argued, preferential economic treatment. In this context, an active *Afrikapolitik* were followed and military and security operation in Africa were expanded.²² Furthermore, trading relationships were developed with a number of Third World states. East Germany imported mainly raw materials, such as cotton, tropical fruits, coffee beans, and nuts.

Anti-neo-colonialism was still one of the *leitmotivs* of the GDR foreign policy; in September 1973, once formally admitted into the UN, the GDR took advantage of the international forum to present an anti-colonial and non-racist profile, whilst openly condemning the West for its imperialist activities, together with the FRG.²³ Thus, confidence in decolonization was strong in Soviet ideology. Evgeny Varga noted that the disintegration of the colonial system would have shaken the foundations of imperialism, which in broader terms would have meant the general crisis of capitalism.²⁴

In the post-recognition period, to tighten its relations with Africa states and strengthen its role in the African continent, East Germany concluded treaties of friendship and cooperation not only with African states, but also with parties, national fronts and liberation movements. Undoubtedly, the extensive contacts with African political parties in this period were essential to the propagation of Marxism-Leninism throughout the whole continent in the interest of the Soviet bloc.²⁵ These agreements called for cooperation in the fields of health, economic, scientific,

²² Winrow, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p 86.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 93

²⁴ See Varga, E., "On Trends of Development of Contemporary Capitalism and Socialism", in *World Economy and International Relations*, 1957, vol. 4, pp. 36-48.

²⁵ Winrow, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 89.

political, and educational affairs. In chapter 2, along with a detailed reconstruction of bilateral relations between GDR and Mozambique, it will be widely spoken about the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between East Germany and Mozambique.

The GDR also supported the development of ‘vanguard parties’ in the democratic phase of socialist orientation.²⁶

Military aid represented an essential part of international relations between African states and GDR. In the mid-1980s, East Germany had a significant military presence in Africa. The United States Department of Defence reports that in 1981 “East Germans were serving in the Middle East and Africa, specifically in Angola, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mozambique, Algeria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen)”²⁷. Distinctive was that East German troops did apparently no fighting; they acted primarily in an advisory and training capacity. Third World military and security personnel would also travel to East Germany to be military trained, a subject matter which will be addressed in detail in chapter 5 as regards to Mozambican troops.

1.3. Solidarity against imperialism: the ideological justification

The GDR built its friendly state ‘myth’ by depicting itself as the antagonist of imperialistic and racist West Germany, whilst sustaining the policy of *Völkerfreundschaft*, a friendship between peoples which aim was to provide developing nations with military, financial and political support.

GDR assistance to developing countries was underpinned by political, ideological and economic factors. In fact, for the SED, the Socialist Unity Party, aid was the means through which the construction of a new socialist international order would be realised. Therefore, rather than using the term ‘aid’, the SED preferred using

²⁶ Nimchowski, H., *Probleme der Einheitsfront der anti-imperialistisch-demokratischen Kräfte in Staaten mit sozialistischer Orientierung*, AAL, vol. 5,4, 1977, p. 536.

²⁷ www.country-data.com, based on the Country Studies Series by Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress

‘economic socialist assistance’.²⁸ Hence, special relations were developed with countries with a ‘socialist orientation’, such as Mozambique.

In 1976, during the 9th SED Congress, Honecker stressed the revolutionary potential of the developing States and liberation movements, and ‘anti-imperialist solidarity’ was ranked as one of the most important foreign policy goals.²⁹ At the same time, helping liberation movements fight against colonial regimes was seen as a step forward in the annihilation of Capitalism. The struggle for freedom was classified by the SED as a ‘fair war’, and consequently approved by the government³⁰. Normally, foreign interventions were not allowed, but African affairs represented an exception in the broadest context of the fight against Capitalism.³¹ Positive developments in Africa were particularly stressed. In two major speeches in 1978 Honecker referred to Africa specifically as a continent in which “peoples were substantially contributing to the continuing change of the international balance of power in favour of Socialism”.³²

Even if the SED argued that its economic links with Third World countries were founded on equality, respect for sovereignty and especially on mutual advantage, in practice, as many authors underlined, the aids resembled to those of capitalist counterparts. Economic interest played actually a vital role in the developing of the aid programme. Authors are generally convinced that the GDR, like western capitalistic countries, aimed to secure supplies of raw material to favour its industry, by fostering at the same time a market for its products.

²⁸ See Schulz, B. and Hansen, W., “Aid or Imperialism? West Germany in Sub-Saharan Africa” in *The journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 22, issue 2, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, June 1984, pp. 287-313.

²⁹ Honecker, E., *Bericht des Zentralkomitees der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands an der IX Parteitag der Sed*, Berlin (East), Dietz Verlag, 1976, p. 27.

³⁰ Rabenschlag, A., *Völkerfreundschaft nach Bedarf. Ausländische Arbeitskräfte in der Wahrnehmung von Staat und Bevölkerung der DDR*. Stockholm, Stockholm University, 2014. P. 56.

³¹ Storkmann, K., “‘Aktive Solidarität?’ Akteure und Motive des politischen Entscheidungsprozess zu Militärhilfen der DDR für die sogenannte Dritte Welt”, in: *Zeitschrift des Forschungsverbunden SED-Staat*, Nr.24, Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, 2008, pp. 131-153.

³² Neues Deutschland, 18/19 February 1978, speech to *Kreis* SED first secretaries, and, 8 *Tagung des ZK der SED*, 24/25 May 1978. Berlin (East). Dietz Verlag, 1978, p. 15.

1.4. The case of Mozambique

Having provided a general overview on GDR foreign policy towards African countries, it is now possible to turn the attention to a major recipient in Africa of the GDR assistance, namely FRELIMO, the Mozambique Liberation Front.

The SED nurtured a particular interest in Mozambique, both for economic and for ideological reasons. On the one hand, ideologically speaking, the main interest was to guide the former Portuguese colony through the development of a new socialist society. On the other hand, economically speaking, Mozambique was a great source not only of raw materials, but also of labour force and could represent a market for East Germany exports.

Before analysing the relations between the two countries, it is necessary to briefly introduce the political and economic background of Mozambique right after the independence from Portugal.

1.4.1. Political and economic background of Mozambique

Mozambique obtained independence on the 25 June 1975, after a long war between FRELIMO, the liberation movement, and Portugal, namely the Mozambican War of Independence (1964–1974).

After World War II, while many European nations were granting independence to their colonies, Portugal maintained that Mozambique and other Portuguese possessions had to remain territories of the mother country. However, especially during the Cold War, Communist and anti-colonial ideas were spreading out across the African continent; they were certainly inspired by the social revolution on the Soviet model, but in the case of African colonies, the conflict was not primarily between workers and capitalists, but rather between colonists and colonizers. Therefore, it didn't take long for liberation political movement to be established. In 1962 several anti-colonial political groups joined, creating FRELIMO, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique. FRELIMO initiated a guerrilla campaign against Portuguese rule in September 1964. The ten-years conflict became soon one of the fronts of the cold war. FRELIMO had received the solidarity of the Soviet Union and

the countries of Eastern Europe that had sent arms, emergency aid, councillors and technicians.³³

By April 25, 1974 FRELIMO was in control of more than one-fourth of the territory of Mozambique.³⁴ General António de Spínola, the new head of government in Portugal, called for a ceasefire and negotiations between the country and FRELIMO officials helped with the signing of the Lusaka Accord on September 7, 1974. In the accord, all power was handed over to FRELIMO without elections, and the country's formal independence was set on June 25, 1975, which was the 13th anniversary of the founding of FRELIMO.

After independence, FRELIMO ceased being a political movement fighting a guerrilla war and became a political party assuming control of a government. Therefore, FRELIMO is said to be "an example of the actuality of a victorious liberation movement which, on the morrow of its victory and accession to power, transformed itself from a movement for national liberation into a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party for a continued and uninterrupted revolutionizing of society and state".³⁵

At independence, the People's Republic of Mozambique inherited an extremely catastrophic and perilously backward economic and financial situation, defined by Samora Machel, the first president of independent Mozambique, as the "result of unbridled plunder, the financial conditions imposed by colonialism and the disorganised exploitation of our potential". Mozambique was faced with a foreign debt of \$800 million, a trade deficit of \$24 million, high inflation and few foreign reserves. Thus, forty per cent of Mozambique's annual budget came from rail and port tariffs, and between seven and ten per cent came from the remittances of mine workers to South Africa.³⁶

In 1976, a United Nations report concluded that the kind of development carried out in Mozambique has been unable for many years to absorb the growing population into productive employment and the large number, over a quarter of a

³³ Lorenzini, *Una strana guerra fredda*, pp. 3-4.

³⁴ Schneidman, W. J., "FRELIMO's foreign policy and the process of liberation, in *Africa Today*", in: *Southern Africa: Confrontation and Conflict*, Indiana, Indiana University Press, Vol. 25, No. 1, Mar. 1978, p. 63.

³⁵ Nwafor, A., "FRELIMO and Socialism in Mozambique" in *Contemporary Marxism*, No. 7, *Revolution in Southern Africa*, San Francisco, Social Justice – Global Options, Fall 1983, p. 31

³⁶ Keesing Contemporary Record, Vol. 15. No. 20, Oct 4 1971.

million, who found employment abroad became a major source of foreign exchange for Mozambique and Portugal, and increased the dependence of Mozambique on surrounding countries. Moreover, the liberation in Mozambique did not however mark the end of the clashes, which continued at the borders. Here the RENAMO (Mozambican National Resistance), the group born in 1975 and supported by Rhodesia and South Africa of apartheid, used to fight the guerrilla to defend the government of the white minority against the armed uprising of the patriotic front.

A further problem for Mozambique was the lack of specialised labour force, being the higher position covered by the Portuguese. After the independence, FRELIMO made the Portuguese leave the country. This was going to be one of the fundamental premises to the cooperation between GDR and Mozambique, as reflected in chapter 2 and 3.

1.4.2. Early relations between FRELIMO and the GDR

The GDR was the first East European state to conclude party-level agreements with FRELIMO.³⁷ Ascertaining the precise details of the nature of such party agreements is quite complicated, although it may be assumed that such connections were employed to increase East German leverage over the internal and external policies of the state.³⁸ According to East German sources, party relations were a source of ‘impulses not only for inter-state cooperation but also for ties with social organisations’³⁹

However, relations between GDR and FRELIMO date back before Mozambique gained its longed-for independence. As a liberation movement aspires to form a government, it is useful to view it as an embryonic governmental structure. FRELIMO was a Marxist-Leninist-oriented liberation movement, which would have given rise to a new socialist government in Mozambique. This clearly explains why such relations between SED and FRELIMO began before the independence of Mozambique. In particular, mutual delegation visits between SED and FRELIMO

³⁷ von Plate, B., “Aspekte der SED-Parteibeziehungen in Afrika und der arabischen Region” in *Deutschland Archiv* 12, 1980, pp. 134-5.

³⁸ Winrow, *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 89.

³⁹ Zenker, J., ‘Zusammenarbeit der SED mit revolutionär-demokratischen Parteien in Afrika und Asien’, in: *Deutsche Außenpolitik*, vol. 22, October 1977, p. 105.

took place in preparation for what would come after the independence. For instance, in 1974 a FRELIMO delegation was invited in East Berlin and the whole meeting between SED and the delegation followed the protocol of state visits, meaning that FRELIMO was considered the rightfully representative of Mozambique.⁴⁰

As mentioned before, intervention in foreign matters was to be avoided; still, the struggle for independence was considered a 'fair war'. In addition, FRELIMO made its voice heard through the United Nations, condemning Portugal in many occasions. As a consequence, several relevant resolutions were passed by the General Assembly which related to FRELIMO's struggle. For instance, Resolution 1514 (XV), Dec. 14, 1960, called for the granting of independence to all colonial territories, and Resolution 2787(XXVI), 1971, confirmed the legality of people's armed struggle against colonialism and alien self-rule. Given the fact they were passed by the General Assembly, these resolutions were non-binding for the members of UN, anyway they did direct the attention of the world to Mozambique, and they also gave a legal as well as a moral basis for aid to the liberation movement.⁴¹

Consequently, GDR could deliver concrete aid to FRELIMO; it concerned material aid – food and clothing – as well as political and military education, and the supplying of significant quantities of arms.⁴²

Interesting was the *Medienpolitik*, one particular means of influence employed by the GDR in Mozambique. From the reports in the newspaper *Neues Deutschland*, it appears that in the period between 1973 and 1979 the VDJ, the GDR Union of Journalists, concluded agreements with journalists' union in many African states, among which also Mozambique. The aim was the training of journalists in courses and seminars organised by the East Germany specialists at the *Internationales Institut für Journalistik* near East Berlin. In total, 432 journalists coming from 39 Third World countries were reported to have been trained at the Institute.⁴³ The nature of the training and how it was carried out are unknown.

⁴⁰ Döring, H. J., und Rüchel, U., *Freundschaftsbande und Beziehungskisten. Die Afrikapolitik der DDR und der BRD gegenüber Mosambik*, Frankfurt am Main, Brandes & Apsel, 2005.

⁴¹ Schneidman, W. J., "FRELIMO's foreign policy and the process of liberation", in: *Africa Today*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Southern Africa: Confrontation and Conflict, Indiana, Indiana University Press, March 1978, p. 60.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ von Löwis of Menar, H., "SED-Journalismus als Exportartikel – die Entwicklungshilfe der DDR", in: *Deutschland Archiv* 12, October 1979, p. 1016.

It could be concluded that this exercise of what one Western source has referred to as ‘applied Proto-Leninism’⁴⁴, to exert increasing East German influence through party contacts and organisational ties, was for the GDR fundamentally an extension and continuation of policies commenced in the pre-recognition period. After the independence of Mozambique, the ties between FRELIMO and SED became tighter; the bilateral relations between the two governments would bring to a new level of cooperation, where many Mozambican citizens were sent to GDR to follow particular education plans, vocational and military training. In the next chapter, the bilateral relations between the GDR and the newly formed People’s Republic of Mozambique will be analysed in detail.

⁴⁴ See Croan, M., “A new Afrika Korps?”, in: *The Washington Quarterly*, No. 4, Winter 1980, p. 22.

2. Bilateral relations between East Germany and Mozambique: from Mozambique's independence to the collapse of the GDR (1975-1990)

In this chapter the bilateral relations between the People's Republic of Mozambique and the German Democratic Republic will be reconstructed. To this end, Documents on East Germany foreign policy (*Dokumente zur Außerpolitik der DDR*) were used; in particular, treaties, meetings and speeches are the foundations of this study. Moreover, the daily newspaper *Neues Deutschland*, the official party newspaper of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), was used to retrieve further information about how the SED perceived such relations.

A problem had arisen during the research, namely the absence of documents about the GDR foreign policy between the years 1986 and 1990. The Documents on East German Foreign Policy were in all likelihood stopped being published after the German reunification, as the more recent one was published in 1988 and referred to the year 1985.

Mozambique, classified as a developing country with a socialist orientation, was one of the most important African countries within the frame of East German foreign policy and maintained intensive relations with the former GDR. Such cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique was realised mainly through party relations, solidified with agreements. Eventually, an extensive agreement-system was brought to life, with more than 800 agreements and conventions.⁴⁵ In particular, 70 state-level agreements were reached on many fields, such as economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the GDR provided also assistance in such areas as education, communications, cadres training

⁴⁵ See BStU: MfS-Zentralarchiv, HA U, nr. 13548, p. 182.

and military/security operations.⁴⁶ On the basis of this agreement-system, many Mozambicans studied on the GDR territory, and around 22,000 Mozambicans worked in East Germany, they were the so-called ‘contract workers’⁴⁷.

Strong emphasis was however placed on economic relations, to the point that the development of economic relations became broad and complex as with no other African country.⁴⁸

Despite the exploration of many possibilities for international cooperation, Mozambique strongly relied on the support from the GDR and on future relations with it in the course of its social development. The transition to complex cooperation in political, scientific-technical and cultural fields meant entering a new territory. However, both sides were quite aware about their mutual political interests since the beginning. In addition, the problematic nature coming from such an extensive agreement-system was mutually known.⁴⁹

2.1. Reasons behind the cooperation between East Germany and Mozambique

It’s clear that the tight cooperation between the German Democratic Republic and the People’s Republic of Mozambique relied upon mutual interests.

First of all, the GDR was politically ready to help Mozambique overcome its colonial legacy, i.e. to support it in building a national economic and social base. On an ideological level, it was driven by the desire to assist the former Portuguese colony in the construction of a new socialist society. Politically, East German support for Mozambique enabled the GDR to extend its influence to Southern Africa⁵⁰. In other words, East Germany was eager to ‘export’ its socialist model,

⁴⁶ See Löwis of Menar, *Das Engagement der DDR im portugiesischen Afrika*. In: Deutschland Archiv 1/1977, pp. 37-8.

⁴⁷ Auswärtiges Amt der Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

⁴⁸ Butters, H., “Zur wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit DDR – Mosambik”, in Matthias Voß, *Wir haben Spuren hinterlassen! Die DDR in Mosambik. Erlebnisse, Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse aus drei Jahrzehnten*, LIT Verlag, Münster, 2015, p. 199

⁴⁹ Matthes, H., “Die Beziehungen DDR – VR Mosambik zwischen Erwartungen und Wirklichkeit – ein Gespräch” in *Wir haben Spuren hinterlassen*, p. 19.

⁵⁰ Howell, J., “The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid” in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Jun., 1994, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. P. 314

extending at the same time the influence of the USSR on the continent and bringing Mozambique under its influence area, as a way of contributing towards the construction of a new socialist international order. At the same time, the FRELIMO leadership wanted to build a socialist system in Mozambique, and the introduction of economic policies and state structures similar to those of the GDR was therefore sought.⁵¹

Whilst ideological and political factors took precedence in the 1970s, economic interests played a vital role in the shaping of cooperation projects, especially after the impending crisis of the mid-1980s. The SED always maintained that, as opposed to Western neo-imperialism, its economic links with poorer countries were founded on equality, mutual advantage, respect for sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Many authors underlined how they bore a striking resemblance to those of its capitalist rivals. Howell argued that, like Western capitalist countries, the GDR held a keen interest in securing supplies of raw materials for its industry⁵². Key projects included coal and pegmatite mining, state farms, the textile factory in Mocuba, the reconstruction of the Moatize railway, the production of radios, medical assistance and licensed fishery. The focus was on East German support on Mozambique's industrialisation, the development of agriculture by large enterprises, the development of technical infrastructure, the search for and the extraction of raw materials, and especially the development of a national education and health system. The GDR was furthermore interested in creating a long-term receptive market for its products, in particular the one from the sectors of mechanical engineering and metalworking industry.

As already mentioned, the cooperation would have brought both countries mutual advantages; Mozambique needed basically everything an industrial state could offer: machinery, chemicals, consumer goods and in particular expertise. Since during the Portuguese rule Portuguese employees were employed in the highest working position, the ones requiring expertise, once Mozambique obtained its independence it was left without specialised workers. Given the lack of experts, the GDR and Mozambique cooperated also in this field; East German experts were sent to work in

⁵¹ See Butters, H., *Zur wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit DDR – Mosambik*, pp. 199-214

⁵² Howell, J., *The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid*, p. 315

Mozambique and, vice versa, Mozambican workers could undertake a training programme in the GDR. These projects served mainly two purposes. Firstly, they provided the respective countries with industrial expertise, thus contributing to the formation of a skilled workforce and a potential working class. Secondly, they were a way of dealing with the GDR's acute labour shortage, a result of both low birth rates and the loss of population following the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Not all cooperation projects were the result of a thorough analysis and careful economic calculations. Some projects also arose on the occasion of political encounters between representatives of both states, led by the wish to quickly overcome the underdevelopment of the country and to achieve profound social change. However, the agreed cooperation projects were generally the result of negotiations regarding the economic development of Mozambique.

What many authors underlined, is that the cooperation would have brought in general to mutual advantage to both countries. As Butters argued, there were no projects that the GDR has pushed only for its one-sided benefit and to the detriment of Mozambique.⁵³

In the period between 1977 and 1980 the major agreements were signed. However, it should be mentioned that at the beginning of the 1980s severe problems arose because of the massive destabilisation of the country carried on by RENAMO, the anti-communist and reactionary militant organisation, against the ruling party FRELIMO. At the time, their devastating effects on the realization of most of the GDR projects could not yet be estimated nor identified. On the contrary, on the side of the GDR, it was assumed that since Mozambique achieved independence, the progress of the country on the basis of existing resources were to develop rapidly. The destabilisation carried on by RENAMO, however, eventually affected Mozambique's capacity to export severely.⁵⁴

⁵³ Butters, H., *Zur wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit DDR – Mosambik*, p. 209

⁵⁴ Howell, J., *The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid*, p. 315.

2.2. 1975-1978: Early relations after the independence and the birth of the People's Republic of Mozambique

Right after Mozambique's independence, on 25 June 1975, the GDR recognised the People's Republic of Mozambique⁵⁵ and, vice versa, Mozambique recognised the GDR. The sole German delegation in attendance at the independence celebrations for Mozambique on that day was the one of the German Democratic Republic, led by Bernhard Quandt, member of the SED Central Committee and member of the Council of State, in the presence of guests from over 50 countries.⁵⁶

Naturally, diplomatic relations between the two countries immediately commenced.⁵⁷ Already on 24 May 1975 a communiqué announced the establishing of diplomatic relations with Mozambique right after its independence. As written in the report:

Based on their solid alliance in the anti-imperialist struggle and the long-standing solidarity relations between the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, as well as the effort to promote and deepen this cooperation in the future, the German Democratic Republic and Mozambique will, on the basis of the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, with effect from 25 June 1975, establish diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level.

(Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Staatsverlag der DDR, 1975, vol. 1, p. 604, translated by the author).

Although FRELIMO started to develop complex cooperation measures as soon as political power was taken over, firm commitments by the GDR were only taken after lengthy scrutiny and cautious analysis. During the period of the interim government under Prime Minister Chissano, the GDR sent a delegation that had a friendly exchange of views with FRELIMO President Machel at the GDR embassy in Dar es Salaam. The planning for cooperation was boosted by the GDR when its economic situation worsened in the second half of the 1970s, and connecting its projects in Mozambique with the solutions for upcoming problems of the GDR economy appeared to be the right solution.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1975, vol. 1, p. 605.

⁵⁶ Neues Deutschland, 26 June 1975

⁵⁷ Neues Deutschland, 26 June 1975

⁵⁸ Helmut, M. Die Beziehungen DDR – VR Mosambik zwischen Erwartungen und Wirklichkeit – ein Gespräch, pp. 20-21.

In the same year, on the 13 August, an agreement regarding cooperation in the field of science and technology was signed. Such agreement stipulated that the GDR should admit on its territory citizens of the People's Republic of Mozambique, with the aim of providing vocational training or further education by allowing them to work in companies and institution of the GDR⁵⁹.

In the following year, in 1976, Oskar Fischer, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, made an official state visit to Mozambique on 13 December and on this occasion two agreements were signed; one regarding cooperation in the field of fishing, and the most noteworthy was the Consular Agreement between the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Mozambique, as the GDR and Mozambique wanted to strengthen their relations by regulating and developing their consular relations.⁶⁰

In 1977 the links between the two countries were further strengthened. The first trade agreement between the governments of the GDR and Mozambique was completed on 15 April 1977⁶¹. It was *inter alia* agreed that trade relations should be developed and deepened in accordance with the principles of sovereign equality of states, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual benefit.

The cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique also included culture and propaganda; as already mentioned, East Germany held in high regard cultural activities, especially if they were linked to party propaganda. A perfect example is the Agreement between the State Broadcasting Committee of the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic and Radio Mozambique on cooperation in the field of broadcasting of 24 May 1977. The agreement stipulated that the two countries had to exchange broadcasting material, especially on politics, economics and culture. Programmes such as folk and classical music, work songs and even battle hymns were to be shared. On request, it could also be possible to have Mozambican speakers trained by the *Rundfunk der DDR*, the East German radio organisation⁶².

⁵⁹ Archiv des Ministerium für Auswertigen Angelegenheiten der DDR.

⁶⁰ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1976, vol 1, p. 608.

⁶¹ Archiv des Ministerium für Auswertigen Angelegenheiten der DDR

⁶² Archiv des Ministerium für Auswertigen Angelegenheiten der DDR

In 1977 another official state visit took place, this time in East Berlin, on 12 September, between the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, Willi Stopf, and the head of the party and government delegation of the People's Republic of Mozambique, the Minister Mario da Graca Machungo. Themes of the official conversation were information exchanges between the two about the development of their countries. The fact that the two parties converged in the same political ideas was always emphasised in such official conversations: the fight against imperialism, racism and neo-colonialism. Both representatives would underline they were looking forward to developing further relations and take further steps towards new fields and forms of cooperation.⁶³

The first significant concretization of economic cooperation between the two countries took place as a result of negotiations of a delegation headed by the former Minister for Development and Economic Planning, Marcelino dos Santos, in November 1977 in the GDR. It resulted in the adoption of important agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation, cooperation agreements in selected areas and the creation of a Joint Economic Committee. On 15 November another agreement regarding cooperation in the field of economics, science and technology was signed during the visit of a government delegation of the People's Republic of Mozambique in the German Democratic Republic. In this occasion, support in the training of cadre by the GDR was also offered.⁶⁴

After the Politburo of the SED decided in December 1977 to form the "Politburo Commission for the Coordination of Economic, Cultural, Scientific and Technological Relations with Developing Countries in Africa, Asia and the Arab World", economic cooperation with Mozambique also received the highest political support and economic priority.⁶⁵

In 1978, the *Wirtschaftssauschusses* (Joint Economic Committee) GDR–Mozambique was founded. Each year until 1983 a conference was carried out in order to assess, discuss and organise the cooperation between East Germany and Mozambique. It had many subcommittees for specific areas. The most noteworthy

⁶³ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1977, vol 1, pp. 698-699.

⁶⁴ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1977, vol 1, pp. 699-701.

⁶⁵ See Butters, H., Zur wirtschaftlichen Zusammenarbeit DDR – Mosambik, pp. 201-202.

were foreign trade, scientific and technical cooperation and finance; mining and geology; construction, education and workforce. In particular, the latter was focused towards the diverse support of vocational training and continuing education of Mozambicans in Mozambique and in the GDR, with emphasis on qualifying them for later employment in the enterprises to be built by the GDR in Mozambique, the establishment of vocational training centres in Mozambique and support for elementary school, technical and university education.

On the 10 July 1978, the 1st meeting of the Joint Economic Committee GDR - VR Mozambique took place in Maputo. The GDR and the People's Republic of Mozambique signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the deepening of their cooperation on 10 July 1978 following the successful conclusion of the first meeting of the Joint Economic Committee. It saw a significant increase in the mutual exchange of goods both in 1979 and in the following years. At the same time, the two sides concluded intergovernmental agreements on aviation, maritime traffic and postal and telecommunications services. The GDR agreed to support Mozambique in the development of its mineral deposits as well as in the construction of a lorry assembly plant and a textile combing facility. At the same time, the GDR agreed to provide vocational training for Mozambican workers in their homeland and also in the GDR.⁶⁶

On 2 November 1978 a meeting between Erich Honecker and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano took place in Berlin.⁶⁷ Both interlocutors praised the rapid development and the high level of cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique in various fields. Then the results of the first meeting of the Joint Economic Committee DDR-Mozambique were emphasised, as they gave new impetus to the dynamic and all-round development of economic relations between the two countries. As reported by *Neues Deutschland*, Willi Stoph and Joaquim Chissano reaffirmed the intention of their states to further develop bilateral relations for the benefit of both peoples⁶⁸.

⁶⁶ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1978, vol 1, pp. 700-701.

⁶⁷ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1978, vol 1, pp. 725-726

⁶⁸ Neues Deutschland, 3 November 1978

Shortly thereafter, in February of the following year, the most significant bilateral agreement between East Germany and Mozambique would have been signed, namely the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. It marked a turning point in the relations between the two countries.

2.3. The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Mozambique (24 February 1979): a turning point in the relations between the two countries

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique⁶⁹ can be taken as the most relevant bilateral treaty in the history of their relations. It represented a turning point in the relations between the two states, as allowed their cooperation to become even tighter.

The Treaty was concluded in occasion of Honecker's first tours of Africa in 1979, marking the pinnacle of success of East German involvement in Africa in this period. Basing on article 15, the Treaty was supposed to have duration of 20 years. During his tour through the African continent, Honecker concluded other twenty-year Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation, namely with Angola and Ethiopia. One East German report published shortly after the February tour, portrayed the first Honecker mission as a high point in the history of the foreign policy of the German Democratic Republic. It especially praised the GDR African policy, since it impressively reinforced the bonds of solidarity between the GDR and those peoples of the African continent struggling for their national and social liberation.⁷⁰ Honecker's 1979 mission to Africa was regarded as the culmination of assiduously cultivated relations stretching over several years, including pre-independence wars of liberation, especially in the case of Mozambique and FRELIMO.

On 28 June 1979, addressing the *Volkskammer*, Fischer referred to the GDR treaties with Mozambique emphasising the fact that the cooperation was based on

⁶⁹ See pp. 121-124 of the Appendix for the full original text of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

⁷⁰ Willerding, K., "Zur Afrikapolitik der DDR", in *Deutsche Aussenpolitik*, vol. 24, 8 (1979), p. 5.

proletarian internationalism and Marxism Leninism. Such principles, broader speaking, reflected part of that policy agreed during the session of the Political Consultative Committee of the WTO in Moscow in November 1978. At the session, the Soviet bloc was urged to develop relations with ‘states of socialist orientation’ in the Third World.⁷¹ One West German analyst was prompted to assert that the GDR had come to regard itself as a ‘pacemaker’ [*Schrittmacher*] of the world revolutionary process by the side of the Soviet Union.⁷²

By reading the Preamble of the Treaty one could easily understand what were the intentions of both sides by concluding such an agreement:

The German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Mozambique, in view of the fraternal friendship and cooperation between their parties and peoples, already forged during the armed liberation struggle of the Mozambican people, based on Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism;

determined to contribute to the creation of favourable conditions for the continuation of the revolutionary process in the world;

guided by the desire, with the further deepening of fraternal friendship and cooperation between the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Mozambique, to contribute to the consolidation of the natural anti-imperialist alliance between the socialist states and the national liberation movements, as well as to the further unity of all to provide peace, democracy and social progress to the struggling forces;

filled with the ideals of the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid;

determined to contribute to the consolidation of the peace and security of all peoples;

willing to further develop the social and economic advances of both countries and to support each other;

reaffirming its loyalty to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

have decided to sign this agreement of friendship and cooperation [...].

(Gesetzblatt der DDR, Teil II, 1979, nr. 4, p. 60. Translated by the author, see p. 121 of Appendix for the original version).

As one can see, the natural anti-imperialistic alliance between the socialist states and the national liberation movement is rather stressed, together with the aim of further the ‘revolutionary process in the world’. It can therefore be argued that the

⁷¹ *Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, 1979, vol. 1, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, pp. 489-91.

⁷² L. of Menar, *Die DDR als Schrittmacher im weltrevolutionären Prozeß. Zur Honecker-Visite in Äthiopien und im Südjemen*. In *Deutschland Archiv* 1/1980, p. 41.

contracting parties were convinced that the unity between socialist states would have helped win the fight against capitalism.

The Treaty called for cooperation in numerous fields such as science and technology, politics and culture. Particularly stressed were economic relations, industrial cooperation and trade, cooperation in the field of telecommunications, and the training of Mozambican workers. Moreover, in Article 2 it was set out that economic relations were to be realised on the base of mutual advantages and the interests of both countries.

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation also contained Articles on military cooperation. Article 5 provided for military cooperation with the aim of strengthening the defence capabilities of the two states. Furthermore, according to Article 10, should a situation arise which was threatening or violating peace, both states should immediately contact one another in order to harmonise and coordinate their positions regarding the elimination of the looming danger or the restoration of peace:

Art. 10: In the event of a situation that might threaten or violate peace, the High Contracting Parties will immediately contact each other to coordinate their positions to eliminate the threat or to restore peace.

(Translated by the author, see p. 123 of Appendix for the original version)

In accordance with Article 5, a Protocol of Military cooperation was agreed on May 1979 in the occasion of the visit of the officiating Minister of National Defence of Mozambique, Armando Emilio Guebuza, in East Berlin.⁷³ However, it must be noted that the published military clauses in such treaties between the GDR and individual African states promised by no means a definite military commitment of troops in the event of conflict. In fact, an extension of the applicability of the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine to the African continent in the name of socialist internationalism was unlikely to happen⁷⁴. In short, the Brezhnev Doctrine could be summarised as follows, quoting the speech of Brezhnev himself in Warsaw on November 12, 1968:

⁷³ *Neues Deutschland*, 28 May 1979.

⁷⁴ Winrow, *The Foreign Policy of GDR in Africa*, p. 138.

When external and internal forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a given socialist country in the direction of restoration of the capitalist system, when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country—a threat to the security of the socialist commonwealth as a whole—this is no longer merely a problem for that country's people, but a common problem, the concern of all socialist countries.

This Treaty can be taken as a further proof supporting the fact that the relations between Mozambique and the GDR were tighter than the ones with any other African state. For instance, Western analysts have noted the omission of the clause concerned with military cooperation in treaties of friendship and cooperation with other African states, in contrast to the GDR-Mozambique Treaty (Art. 5). Similarly, Articles 9 and the already quoted Article 10 stressed the harmonising of foreign policy actions, which underpinned a close relationship between the two states:

Art. 9: The High Contracting Parties will exchange information and opinions and hold consultations at various levels to deepen and widen their cooperation, coordinate foreign policy activities and discuss international issues of mutual interest to both sides.

(Translated by the author, see p. 123 of Appendix for the original version)

East Germany concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the former Portuguese colony Angola as well, but such harmonising was not present in the Treaty, which supports the argument that the GDR had developed closer relations with Mozambique.

Basing on a Joint Communiqué, on the wave of the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation other agreements were signed, including a party agreement between the SED and FRELIMO for the years 1979-1980, and a programme on long-term on economic cooperation up to 1990. This programme was the first of its kind concluded by the GDR with an African state⁷⁵.

2.4. Relations between the years 1980-1990: civil war in Mozambique and the German reunification

After the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty was ratified, the relations between the GDR and Mozambique flourished. In the first half of 1980s, many official visits

⁷⁵ DDR-Komitee für die Kampfdekade gegen Rassismus und Rassendiskriminierung, *Gegen Rassismus, Apartheid und Kolonialismus*, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1978, p. 260 for the text of the Joint Communiqué on Honecker's visit to Mozambique.

took place; in the Documents of GDR foreign policy and in the daily newspaper *Neues Deutschland* the friendly and collaborative atmosphere between the representatives of the two countries during such official visits is always emphasised.

Hereunder a table showing all the visits between the representatives of GDR and Mozambique, both in the GDR and in Mozambique, in the years 1980-1985:

Date	Place	Representatives
21 August 1980	East Germany	Erich Honecker and Minister for National Defence of Mozambique Alberto Joaquim Chipande
17-20 September 1980	East Germany	Erich Honecker and President of FRELIMO and of Mozambique Samora Machel
23 October 1980	East Germany	Erich Honecker and Member of the Council of Ministers Sergio Vieira
24 October 1980	East Germany	Minister for Foreign Affairs of the GDR Oskar Fischer and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano
30 October 1980	East Germany	Minister of National Defence of the GDR Heinz Hoffmann and Minister of National Defence Alberto Joaquim Chipande
29 May 1981	Mozambique	Head of the Free German Trade Union Federation Harry Tisch and President of FRELIMO and of Mozambique Samora Machel
9 June 1981	Mozambique	Member of the Central Committee of SED Gerhard Schürer and President of FRELIMO and of Mozambique Samora Machel
25 September 1981	East Germany	Chairman of the Council of Ministers Willi Stoph and Minister in the President's Office José Oscar Monteiro
12 November 1981	East Germany	First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Alfred Neumann and Minister of Port and Land Transport Luis Maria Alcantara Santos
11 January 1982	East Germany	Politburo Member and Secretary of the Central Committee of SED Paul Verner and Minister to the President of Mozambique José Oscar Monteiro
6 April 1982	East Germany	Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR and Chairman of the State Planning Commission Gerhard Schürer and National Director for Planning of the National Planning Commission Marcelo Andrade

16 April 1982	Mozambique	Delegation of the Volkskammer of the GDR and its President Horst Sindermann and Marcelino dos Santos.
27 May 1982	East Germany	Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR and Chairman of the State Planning Commission Gerhard Schürer and Secretary of the Central Economic Committee Marcelino dos Santos
3-4 March 1983	East Germany	Erich Honecker and Samora Machel
1 September 1983	East Germany	Member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Central Committee of SED Günter Mittag and Member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Central Committee of FRELIMO Marcelino dos Santos
20 September 1983	East Germany	First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Werner Krolikowski and Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management Júlio Zamith Carilho
3 February 1984	Mozambique	President of FRELIMO and of Mozambique Samora Machel and Ministry of Ore mining industry, metallurgy and potash of the GDR Kurt Singhuber
21 May 1984	East Germany	Chairman of the Council of Ministers Willi Stoph and Minister of Education and Culture of Mozambique Graça Machel
26 October 1984	East Germany	First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers Werner Krolikowski and Secretary of State for Labor Aguiar Real Mazula
26 June 1985	Mozambique	Party and government delegation of the GDR under the direction of Herbert Weiz, member of the Central Committee of the SED and deputy of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, Minister of Science and Technology and President of Mozambique and FRELIMO Samora Machel
11 September 1985	East Germany	Chairman of the Council of Ministers Willi Stoph and Minister of Justice of Mozambique Ussumane Aly Dauto
14 October 1985	East Germany	Delegations of the GDR and the Mozambique headed by the candidate of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the SED Gehrard Schürer, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the GDR and Chairman of the State Planning Commission, and the Member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee of the FRELIMO party Marcelino dos Santos

Table 1: Visits between the representatives of GDR and Mozambique in the years 1980-1985. Source: Dokuments zur Außenpolitik der DDR, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR 1980-1985.

On 20 September 1980, for instance, on the occasion of the official friendly visit of the President of the FRELIMO Party and President of the People's Republic of Mozambique Machel in the German Democratic Republic, a Joint Declaration was signed. Upon invitation of Honecker, Machel, attended an official friendly visit to GDR from 17 to 20 September 1980.

During the meeting, according to the *Archiv des Staatsrates der DDR*, the representatives of both countries noted with 'great satisfaction' that the relations between the GDR and the Republic of Mozambique were developing excellently in accordance with their goals and policies. They also agreed to actively further develop these relationships and, in particular, to continue the lively exchange of experiences and opinions. It was decided that Both sides would develop friendly contacts and links between their Parliaments and between their cities; between the youth organisations, trade union and women's associations, in the field of sport, arts, culture and science; and within the framework of Joint Economic Committee GDR–Mozambique. Both sides reaffirmed their 'firm determination' to resolutely pursue and expand the fraternal cooperation that underlies the interests of both peoples. To this end, during the official friendship visit, Machel signed various agreements and protocols in the GDR. Namely: the agreement on further cooperation between the SED and the FRELIMO party for the years 1981 to 1985; the Protocol to deepen the economic and scientific-technical cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique, discussed during the friendly visit of the President of the FRELIMO Party and President of the People's Republic of Mozambique; the Protocol between the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the coordination of important tasks of the GDR and Mozambique linked to the economic plans for the period 1981 to 1985; the Protocol between the Central Council of Free German Youth (FDJ) and the National Coordinating Council of the Organisation of Youth of Mozambique (OJM) on cooperation with the aim to support the Moatize coal program in Mozambique; the agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Industry of the

GDR and the Ministry of Agriculture of Mozambique on the deepening of mutual cooperation in those fields.⁷⁶

In the second half of 1980s, the work on some projects, including the state farms, the Mocuba textile factory, and the Moatize railway, had to be stopped due to military attacks to infrastructures by RENAMO and the consequent worsening of economic conditions⁷⁷. RENAMO guerrilla activity was still going on, and East German technician in Mozambique were targeted by its forces. In July 1984 the East German Embassy in Maputo ordered the withdrawal of its nationals working in Inhambane's gas fields, following a land mine incident in Macovane in which two Germans were killed.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, German experts continued to be recruited for other assignments. For instance, in 1988 the GDR Government agreed to send 50 specialists in Mozambique for a three-years period, and other 10 for a six-months period.⁷⁹ East Germany also continued rendering political support to FRELIMO, providing advisors to the Prime Minister from 1986 to 1987 and from September 1989 till November 1991. Their tasks were the drafting of documents and the discussing of general issues, as well as formulating proposals aimed at improving the Mozambican state apparatus and solving economic problems of the country.

The collapse of Eastern Europe in 1989 marked the virtual end of socialist aid to the developing world. The end of the GDR in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in October 1990 left big question marks over the future of assistance development. After the formal dissolution of the state in November of that year, new organisational arrangements were rapidly made to deal with the aid legacy. With the discrediting of the SED and its associated bodies, many of those political forces who had formerly been marginalised and repressed in the policy process during the Cold War years began to play a more prominent role. The GDR's interim Ministry for Economic Cooperation was disbanded right after the reunification and the aid programme came fully under the jurisdiction of the FRG's Ministry of Economic Cooperation.

⁷⁶ Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1980, vol 1, pp. 692-696 und Archiv des Staates der DDR.

⁷⁷ Howell, J., *The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid*, p. 319.

⁷⁸ Cabrita, J. M., *Mozambique, the Tortuous Road to Democracy*, London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2000, p. 227.

⁷⁹ Article 1, Protokoll zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Volksrepublik Moçambique über die wissenschaftlich-technische Zusammenarbeit für den 2-Jahres Zeitraum 1988 und 1989.

Therefore, from then onwards only those projects that were compliant to and compatible with the development principles of the former West Germany were to be continued.

Quite problematic was the fact that there was no central coordination or monitoring of GDR aid, and a comprehensive assessment only became possible in the interim years of 1989 and 1990, period in which fast decisions had to be made about the desirability and the convenience of continuing various projects⁸⁰.

The newly reunited Germany faced the immediate problem of dealing with 200 cooperation and intergovernmental agreements with 60 developing countries. As many as 11 Free German Youth Brigades and 1,200 experts were still overseas⁸¹. In addition, there were around 10,000 students and trainees enrolled in long-term courses, as well as 72,000 foreign workers in East German factories⁸². Undoubtedly, with the rapid pace of reunification, there was little time for in-depth analyses or plans to solve such situations in the best and most effective way. In chapter 6 an overview on the situation of Mozambican in East Germany after the reunification will be presented.

From October 1990 the DAZ assumed responsibility for the on-going German assistance in Mozambique, where the rapid evacuation of experts had left the country with an immediate shortage in some key areas. Further support for the engineering and forestry faculties at the University of Maputo was agreed, together with support of experts to assist the banking and coal sectors, the national and provincial planning commissions on education, the fishery school in Matola on marine biology, and the completion of water supply to Mocuba textile factory⁸³.

However, the termination of contracts of the GDR experts in mid-1991 heralded the end of technical assistance to Mozambique.

⁸⁰ Howell, J., *The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid*, p. 319

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 320.

⁸² Of these foreign workers, 55,000 were Vietnamese, 12,000 Mozambicans, 4,000 Cubans, and 1,000 Angolans. 'Rechenschaftsbericht der Länderabteilung', M.W.Z., Berlin, 2 October 1990, P. 37.

⁸³ Howell, J., *The End of an Era: The Rise and Fall of G.D.R. Aid*, p. 325

3. Mozambican contract workers in East Germany

In February 1979 the GDR and the Mozambican Ministry of Labour signed an agreement for the employment and training of Mozambican workers in East German factories. As examined later in this chapter, this project should have helped East Germany alleviate its labour shortage, while providing Mozambique with an opportunity for developing industrial skills. Furthermore, such training would have helped foster the emergence of a working-class in the long run, which was regarded as an essential step forward in the construction and maintenance of a new socialist society.

The entry of foreigners into the territory of the GDR was regarded as an extreme exception for the local German population as well as for the leadership of the ruling state party, given the fact that the internal mobility in the GDR and the migration to its territory were, except for the Soviet troops, comparatively low over its forty-year existence. In contrast, the migration from the GDR, despite considerable fluctuations, was a mass phenomenon, and was a major problem for East German economy.

This chapter therefore aims to track the phenomenon of the recruitment of Mozambican people in the German Democratic Republic from 1979, when the guest worker agreement was signed, to the fall of the GDR in 1989. The majority of Mozambican people that went to the GDR were labour migrants, the so-called *Vertragsarbeiter* (contract workers).

3.1. Historical, economic and political premises for the development of the contract workers program between the GDR and Mozambique

3.1.1. East German economic situation prior the realisation of the contract workers program between the GDR and Mozambique

With no doubt the division of Germany in two states in 1949 was a major catalyst for the guest-worker programs since 1950s, both in the Federal Republic of Germany and in the German Democratic Republic. During the “Economic Miracle” years, in West Germany the labour shortage was most acute in those areas bordering on the East, areas where the militarisation and the political uncertainty scattered thousands of families into the zones under the influence of the Allied forces.⁸⁴ East Germany had labour shortage problems as well, but this shortage was quite widespread throughout the whole state. The GDR was losing millions of its citizens to the West, and even 10 years after the Berlin Wall was erected it continued suffering crippling labour droughts. Each month, East Germany was losing between 10,000 and 20,000 of its most able-bodied residents to the West’s open door policy, until the “antifascist border wall” was constructed on August 13, 1961.⁸⁵ The long-term effects of mass exodus over the zone borders, together with sluggish birth rates eventually left East Germany with labour shortage.

In 1963 the GDR signed its first guest-worker contract with Poland. In the following years many other socialist countries agreed to send workers in East Germany. In 1967, Hungary sent 13,000 workers, and additional contingents followed from Algeria (1974), Cuba, (1975 and 1978) and of course Mozambique (1979). The contract workers that arrived in East Germany came mainly from socialist and communist countries, which were already allied with the Soviets; the SED used its guest-worker program to build international solidarity among fellow communist governments.

The advent of the agreement with Mozambique is particularly interesting. In November 1977, the government office responsible for employment and wages in the

⁸⁴ Göktürk, D. et al., editors. “Our socialist friends. Foreigners in East Germany” in *Germany in transit. Nation and migration, 1955-2005*, University of California Press, London, 2007, p. 67.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

GDR rejected the placement of untrained Mozambican workers as politically intolerable. Nonetheless, in early 1979, this policy expired, and 2,000 Mozambican could soon accept “paid employment in socialist factories”. Mozambique’s fiscal debt to the GDR must have played a role in this policy change in the opinion of some authors. According to the agreement, the debt was supposed to be amortised through the partial remuneration of the contract workers⁸⁶.

After the building of the Berlin Wall on August 13, 1961, not only were West Germany and East Germany virtually divided, but also their labour markets. This initially brought to a state of confusion and disorder, in particular in the cities close to the border and, of course, in Berlin. This brought to labour shortage in West Berlin, as it was already pointed out in an internal report of the Berlin Senate of October 18, 1960, where it was reported that if East German frontier workers would have no longer been able to work in West Germany, a demand of more than 36,000 workers would have remained.⁸⁷

The frontier workers who lived in the East and worked in the West were available to the economy of the GDR after the construction of the Berlin Wall. But scarcely a decade later, there was such a great need for workers in both parts of Germany that foreigners had to be recruited in the GDR and in the Federal Republic.⁸⁸

In fact, the frontier workers did not cover the demand of labour force in the labour market, for many reasons. Firstly, GDR economy was characterised by low labour productivity; a larger amount of labour was therefore needed. Secondly, missing or inadequate modern technologies required a labour-intensive production process per se.

Hence, an increasing greater number of African workers arrived in East Germany from that time on. Since the mid-1970s, some hundreds of contract workers from the African continent, especially from Mozambique, went to the GDR. The number of foreign workers employed in the GDR economy rose steadily. In January 1985,

⁸⁶ Göktürk, D., “Our socialist friends. Foreigners in East Germany”, p. 99.

⁸⁷ See Reichhardt, H. J. et al., *Chronik der Jahre 1959-1960*, ed. on behalf of the Senate of Berlin, Berlin, 1978.

⁸⁸ Van der Heyden, U., “Zu den Hintergründen und dem Verlauf des Einsatzes mosambikanischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft” in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe, Verlauf, Folgen*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2014, p. 50.

85,000 foreign citizens were already working in the GDR.⁸⁹ In 1987, the number of foreigners living in the GDR had already increased to about 95,400 people.⁹⁰ At this time, about 7,800 Mozambican workers lived in East Germany. According to the GDR Interior Ministry, by the end of 1989 about 15,500 Mozambicans (8.1 per cent of foreigners in the GDR) were living in the country.⁹¹

3.1.2. A matter of propaganda: contract workers as ‘socialist friends’

As almost every other activity carried out in the GDR, the recruitment of contract workers served also largely propagandistic purposes for the East German government. Contract workers in the GDR represented an extension of socialist solidarity, upon which the state was established. Universal solidarity among workers provided the ideological background for the contract workers program to be developed. The GDR attempted to present the contract workers program as a socialist exercise in solidarity through the instrument of political rhetoric. The program was presented as a good chance for workers from Third World countries to go to the GDR and work or attend school before returning to their countries of origin, culturally enriched with qualifications and know-how.

Foreign workers and students had been going to the GDR since the 1960s, where there was always a labour shortage despite the building of the Berlin Wall. The state signed a short term Qualification Agreements with socialist states. Official propaganda represented the presence of foreign workers in the ‘Worker and Farmer State’ as ‘workforce cooperation’ within the framework of socialist economic integration. As long as the GDR was economically superior to the other socialist states, workers would come from those states to build socialism in their homeland after their residence in the GDR. The GDR promoted this cooperation as a kind of solidarity through training, meant to aid other countries’ liberation movements as well as younger nation-states.

⁸⁹ See Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik: Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der DDR, Hauptabteilung II, nr. 29526, p. 20.

⁹⁰ See Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik: Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der DDR, Hauptabteilung II, nr. 29526, Bl. 65.

⁹¹ See *ibidem*.

Continuing on the same policy line against capitalism and neo-colonialism and basically against West Germany, the SED sought to distinguish its ‘socialist friends’ from capitalist West Germany’s guest workers. In 1954, during the first ceremonial embrace of North Korean orphan children in the GDR, the party framed its immigration policy in terms of a visionary struggle against the ‘American aggressor’ and its West German accomplices. This widely heralded magnanimity toward refugees should serve as a potent symbol of East Germany’s commitment to human rights and the Geneva Convention. The first image of the guest worker in West Germany was that of a single, able-bodied person. In contrast, the first public images of non-Soviet foreigners in East Germany were war-ravaged children and adolescents. The press hailed the residence halls that housed refugees, children, and contract workers, equipped with all the amenities necessary for a thriving collective. First East German publicised reports on its foreigner residents were exalting the newly arrived guests for their patriotic bond to their homeland. Their “courageous gesture of faith” in the new socialist German state and their “confidence in the GDR’s unique capacity to provide less-developed socialist societies with expert medical care, technical training and financial subsidy” were also emphasised⁹². The GDR press showcased East German role as an “industrial leader and global ‘outpost of peace’ for the future of socialism”.⁹³ On the other hand, contract workers were depicted as ambassadors. Some reports even maintained that the newly arrived workers could sing the GDR anthem in German, as a “gesture of spontaneous praise for their hosts”⁹⁴.

An interesting article from *Die Zeit* of August 18, 1973, reports how the contract workers were considered in East Germany, and, in contrast, how they were represented in Western countries:

Last year, in the GDR magazine *Wirtschaft*, Jozsef Rozsa, a high-ranking administrator of the Labour Ministry of the People’s Republic of Hungary, was asked, “What is the fundamental difference between the guest-worker system in capitalist countries and organised labour-power cooperation in socialist countries?” He got a quick and ready answer: “The difference is essentially that in capitalism the underdevelopment of various countries necessitates labour migration. In socialist countries, there is no such pressure. These countries – Hungary, for example – can guarantee employment for all citizens of working

⁹² Göktürk, D., “Our socialist friends. Foreigners in East Germany” p. 68.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

age. Socialist governments seek out opportunities for international cooperation so that certain workers may acquire further training in their field and supplementary experience in dealing with modern technology. Furthermore, coming to a new country lets workers learn a new language and earn about life in another socialist partner country”.[...]

These people are not merely supposed to acquire greater knowledge of their profession, the German language, the country and its people; they are expected to put their labour power at the disposal of the GDR. The population of the GDR is, after all, ageing faster than its birth-rate is growing. Furthermore, the country is not growing as quickly as an aspiring industrial nation ought to. Another problem is that the GDR's workers are very competent and are constantly improving their qualifications; thus, a few are willing to perform unskilled labour. It is thus no coincidence that many of the working guests are employed in service industries as cooks and waiters, maids and sales clerks. Most, however, work in factories and obtain continuous training there. Of course, these guest workers are not coming to their socialist brother country only for professional development and the beautiful German language. [...] Foreigners working in the GDR are between 18 and 25 years old, and their contracts last two to three years. They enjoy parity with their German counterparts in salary and social benefits.

(Menges, M., “In the GDR, They're Called Friends”, *Die Zeit*, Aug. 18, 1973, in *Germany in Transit: Nation and Migration, 1955-2005*, translated by David Gramling, p. 76)

One could therefore argue, that the contract workers were considered and depicted as ‘socialist friends’ in East Germany, but Western authorities were rather sceptical, since they constantly emphasised the fact contract workers were actually being ‘exploited’ by GDR's companies. However, in the following paragraphs it will be self-evident that, normally, Mozambican contract workers were given the chance to obtain qualifications and to be employed in qualified works. Their personal experiences will be also taken into consideration.

3.1.3. Serving the interests of both nations. Mutual advantages in carrying out the contract workers program

The GDR was ready to help by offering contract work. Of course, this offer was also an end in itself; workforce in the GDR was needed. In any case, the offer from the Mozambican side to send young people to the GDR came just at the right time.

During the colonial period, young Mozambicans were constantly migrating to work in the mines of South Africa, on plantations and in the industrial enterprises of apartheid states. When Mozambique became independent in 1975, migratory flows towards those countries almost stopped. Hence, the Mozambican labour market had suddenly surplus labour⁹⁵. Therefore, the intergovernmental agreement with the GDR

⁹⁵ Ahmed, F., “Internationale Solidarität oder Ausbeutung? Zur Lage der mosambikanischen VertragsarbeitnehmerInnen der Ex-DDR vor und nach der Wende”, in *Schwarz-Weiße Zeiten*.

would have relieved the market from the steadily rising unemployment. In turn, as already mentioned, the labour demand in the GDR could not be satisfied. Some authors highlighted that the appearance of pure brotherhood was actually deceiving. For instance, Ahmed Fahrah argued that the importation of cheap labour from the former colonized countries into an industrialized country, whether its socialist or capitalist form of society, represents a mere economic calculation. Therefore, Mozambican workers would have enabled the GDR to meet the basic needs of its people and increase its export capacity without investing in new and more efficient technologies⁹⁶. However, the interviewed Mozambican workers did not mention such treatment; on the contrary, they were actually given the chances the agreement provided for.

Work and training, “*Arbeit und Ausbildung*”, was the motto of the program, which was agreed by both sides. Trained skilled workers would have taken over production in the young country in the south-east of Africa, be it in mining, in the textile industry or in other areas, in order to fight underdevelopment and poverty in the future.

Such training program, however, had a crucial weakness; the long-term goal was to educate and train workers who would obtain qualifications and know how but, in fact, the devastation of the civil war prevented the implementation of contractually regulated economic projects and the implementation of the plans to build a high-performance industry in Mozambique, for which skilled workers were needed. Towards the end of the 1980s, it became clear that skilled workers were no longer needed to this extent, at least in the foreseeable future. The Mozambican side, however, kept attaching great importance to sending young people to Europe, to the GDR since Mozambique was increasingly insecure, unsettled by a series of raids further north by the political insurgent group RENAMO. As a result, young people did not have many chances in their country; hence the best option for them was to go to work in the GDR. And so it happened that in the last three to four years of the

AusländerInnen in Ostdeutschland vor und nach der Wende. Erfahrungen der Vertragsarbeiter aus Mosambik, Informationszentrum Afrika e.V, Bremen, 1993, p. 35.

⁹⁶ See Ibid. p. 36.

existence of the GDR, young people entered the GDR to be employed primarily in the production process.⁹⁷

3.2. How was the contract workers program between the GDR and Mozambique organised

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the GDR and the People's Republic of Mozambique signed on 24 February 1979 was the prelude to the subsequent moving stories of Mozambican contract workers in the GDR. The basis for the employment of the Mozambican contract workers in the GDR was the Agreement between the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises of the German Democratic Republic.

Two distinct stages in the employment of Mozambican contract workers have been identified⁹⁸. The first goes from 1979 to 1985. During these years, the workers who were sent to the GDR were carefully selected from all over the country. The role of their occupational qualification was not to be underestimated in the first period the implementation of the intergovernmental agreement. Their training in East Germany was well-organised: it should have lasted up to three to four years. Thereafter, in the period between 1985 and 1989, the GDR's critical need for extra labour led to an increase in recruitment with less careful selection, while Mozambique kept sending an increasing number of labour force. Hence, even workers with lower qualification were accepted. Due to the increasingly difficult economic situation of the GDR, the implementation of the agreements was more geared towards economic needs, while Mozambique wanted to achieve a relief of its labour markets and, as argued by a partial debt relief of their obligations to their lender.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Van der Heyden, U., et al., *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergrunde, Verlauf, Folgen*, p. 15.

⁹⁸ See Mulder, A., Report on the Reintegration of Mozambican Workers from the Ex- GDR', Weltfriedensdienst, Berlin, August 1991, p. 5, and Schonmeier H. W., "Prüfung der Möglichkeiten eines Fachkräfteprogramms Mosambik", in Studie im Auftrag der IOM (Saarbrücken), March 1991, p. 11.

⁹⁹ See Marburger, H., et al., "Situation der Vertragsarbeitnehmer der ehemaligen DDR vor und nach der Wende", in: Marburger, H., „Und wir haben unseren Beitrag zur Volkswirtschaft geleistet“.

3.2.1. General organisational aspects: selection and employment of Mozambican contract workers and conformity controls in GDR's companies

The organisational aspects and relative tasks connected with the stay and the employment of Mozambican contract workers in the GDR were diverse, but also extremely interesting. For instance, the Ministry of Labour coordinated aspects such as the number of the workers who should have been employed, in which company and at what time¹⁰⁰. The Ministry of Labour would even designate the airline company the contract workers should have been transported with. The on-going cooperation process continuously brought new insights, which in turn had to be incorporated into the existing arrangements. East Germany and Mozambique therefore agreed on requiring that relevant arrangements had to be set out in annual protocols that were then signed by both states¹⁰¹. This resulted in a process of concretisation and completion of the agreement guidelines through the years.

The contract workers were recruited from all the provinces of Mozambique. Before being selected, they had to undergo an examination, which initially took place in Maputo, but eventually the candidates could be examined in their respective provinces. Firstly, a mixed medical team, made up by experts from the GDR and local doctors, carried out a medical check-up. The contract workers had to be proven fit for labour in order to be eligible to be employed in enterprises of the GDR. Another requirement to be satisfied in order to be eligible was to have at least a fourth-grade primary education level. The selected Mozambicans were then accompanied to Maputo's airport where the Ministry of Labour of Mozambique and the SAL representative would formally say goodbye to them. Once landed in the GDR, they would then again be greeted by the Representatives of the Ministry of Labour of Mozambique and by SAL representative at the airport Berlin-Schönefeld.¹⁰² Most of these contract workers had been living in small villages for

Eine aktuelle Bestandsaufnahme der Situation der Vertragsarbeitnehmer der ehemaligen DDR vor und nach der Wende, Iko-Verlag, Berlin, 1993, p.9.

¹⁰⁰ Straßburg, R., "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen" in *Mozambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, p. 99

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

their whole lives, they had never or rarely travelled and almost all of them had never boarded a plane before this trip.

The SAL (*Staatssekretariat für Arbeit und Löhne der DDR*, the supreme state authority for the control of labour, pay and social policy, which existed in this form between 1972-89) was the main State body in the implementation of what the agreement provided for. Its main task was organising all that operation meant to realise the program set out in the agreement, task that was rather complicated, since the public had limited access to the content of the agreement. Besides this preparatory scenario, the real focus of the work of the SAL was controlling that the employment of the Mozambican contract workers in the factories was planned and carried out in compliance with the agreement. Control consultations were also carried out; besides the SAL, the competent ministry of the respective enterprise, the council of the district in which enterprise was settled, and of course the foreign agreement partner were taking part. Representatives of the board of the Free German Trade Union Confederation (*Freien Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes*, FDGB) and those of the FDGB district board often took part in deliberations and inspections.

The control activities required appropriate specifications. These specifications were drafted by the SAL in the form of guidelines, and then agreed with the councils of the districts and the relative ministries, and the resulting document was given to the companies as action documents. Such policy paper was a framework directive that applied to all contract workers coming from a wide range of employment nations. This framework guideline was then revised if, for example, changes from the expiry process resulted necessary or new specifications had to be added for the respective country of assignment.¹⁰³

As far as regulations directly concerned the foreign workers, these had to be agreed and signed with the foreign partner. In these papers, little was left unconsidered and unregulated in terms of the company's compliance with the agreement and the working life of the Mozambican. These papers were then continuously adapted to current conditions and needs. In preparation for a control consultation, the companies were required to send a control report to the SAL, the relevant ministry and the county council in accordance with these guidelines. This

¹⁰³ Straßburg, R., "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen", p.101.

report had to be drafted in preparation for the operation by the SAL and the Ministry of Trade and which was aimed at fulfilling the conditions of the agreement. The inspections took place on the basis of the report and the operational concept submitted by the company. Then an on-site inspection would have taken place directly in the company. As mentioned earlier, the participants included the Ministry of Labour of Mozambique, the SAL, the Ministry of Education and the County Council. On the part of the company participated the Director of Operations, the Party Secretary, the President of the Union, the FDJ Secretary, the Mozambican group leaders and the Mozambican representatives of the unions and youth organisations. It should be mentioned that in some companies these control consultations brought to clashes, as the management had its own views and ideas on the matter; sometimes this resulted in the refusal to accept the terms of the agreement for the employment of Mozambican workers, who were seen as mere productive forces. However, if the operation did not or could not fully comply with the terms of the agreement, it was stopped and the Mozambican workers transferred in another company where the conditions of the agreement could be fulfilled.¹⁰⁴

At this point, it seems reasonable shedding light on one of the most critical aspects of the *Vertragsarbeiter* program, namely the fact that Mozambican contract workers would only be employed in unskilled jobs. This was true at the beginning of the employment of the Mozambican labour force, as qualified work requires qualification. During this qualification phase, they were therefore entrusted with works that were very easy and sometimes dirty. This triggered some protests. Once having made some experiences and increased their theoretical and practical qualifications, the contract workers were then entrusted with more qualified tasks.

Usually, after this period of ‘training’ no complaints arose on this problem. That does not mean, however, that all Mozambican workers were engaged in skilled work. Moreover, especially in the last years of employment starting in 1988, a considerably larger number of Mozambican workers arrived in the GDR compared to the previous years. In order to send such an increasing number of workforces in the GDR, one of the terms and conditions of the agreement was undermined by Mozambique, namely

¹⁰⁴ Straßburg, R., “Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen”, p. 105

the minimum requirement of four-grade primary education¹⁰⁵. This in turn meant that without such minimum qualification, employing Mozambican workers in qualified works was no longer possible on the scale as before.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1984-0418-302
Foto: Sindermann, Jürgen | 18. April 1984

Figure 1: Rostock, 18.4.1984, apprentices from Mozambique. These young Mozambicans were undertaking several years of specialized training in various professions related to deep-sea fishing from the *VEB Fischfang Rostock*. Source: Bundesarchiv Bild 183-1984-0418-302

The transfer payment system is a relevant aspect of the Mozambican contract workers program, and therefore should not go unmentioned. The contract workers received wages and bonuses in accordance with the labour law provisions of the GDR. At the beginning, up to 25 per cent of this could be transferred to Mozambique, but from 1986 onwards the Mozambican contract workers were obliged to transfer 60 per cent of their monthly net wages exceeding 350, - Mark to Mozambique. In addition, 50 per cent of their contributions to East German compulsory social insurance and the accident surcharge were transferred by the GDR to Mozambique. These funds served to adjust Mozambique's existing loan payment obligations. Such transfer system was a consequence of the non-conforming loan

¹⁰⁵ Straßburg, R., “Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen”, p. 106

repayment by the People's Republic of Mozambique and should therefore help stabilize the increasingly worsening economic situation of the GDR¹⁰⁶. Even today, many of these former contract workers are struggling to get their transferred funds. According to official information, this problem has already been resolved. According to unofficial information, there are still a few specific isolated cases that are not yet clear.

The employment of Mozambican contract workers was stable until the late 1980s. As already mentioned, a larger number of Mozambican working people arrived in the GDR during the last years of the program, namely from 1988 onwards. The previous maximum had been the entry of 3,203 Mozambican workers in 1987; this number doubled in 1988 with the entry of 6,464 Mozambican women and men.¹⁰⁷ Such situation inevitably led to an increased control effort by the competent authorities, but this effort was not sufficient to control the totality of over 200 companies, in which thousands of Mozambican was working. Therefore, the authorities realised too late, or in some cases didn't realise at all, that in some companies the employment did not comply with the agreement conditions.

3.2.2. Organisational and legal aspects in the life of Mozambican contract workers during their stay and employment in the GDR

Since 1979, Mozambican contract workers have been arriving in the GDR every year in groups. They were between 18 and 25 years old. In order to save social follow-up costs, they were brought without their family members. For this they should receive a "separation compensation" of 4 marks per day, which, however, was made dependent on their "work discipline"¹⁰⁸. The Mozambican contract workers were provided a temporary residence permit according to the agreement, so they didn't need to take any effort to obtain such permit, since the GDR aliens law expressly granted a residence permit for reasons of vocational training. The intergovernmental agreements constituted the factual basis of the right of residence

¹⁰⁶ Straßburg, R., "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen", p. 106

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 120.

¹⁰⁸ Ahmed, F., "Internationale Solidarität oder Ausbeutung?" pp. 36-37

of contract workers in the GDR. With the departure from the GDR, the issued residence permit would expire.

The contract workers had the duty to attend German language courses as soon as they had been employed and began their activities in GDR's factories. Linguistic and professional training was moreover granted paid leave throughout the duration of the training period.¹⁰⁹

Travelling to third countries was expressly been excluded in the labour agreement. Despite this restriction, many workers tried, after the expiration of their contract, to obtain an extension of their stay in the GDR. Thus, 20 per cent of the Mozambican contract workers with the "best performance and qualification requirements" was granted a one-year extension of their residence permit, and later on they could be granted a stay in the GDR for up to five years longer. From 1989, the length of stay was extended to a maximum of ten years.¹¹⁰

The Mozambican contract workers struggled to stay in the GDR and the authorities from Maputo repeatedly asked the GDR whether more workers could be admitted in the GDR. This request was noticed in particular by the responsible staff of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR and therefore it was reported to their Minister, that "the People's Republic of Mozambique justified its growing interest in the employment of Mozambican working people in the GDR with the complicated economic situation in their own country".¹¹¹

A premature termination of the employment contract together with the residence permit was possible by mutual agreement of the respective institutions of both states. Otherwise, certain events that would have led to a premature termination of the contract were already set out in the agreement. In the event of a breach of the law in the host country, or if a worker blatantly violated "socialist labour discipline" or if he permanently failed to meet the labour standards, the person concerned could be sent

¹⁰⁹ See Beyer, H., "Entwicklung des Ausländerrechts in der DDR", in: Heßler, Manfred, *Zwischen Nationalstaat und multikultureller Gesellschaft. Einwanderung und Fremdenfeindlichkeit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin, 1993, pp. 211-229.

¹¹⁰ van der Heyden, U., "Zu den Hintergründen und dem Verlauf des Einsatzes mosambikanischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft" in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe, Verlauf, Folgen*, p. 58.

¹¹¹ Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik: Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der DDR, Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe des MfS, nr 4574, Bl. 128

back to Mozambique. Furthermore, apart from criminal cases, a premature termination of the work permit would have taken place only if the ability to work after illness or accident could not be restored "in the foreseeable future", usually after three months.¹¹² In some cases women were subjected to particular restrictions; in the event of pregnancy they had to leave the country or were even asked to have an abortion; a stipulation that, as Ulrich van der Heyden argued, had been included in the contract at the request of the Mozambican side.¹¹³

Part of the earned wages of the contract workers from Mozambique were transferred from the GDR to Maputo, which was then to be paid out to the workers' relatives or themselves upon their return from the Mozambican government. In this way, the debt of Mozambique to the GDR should have been reduced. As noted above, the agreement allowed for the transfer of part of the workers' earnings: 25 per cent of their net income could be remitted to Mozambique after four months of employment, and 40 per cent over M 350 after a further two months. These remittances were in theory to be deployed for the reintegration of the workers upon their return. For the Government in Maputo they represented export earnings to be used for the payment of imports or debts.¹¹⁴ The Mozambican government did not adhere to this definition, and some of its former contract workers had and still have to fight to disburse their transferred funds, more than two decades after they returned from Germany.

¹¹² See Brozinsky-Schwabe, „Die DDR-Bürger um Umgang mit “Fremden”. Versuch einer Bilanz der Voraussetzungen für ein Leben in einer Multikulturellen Welt“, in Kleff, Sanem et. al., editors, *BRD-DDR. Alte und neue Rassismen im Zuge der deutsch-deutschen Einigung*. Frankfurt a.M., 1990, p. 10

¹¹³ Van der Heyden, U., “Zu den Hintergründen und dem Verlauf des Einsatzes mosambikanischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft” in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe, Verlauf, Folgen*, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2014, p. 59.

¹¹⁴ See Stach, A.; Hussain, S., *Ausländer in der DDR. Ein Rückblick*, ed. by. the Foreigners Commissioner of the Senate of Berlin, Berlin, 1994, p. 12.

3.2.2.1. Service Protocol on the residence of noncitizens in the German Democratic Republic. "Protokoll No. 041/77" by the Minister of the Interior and Chief of the German People's Police on December 20, 1976¹¹⁵

Mozambican workers in the GDR, as any other foreign contract worker, had to comply with the rules contained in the Service Protocol on the residence of noncitizens in the German Democratic Republic, or they could be sent back to their respective countries.

The protocol provided as follows.

Permanent residence may be withheld from persons who:

1. Let it be known that they oppose the socialist societal order of the GDR or can be expected not to integrate into the socialistic life of the GDR;
2. Are considered as having a criminal record according to the laws of the GDR or who have been prosecuted abroad for a crime that would be considered an indictable offense in the GDR, or those for whom the character of their felony demonstrates they cannot be integrated into the societal life of the GDR;
3. Do not carry identifying documents and the identity of the person cannot be determined in short order;
4. Are mentally disturbed, incurably ill, or are so ill that the convalescence process requires a longer period of time that can reasonably be accepted, or are drug addicted;
5. Knowingly make false statements in order to obtain residence in the GDR;
6. Live in ambiguous familiar relations;
7. Are, on account of their age or other reasons, incapable of working or are in need of supervision and have no close relatives in the GDR, or whose family in the GDR have denied them assistance and supervision;
8. Are clearly to be seen as asocial elements, and integration into societal relations is not to be expected;

¹¹⁵ Translated version taken from *Germany in Transit: Nation and Migration, 1955-2005*, ed. Deniz Göktürk, David Gramling and Anton Kaes, trans. David Gramling, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, p. 79.

9. Have left behind large financial responsibilities and personal debts and are hoping to evade these by taking up residence in the GDR, or are suspected of seeking residence for personal gain;
10. Are not in possession of work papers or have had no orderly employment in the past due to their own actions, and will most likely not change their attitude toward work once in the GDR;
11. For whom a permanent residence does not appear to be in the interest of state and society;
12. When considerations of foreign affairs appear to compel such action.

3.2.3. Ten years after (1979-1989): outcomes of the program and data about Mozambican workers that were employed in the GDR

After ten years of existence and implementation of the agreement, a summary assessment was made. On the 24th February 1989 a document was drafted by both states, which focused on the results of the program. The following information was retrieved from the mutual assessment about the contract workers program.¹¹⁶

First of all, the document assessed that through the entire realization process, the agreement contributed to the deepening of friendship relations between the working people of the two countries both at work and during leisure time as well. Then, some data regarding the number of Mozambicans that worked in the GDR until that moment were reported. For instance, in the second half of 1979, 447 Mozambican contract workers began operating in 8 companies in the GDR. By the end of 1988, 18,886 Mozambican workers were employed in as many as 245 industrial, construction and agricultural East German enterprises. In that current period, namely in February 1989, 14,675 Mozambican workers were employed in 220 companies.

As a result of the 10-year agreement implementation, it was furthermore estimated that the Mozambican workers with high discipline and eagerness to learn were able to gain knowledge and acquired practical skills and abilities achieving good results in production. Moreover, the success of the 5-month familiarization period was

¹¹⁶ Gemeinsame Einschätzung des SAL und der mosambikanischen Vertretung für die Leitung des SAL, Privatarhiv Straßburg. See also: Ralf Straßburg, "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen" in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 122-124.

declared 'worthy', since an average compliance of more than 100% was documented. This preparatory phase, which all contract workers had to undertake, was aimed to teach them basic knowledge of the German language and to familiarise them with the life in the GDR, as well as preparing them for their employment in production.

The vast majority of Mozambican working people were said to have taken advantage of the opportunity offered by the companies' training offer to gain a successful professional qualification. Approximately, two-thirds of the working people who started their journey home after their four-year assignment were qualified as skilled workers, while one-third of them obtained degrees for having reached expertise in specialist areas or specific knowledge. The Mozambican workers with the best results in professional qualification and productive activity could obtain further qualifications; the highest one was the *Meisterqualifizierung*. So far, in February 1989, a total of 75 Mozambican workers already obtained this qualification, and other 75 workers were following the *Meister* training.

During the process of professional and political-ideological qualification, some Mozambican working people who had already been working in the GDR for many years were made responsible for groups of new comers; in the original document they were called '*Leitungskadern*'. They were designated as leader in groups of newly arrived Mozambicans and had therefore the task to help newcomers through the process of getting familiar to "the social life of the GDR".

Nonetheless, already in February 1989 it was clear that the complicated social and economic situation in the People's Republic of Mozambique meant that not all the workers who would have returned to Mozambique could be integrated in the domestic economy. Therefore, in occasion of the drafting of the document, it was agreed that the Mozambican workers, by mutual agreement with the companies, could have been employed up to 10 years in the GDR. About 80% of the Mozambican *Vertragsarbeiter* who travelled home after a four-year stay in the GDR returned to the GDR.

In February 1989, about 3,200 Mozambicans were granted an extension for more than 4 years and therefore kept working in GDR enterprises. The contract workers were moreover given the opportunity to obtain a qualification for a second

profession, or they could obtain specific qualifications such as diplomas or driving licences.

Of great importance was definitely the political-ideological work with the Mozambican contract workers in the factories. How emphasised in the official report, it was believed that using the example of real socialism in the GDR, the contract workers could acquire the necessary political tools to be used later, once they would return to their homeland.

It certainly does not need to be explicitly mentioned that in the official assessment, the critical situations were not brought to the fore. Such information followed later and was divulged by the management of the SAL. Of course positive results were shown, but also the unsatisfactory ones. It should not be left unmentioned that in some cases the Mozambican contract workers carried out activities that profoundly shook the foundations of East German laws; for instance, they organized strikes¹¹⁷. When such events happened, GDR authorities reacted relentlessly and the organizers – even without the consent of Mozambican authorities – were sent back to Mozambique with the next possible aircraft. Striking was held as a state crime in the GDR and no matter whether it was a foreigner or a GDR citizen; the legal organs reacted with great severity. Other violations of applicable GDR legislation by the contract workers were discussed with the Mozambican representation and, depending on the seriousness of the violations, they decided to what extent early repatriation on disciplinary grounds was justified.

Given the fact that after the German reunification many databanks have been destroyed, assessing with great accuracy how many Mozambicans had actually worked in the GDR is quite difficult. However, some broad macro figures are available and it is therefore possible to get a glimpse on the phenomenon, as already seen with data presented in the document drafted after 10 years of program. As far as it is possible to know, Mozambican contract workers in East Germany were ca. 6,000 before 1986, and this number jumped to ca. 15,500 between 1986 and March 1990¹¹⁸, when they accounted for 14.5 per cent of all foreign workers in the GDR.

¹¹⁷ Straßburg, R., “Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen”, p. 123

¹¹⁸ See Mulder, A., *Report on the Reintegration of Mozambican Workers from the Ex- GDR*, Weltfriedensdienst, Berlin, August 1991, p. 5, and Schonmeier, H. W., “Prüfung der Möglichkeiten eines Fachkräfteprogramms Mosambik”, in Studie im Auftrag, Saarbrücken, March 1991, p. 11

Moreover, Oppenheimer reported that during the guest worker programme altogether 21,600 Mozambican workers stayed in the GDR between 1979 and 1989.¹¹⁹

3.3. Shared experiences of Mozambican contract workers in the GDR: Some interviews

In the literature many authors argued that the young contract workers from Mozambique had been exploited by the GDR. However, many efforts were taken by East German competent authorities to ensure and monitor that the employment of Mozambican contract workers in East German companies complied with the terms of the agreement. It is also true that in the last years of the program, an increasing number of Mozambicans were working in about 200-250 companies, and it therefore resulted more complicated for the authorities to assert and control whether everything complied with the rules. Nonetheless, what cannot be maintained as true is that the workers were employed only in simple jobs that East German workers didn't want to make and that were therefore exploited. In fact, most of the Mozambican contract workers were given the chance to gain know-how and obtain qualifications during their stay, and they were paid and treated just as their German counterparts, obviously considering the percentage of their pay that was transferred to Mozambique. This has been confirmed by many interviews with former Mozambican *Vertragsarbeiter*. Since personal experiences are rather subjective, it cannot be maintained that all contract workers were treated equally, that racism did never take place, and that each contract worker was employed in high-qualified jobs. Nonetheless, one cannot maintain, the other hand, that contract workers were exploited both by the GDR government and companies. This paragraph aims to report the experiences of some Mozambican contract workers to show how their life in the GDR was actually like.

¹¹⁹ See Oppenheimer, J., "Magermanes. Os trabalhadores moçambicanos na antiga República Democrática Alemã", *Lusotopie*, n° 11, 2004. Médias pouvoir et identités, pp. 85-105.

*José Candido. “My parents, they saw a brilliant future for their son.”*¹²⁰

José was pleased when he found out he was assigned to go to work in East Germany, or *Alemanha Democratica*, as he still calls it. At that time, he read in magazines that the GDR “was a developed country, that there was no hunger there...that it had no poverty.” José remembers that the Mozambican government started sending teams into schools and *barrrios*; they were looking for men and women who had completed their secondary education, and encouraged them to sign up. “There was a need to make men...we felt it was a good cause”, he explains.

The opportunity for José, as to many other young Mozambicans, to go to work in the GDR seemed too good to pass up, particularly because Mozambique wasn't safe. “My parents, they saw a brilliant future for their son.” José still remembers his dazed first few days in Dresden. He was guided by a minder who didn't speak any Portuguese; he explained to José how to take the metro with gestures, and he introduced him to the local food, “every plate involved a potato.” Then he moved to start his work in Rostock, first on a car assembly line, and then cutting metal, where he came across the demands placed on the worker in the supply-led East German economy. “Everyone had to meet their targets in meters, based on what was set by the firm. Your pay was dependent on it.” And though some foreigners who went to Germany emphasize the harsh labour conditions and sometimes the racism that, as José confirms, could not officially exist in a socialist state like the GDR, he is smilingly nostalgic as he recalls his nine years spent in the country. He recalls friendships with German people, while in Mozambique white men could only ever be distant *patraos*. What's more, he felt part of something greater, namely acquiring skills to help Mozambique “catch up.” But in 1986, when he returned home for a holiday, he saw a nation in a full and brutal civil war. And while shocked to see what it had done to Maputo—“everyone surviving on cabbage”—it left him more determined than ever to carry on his work in East Germany, to “concentrate on our training and our production.”

¹²⁰ From the interview of Sami Kent to José Candido, in “Mozambique's forgotten ‘East Germans’ are still fighting for their communist payday”, October 17, 2007, *Quartz Africa*, *qz.com*.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-1982-0915-003
Foto: Sindermann, Jürgen | 15. September 1982

Figure 2: trainee from Mozambique in KfL ADN-ZB Sindermann 15.9.82, in Rostock. On the side of the experienced apprentice engineer Otto Saatze, the young Mozambican Fernando Maromba learns the profession of agricultural machinery mechanic. Source: Bundesarchiv Bild 183-1982-0915-003

José Chiridza. “I am glad to have come to the GDR”¹²¹

José worked in Görlsdorf, dairy cattle plant, and then was moved to Premnitz, in a chemical fibres plant. Before leaving Mozambique, as he says, they “did not receive concrete explanations about the content of the agreement”, and they didn’t receive any detailed information about the earning possibilities. What they knew, however, was that they could be “trained as a skilled worker in the GDR and then return to

¹²¹ From the interview of Ralf Straßburg to José Chirindza, July 30, 2013, in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 205-210.

Mozambique as specialists in the profession” ready to be employed in their home country using the know-how they learned in the GDR. As José recalls, in the last week of their preparation for the employment in the GDR, they were divided into two groups that would have been sent to work in two different companies. “Our group was informed that we had to work in a farm where cows were milked”. They did not receive further information, not even about GDR. “I have never been to Europe and only knew that the GDR belongs to Europe.”

José was very young at that time, but he said to himself “this would be my big chance if I went there and did an apprenticeship”. Once arrived in Görldorf he was well-received by his new colleagues and he did not feel any reservations. “I can only say that where I started to work in Görldorf I had no problems with the German work colleagues”.

He did receive training in the GDR. “In the dairy cattle plant in Görldorf I got a partial work qualification and in chemical fibres plant Premnitz I received a work qualification as a chemistry specialist”.

José tells about his living conditions as well. As many foreign colleagues, he was accommodated in a dorm. “In the first dorm in Görldorf I was satisfied, as we were two in a room. In the dorm in Guben, where 200 Mozambicans were accommodated, I was not so satisfied; there were four of us in a room. That was almost a disaster. Thank God, I was only one year there and then I changed to the chemical fibres’ factory Premnitz. There the dorm was wonderful. I looked after my compatriots there and had a room for me.”

When he is asked whether he felt to be treated differently from his German colleagues, he answers: “I did not feel that we were disadvantaged. As I heard, we were paid in the companies where I worked as much as the German colleagues”. José believes this experience was quite useful. “I am still glad today that I said yes and I decided to go to the GDR. During this time I have been able to collect a great deal of professional and life experiences”.

Serafim Manhice. “The GDR citizens treated us as human beings”¹²²

Serafim didn't get much information about the details of the contract before leaving Mozambique as well. “We were only informed that we should receive training.” However, they didn't know how much they would have been paid, nor in which sector they were going to be employed. “We only knew that we would earn considerably more than in Mozambique.”

Like his colleagues, Serafim recalls how precarious and dangerous the situation was in Mozambique. Going to work in the GDR and obtaining qualifications seemed the right choice to make. “In Mozambique, the civil war raged at that time and I had the opportunity either to become a soldier or to travel to the GDR. I did not want to participate in the war, so I decided to support the government indirectly from the GDR in this way”.

Serafim attended a German course and specific training once arrived in the GDR, but he rather preferred putting training aside and started working as a forklift lifter, as he aimed to earn more. “Actually, I was supposed to be a locksmith, but since I had only normal earnings and got less pay than the shift workers. My colleagues, who had no qualifications for training and worked in the finishing service, earned more money than I did. I then stopped my training and worked in four shifts”.

As he recalls, Mozambican workers, together with their German colleagues, had also the chance to do sport and engage in recreational activities. “We could even play our music on Alexanderplatz and use the cultural possibilities of the city of Berlin together with friends”. Free time activities were quite an important aspect in the socialist-workers lives. Serafim adds, “there was equality, equal work, equal pay. There was no discrimination because I was a foreigner; I was treated like a GDR citizen. I even had a GDR ID card”.

José Reis. “We got support from the masters and the colleagues”¹²³

José before going to the GDR, was accommodated with other contract workers in a preparatory camp, where they were informed about the basics of the agreement in

¹²² From the interview of Ralf Straßburg to Serafim Manhice, August 5, 2013, in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 211-215

¹²³ From the interview of Ralf Straßburg to José Reis, May 31, 2013, in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 231-236

meetings and seminars. Unlike his colleagues,, he was told also in what company he would be employed. “We knew that we should receive training,” adds José. He remembers also about being informed about working condition, and about the conduct they had to hold. “We should have performed well as workers on the farm”. He goes on telling his first impressions on East Germany once landed in Berlin; when they were still in Mozambique, they had been prepared to the “German discipline and organisation”. Right after they got off the plane, they understood that it was all true, “the pickup was perfectly organized. The supervisors brought and in rank and file to the buses”.

Upon arrival, José and his group already knew what they were going to do and where, but they did not have a clear picture of what the workplace would be like. For example, “there were different tools for the different jobs. In Mozambique, we did not know such specific tools, so we had to improvise”. The training, in José opinion was quite difficult, both because they had to undertake courses in German, and because learning such specific works was even harder, but they were not left alone, “we got support from the masters and the colleagues.”

José committed himself during his employment in Rostock, and he confirms that the conditions of the contract were met in his case. “I received the qualification as a skilled worker at the end of the mission”. Then he adds, “not everybody managed that. There were also some Mozambicans who did not have the academic qualifications and therefore could not achieve this high quality qualification. They then received partial qualifications”.

However, the program wouldn't last long. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the situation changed abruptly. Many of the state-owned enterprises had to close. Most contract workers became unemployed and their savings were frozen in Mozambique. Therefore, many of them had to return home, to a country which had been destroyed by 16 years of civil war. On their return, it became clear that the contract workers did not work for themselves and their future, but for the debt repayment of their land. There were almost nothing left over from their money nor were there any jobs planned for them.

4. Young Mozambican students in East Germany: the socialist experiment of the ‘School of Friendship’ in Staßfurt

Education represented a great aspect of the GDR ‘socialist solidarity’. Not only did East Germany send experts in African states, but also allowed people from those states to study in the GDR. From 1970 on, ca. 15,500 persons from developing states with a socialist orientation have completed their studies at an East German higher or technical education institute. In 1983, in particular, 5,951 citizens from those states were enrolled on educational courses in the GDR covering fields as economics, engineering, transport and agronomy¹²⁴. During the Cold War, state-led education exchange programmes between post-colonial states and the former German Democratic Republic were rather common. As part of this educational cooperation and development policy, the GDR dared to bring forward a unique experiment in the German educational history up until then: the education of numerous Mozambican children and adolescents coming from a different cultural, linguistic and economic background, in the GDR. The *Schule der Freundschaft*, School of Friendship, was actually the most ambitious educational programme the GDR has ever undertaken.

In October 1981 the two countries signed an agreement to set up the School of Friendship in Staßfurt, in the district of Magdeburg. As provided in the agreement, between 1982 and 1988, a total of 899 Mozambican children completed six years of secondary schooling and vocational training at the School of Friendship. Educating a future elite for Mozambique was its target. The students eventually returned to Mozambique in 1988 and found a country that had changed considerably during their absence.

This chapter aims to discuss the way such programme was carried out, focusing on the young Mozambicans’ migration phenomenon together with the guiding

¹²⁴ Winrow, G. M., *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 206.

principles set out by Mozambique and East Germany, as well as their inter-state relations.

4.1. Rationale behind the project of the School of Friendship

Both Mozambique and East Germany held interests in the realisation of this educational experiment. The rationale behind the creation of the school of Friendship was twofold, combining economic and ideological objectives. On the one hand it was meant to produce an educated elite of socialist-oriented professionals who were to assume crucial positions in the future development of Mozambique as an industrial socialist state. On the other hand, the students were trained to become qualified personnel that were destined to work in new joint ventures between the GDR and Mozambique.¹²⁵

Moreover, it is to be highlighted that the international development policies of East Germany were characterized by the coexistence of two basic objectives: the first was securing economic state survival, and the second was advancing socialism and honouring a commitment towards international solidarity with “those subjugated by the capitalist world order”.¹²⁶ Within this policy line, it becomes clear that the schooling of youth from socialist-oriented developing countries in boarding facilities in the GDR represented an important pillar of the international cooperation policy. Going into detail, the first big educational project in the GDR took place between the years 1955 and 1961, and was devised for youth from Vietnam to support the aspirations of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the aftermath of the First Indo-China War. While from 1979 onwards, several groups of Namibian children, who were displaced by the South West Africa People’s Organisation’s (SWAPO) to refugee camps in Zambia and Angola during the nationalist liberation war, were brought up and educated in the GDR, some for up to 12 years. In all those projects a crucial part of the education process was focused on transferring socialist values together with patriotism and a propensity to serve the wider community. In the first

¹²⁵ See Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft. Eine Fallstudie zur Bildungszusammenarbeit zwischen der DDR und Mosambik*, Waxmann, Münster, 2006.

¹²⁶ Müller, T. R., “‘Memories Of Paradise’ — Legacies of Socialist Education in Mozambique”, In *African Affairs*, Vol. 109, No. 436 (July 2010), Oxford University, p. 454.

place the GDR set its foreign policy towards Africa under the goal of the worldwide spread of socialism. The GDR therefore sought to exert a long-term impact on Africa through ideology and value transfer, building lasting security structures and educating people in key positions as they progressed in their careers.¹²⁷ Moreover, among the Soviet bloc and the Comecon states, the GDR was held as the socialist state with the best education system, regarded as one of the most advanced; this therefore made it the natural country for “grooming a future socialist elite”.¹²⁸ One could therefore argue, that the GDR had rich experiences in boarding school education in the context of educational cooperation.

It is no coincidence that the start of the School of Friendship coincided with the most active period of East German economic involvement in Mozambique, namely from 1977 to 1982. In this period, numerous big joint ventures were envisaged in many sectors, such as agriculture, coal production, fishing, textile industry, radio production, light bulb production, and the assembly of lorries. Consequently, an important part of the GDR’s rationale for the School of Friendship was to educate qualified Mozambican personnel who would have worked in leading positions in those joint ventures.¹²⁹

Mozambique, on the other hand, held the same rationale behind the request of the Mozambican government under Samora Machel to create the School of Friendship. At this point it is already well-known that relations between the GDR and FRELIMO began in the 1960s. In particular, from 1967, GDR education experts worked within the FRELIMO education infrastructure, then situated in exile in Tanzania, in the small town of Bagamoyo.¹³⁰ Thus, when in 1979 the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty was signed between the GDR and the People’s Republic of Mozambique, FRELIMO started looking to the GDR for receiving further support in creating an

¹²⁷ See Engel, U.; Schleicher, H., *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika: Zwischen Konkurrenz und Koexistenz*, Institut für Afrika-Kunde im Verbund der Stiftung Deutsches Übersee-Institut Hamburg, 1998.

¹²⁸ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 31

¹²⁹ Döring, H. J., “Freundschaftsform Ökonomie? Zur Rolle und Funktion der Kommerziellen Koordination (KoKo) in den Beziehungen der DDR zur Volksrepublik Mosambik”, in Döring and Rüchel, “Freundschaftsbande und Beziehungskisten”, pp. 68- 87.

¹³⁰ See Kruse, U. “Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt”, in van der Heyden, U., Schleicher I. and Schleicher, H. (eds), *Engagiert für Afrika. Die DDR und Afrika*, LIT Verlag, Münster, 1994, pp. 196–214 and Tullner, M., “Das Experiment "Schule der Freundschaft" im Kontext der mosambikanischen Bildungspolitik”, in Döring and Rüchel (eds), *Freundschaftsbande und Beziehungskisten*, pp. 100–109.

education system based on socialist values and which would emphasize a symbiotic relationship between academic study, practise and its productive application.¹³¹ From the Mozambican perspective, the main educational objective was the creation of a *homen novo*, socialist personnel who was equipped with technical and professional skills that were needed for the future social and economic development of Mozambique.

The objectives of both parts were actually integrated into the workings of the School of Friendship, as will become clear in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1. Educational problems in Mozambique and the concept of ‘*homen novo*’

The most evident reason why Mozambique brought forward the creation of an educational program in the GDR was its education system’s underdevelopment. During the pre-independence years, the education system was racially segregating, meaning that the native population was almost excluded from education under the Portuguese colonial power, even though they formed the largest population group.

After the independence, in 1975, the country had an illiteracy rate of 95% and the educational opportunities of the rural population were extremely below average.¹³² Given such situation, FRELIMO held education issues in high consideration. During the independence struggle, the liberation movement had already established schools in the liberated areas of the country and also in the neighbouring liberated Tanzania. However, right after FRELIMO took control over the finally independent country, the conditions of Mozambique’s education system were disastrous: there were few and dilapidated schools, there was an overall shortage of teachers, the teaching materials were inadequate, and there was a lack of skilled workers. In the construction of the Mozambican education system, FRELIMO decided to establish a ‘socialist education’, which aim was the unification and centralization of the entire

¹³¹ Delegation from Maputo to the Conference of Education of African Member States, “Education policy in the People's Republic of Mozambique”, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 14, 2 (1976), pp. 331–339 and Tullner, M., “Die Zusammenarbeit der DDR und Mosambiks auf dem Gebiet der Bildung und die Tätigkeit der Bildungsexperten der DDR in Mosambik”, in Voß, *Wir haben Spuren hinterlassen!*, pp. 388–406.

¹³² Castiano, J., *Das Bildungssystem in Mosambik (1974-1996): Entwicklung, Probleme Und Konsequenzen*, Institut für Afrika-Kunde im Verbund der Stiftung Deutsches Übersee-Institut, Hamburg, 1997, p. 84.

schooling system. Moreover, the education of ‘socialist personalities’, defined *homen novo*, as already mentioned above, was the ultimate ideological and educational goal. According to the law on the National Education system of Mozambique (*Sistema Nacional de Educação*) the education system had to eradicate bourgeois and colonial mentality by creating a new man, who had to be freed from obscurantism and superstition, and who should have owned appropriate values for a socialist society.¹³³ Experts from East Germany were contributing as well to the implementation of such educational concept. East German educational counsellors even assisted and participated in the drafting of Mozambique's first elaborated education law of March 1983.¹³⁴

It follows that Mozambique leaned quite heavily on the educational concepts of the GDR. The education system of the GDR was regarded as exemplary and guarantor of progressive social development. The idea of the ‘new man’, for instance, was a pedagogic concept originally formulated in the GDR. It related to the ‘universally developed socialist personality’, which eventually became central to Mozambique’s educational projects. Certainly, the success of such pedagogic concept laid also in the fact that the ‘new men’ were represented, according to Marxist-Leninist ideology, as people whose social and cultural background did not concur to the development and shaping of their personalities. This concept was ideal for a young multi-ethnic state as Mozambique, where the need of a new and unifying image of man could perhaps put an end to the civil war and foster the creation of a solid state. The *homen novo* was educated at the School of Friendship, purposefully shielded from potentially disturbing influences. Although the pedagogical concept at the "School of Friendship" was developed in agreement with the Mozambican side, the premises of East German pedagogy ultimately dominated.¹³⁵

¹³³ Law on the “Sistema Nacional de Educação” (SNE) 1983, Art. 4.

¹³⁴ Castiano, J., “Das Bildungssystem in Mosambik (1974-1996)”, p. 108.

¹³⁵ Schuch, J., *Mosambik im pädagogischen Raum der DDR. Eine bildanalytische Studie zur Schule der Freundschaft in Staßfurt*, Springer VS, Berlin, pp. 11-12.

4.1.2. Negotiations between Mozambique and East Germany and premises behind the creation of the School of Friendship: the school as a symbol of solidarity

The construction of the *Schule der Freundschaft* can be seen as a novel turn in East German relations with Mozambique, and in general with the developing world. The project represented an extension of the foreign policy that the SED was pursuing since the founding of the East German state. As already noted in the previous chapters, central to both the rhetoric and content of East German foreign policy was the notion of a shared struggle. This meant that the people of the GDR did not live simply in a socialist state, but “fought forefront of a global struggle against imperialism”.¹³⁶

Many authors have wondered which role the School of Friendship played in this broader context of cooperation and solidarity that the GDR was pursuing. The School of Friendship was often presented by the print as a symbol of living solidarity with the People's Republic of Mozambique. In March 1983, President Machel himself, on occasion of his visit the School of Friendship at Staßfurt, praised the institution as a ‘shining’ example of solidarity between the GDR and Mozambique.¹³⁷ The *Schule der Freundschaft* represented an actual expression of East German commitment to otherwise abstract notions like ‘solidarity’ and the ‘shared struggle against imperialism’. Broader speaking, the planning and construction of the school reflected both East Germany’s ideological commitment in supporting class struggle around the whole world and its pragmatic efforts to win friend states and allies.¹³⁸

The FRELIMO proposal to build schools in the German Democratic Republic for children from Mozambique was perhaps the logical extension of the close relationship between Mozambique and East Germany. Such proposals coming from FRELIMO representatives were specific and persistent. For instance, in September 1980, the East German embassy in Maputo received a memorandum from the Mozambican Ministry of Education and Culture, containing a request for

¹³⁶ Verber, J., “True to the Politics of FRELIMO? Teaching Socialism at the Schule der Freundschaft, 1981-90” in Slobodian, Quinn, ed., *Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World*, Berghahn Books, New York, 2015, p. 190

¹³⁷ Neues Deutschland, 4 March 1983.

¹³⁸ Verber, J., “True to the Politics of FRELIMO? Teaching Socialism at the Schule der Freundschaft, 1981-90” p. 187.

constructing schools in the GDR for a total of 2,000 Mozambican students, as well as providing vocational training to the same. The memorandum was also requesting assistance in building technical schools for another 700 to 1,000 students in Mozambique.¹³⁹

The very next day, Günter Mittag, the Central Committee Secretary for the Economy of the GDR, was writing to Margot Honecker, the East German Minister for Education, to inform her that an identical request was made by a Mozambican delegation in Leipzig.¹⁴⁰ Some days later, Samora Machel himself was making the same request again during a visit to the GDR¹⁴¹

Despite Mozambican making so many efforts, convincing Margaret Honecker that the proposed scope of the project was feasible was rather difficult, since such project would have required considerable expenditure and a high commitment from the side of the GDR, who should have organised every aspect of 2,000 Mozambican students' lives. Nonetheless, East German leadership made Mozambique a counterproposal. One school would be constructed and opened for half as many students, namely one thousand instead of two thousand. Those students could then receive instruction from fourth to eight-grade. After 4 years of schooling, the young Mozambicans would receive two years of vocational training.¹⁴² Even if the project was going to be half the size of the original one proposed by the Mozambican leadership, it was going to be no small undertaking for the GDR, as its realisation would not only require the involvement of multiple ministries, both in the GDR and Mozambique, but also district officials in Magdeburg. For instance, before the School of Friendship opened, local SED officials assumed primary responsibility for public relations within the community of Staßfurt, by preparing and handling pamphlets to the local population informing them about the school project and the young guests that Staßfurt would soon have welcomed.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Huettener to Werner Engst, Willerdig, and Schalk, Telegram, 4 September 1980, BArch DR 2/50686, vol. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Verber, J., "True to the Politics of FRELIMO? Teaching Socialism at the Schule der Freundschaft, 1981-90", p. 194

¹⁴¹ Günter Mittag to Margot Honecker, 5 September 1980, BArch DR 2/50686, vol. 2.

¹⁴² Werner Engst to Margot Honecker, 8 September 1980, BArch DR 2/50686, vol. 2; Beck, "Einrichtung einer Schule für mocambiquanische Schüler in der DDR."

¹⁴³ "Entwurf. Vorlage Politbüro," 5 December 1980, BArch DR/2/13990; Rat des Bezirkes Magdeburg – Bezirksplankommission, "Ergebnisse und Vorschläge zur Ausbildung, Betreuung und

Prior to the realisation of the project, cost estimates were realised, revealing the scope of such ambitious project. Initial projections estimated that only the construction of the school were to cost over 30 million East German Marks, approximately 7.67 million Euros.¹⁴⁴ In 1981, when the construction began, a little more than half that figure was made available right away by the government.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, another eight million Marks (about 2.05 million Euros) would be needed to cover the operating costs for the first academic year. Each year after that, it was estimated to cost the GDR at least six and a half million marks (1.66 million Euros)¹⁴⁶.

Notwithstanding this, East German leadership decided to move forward with the project, considering it as an opportunity to further strengthen its ties with FRELIMO and Mozambique. An educational project like the School of Friendship, in line with the solidarity and aid policy of the GDR, could directly benefit a fellow anti-imperialist state. Lothar Oppermann, the head of the SED's Department of Education, stated that the school would serve as "a living expression of the close bond between the socialist countries of socialism and those of the national liberation movement."¹⁴⁷ In fact, even if in Mozambique the struggle for political independence had been won, economic independence was still to achieve. Verber argued that this could only be done through a functioning internal industry, together with the hard work of an educated workforce. Therefore, the SED offered the school as a means to help finally dismantle the old colonial system. Not surprisingly SED officials were describing the school as a GDR's "contribution to overcoming the difficult legacy of

Unterbringung von Jugendlichen aus der VR Mocambique in Staßfurt," 20 November 1980, BArch DR/2/13990.

¹⁴⁴ See Zatlín, J. R., *The Currency of Socialism: Money and Political Culture in East Germany*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2017, p. 75.

¹⁴⁵ "Entwurf. Vorlage Politbüro," p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ "Überschlägliche Berechnung des jährlichen Finanzbedarfs für das Objekt zur Beschulung, Betreuung und Ausbildung mocambiquanischer Schüler in Staßfurt," 14 January 1981, in BArch DR 2/11231, vol.2, see also Verber, J., "True to the Politics of FRELIMO? Teaching Socialism at the Schule der Freundschaft, 1981-90.

¹⁴⁷ Abteilung Volksbildung, "Information. Betrifft: Zur Arbeit der Grundorganisation der SED in der 'Schule der Solidarität' (Objekt Mocambique)," 2 September 1982, 1-2, SAPMO-BArch DY/30/5756.

colonialism,” and a “direct contribution to the emergence and advancement of socialism.”¹⁴⁸



Figure 3: Berlin (East), 3.3.1983: meeting of Samora Machel, President of the FRELIMO party and President of the People's Republic of Mozambique, with Margot Honecker, Minister of Education of the GDR, and the management of the Staßfurt "School of Friendship". Source: Bundesarchiv Bild 183-1983 0303-423.

4.2. Carrying out the educational project of the School of Friendship

The School of Friendship, as already stated, was a unique project in the educational landscape of the GDR. According to the agreement, 900 Mozambican children were supposed to go to the small industrial city of Staßfurt in 1982. On their arrival, the young students should have been nominally twelve years old and should

¹⁴⁸ “Eine Schule der Freundschaft entsteht in Staßfurt,” 2; Abteilung Volksbildung, “Information. Betrifft: Zur Arbeit der Grundorganisation der SED in der ‘Schule der Solidarität’ (Objekt Mocambique),” 2.

have successfully completed four years of elementary school in Mozambique. In the *Schule der Freundschaft*, they would receive a four-year general education. After that, two years of vocational training should follow. In the autumn of 1988 they would then return to their country of origin as a young, qualified elite of skilled workers that were to help build the new decolonised socialist state of Mozambique. This meant that the students of the School of Friendship would be able to meet their families again only after 6 years of education and training, apart from some exceptions.

4.2.1. Selection of the young candidates

The actual number of students who were sent to Staßfurt to attend the School of Friendship was 899, of which 695 were boys and 204 girls¹⁴⁹. The reasons behind this gender ratio of 1:3 were not officially named. However, it can be assumed that the Mozambican side held interest in having male skilled workers trained and educated.

In February 1982, coordinated by the Mozambican Ministry for Education and Culture, the selection of pupils destined to continue their education at the School of Friendship started. The aim was to recruit children from all over the country, including rural outposts. 900 candidates were originally selected on the basis of equal representation from each province, with special preference for the children of workers, peasants, and revolutionaries. The political proximity of the students' families to FRELIMO was therefore taken into account. Other criteria were academic performance, (students who had successfully completed the primary school in Mozambique with good grades, if possible as the best of their year), discipline at school, social behaviour, state of health, social background, age (ideally, the children should have been between 12 and 14 years of age),¹⁵⁰ good health and the agreement of parents or guardians, which was decisive for the selection.

One reason for targeting children from all over Mozambique was FRELIMO's objective to form a new man, spreading common Mozambican identity among participants, together with a deep commitment towards the country and FRELIMO as the leading agent of progressive change, opposing to as opposed to ethnic or regional

¹⁴⁹ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 63

¹⁵⁰ Müller, T. R., "Memories Of Paradise", p. 455

identities.¹⁵¹ In reality, however, the selection resulted disproportionate, as most of the pupils came from the area of Maputo. Their age also deviated roughly from the requirements. When they arrived in Staßfurt, the young Mozambicans were supposed to be between ten and twelve years old; in fact, they were between nine and sixteen years old.¹⁵² More than half of the students (56%) were born in 1968, 1969 or 1970 and therefore they were between eleven and fourteen years old when they arrived in the GDR.¹⁵³ For the student themselves, a personal reason for applying was the prospect of a professional career and the hope for a consequent social and economical advancement of Mozambique. Another reason for applying to the School of Friendship was, of course, the chance to avoid the dangers posed by the civil war.¹⁵⁴

Once selected, the children were then gathered at four centres in the cities of Maputo, Inhambane, Tete, and Nampula. In the second part of 1982, together with 22 Mozambican pedagogic personnel, they left for the GDR.

4.2.2. Practical realisation of the educational ‘experiment’ of the School of Friendship

The selected students, after four years schooling and two years vocational training, would obtain the *Fachabitur*, comparable professional A-levels. The professions the young Mozambicans were going to get qualified in, corresponded to the ones needed in the operation of the planned joint ventures between East Germany and Mozambique. The apprenticeships were therefore centred in the metal-processing industry, building and construction, electrical engineering, and agricultural technology.¹⁵⁵

The choice of location for the school was guided by the need to have enough training facilities in near areas. Therefore, the choice fell on the small industrial town

¹⁵¹ For a detailed description see Kruse, U. “Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt”.

¹⁵² Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 44 et seq..

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Müller, T. R., “Memories Of Paradise”, p. 456

of Staßfurt, which at that time had about 74,500 inhabitants.¹⁵⁶ A school complex for 900 students could only be built on the outskirts of the city. The construction took only 13 months, from May 1981 to July 1982, and eventually a school building, four residential buildings, a large kitchen with dining room and a sports hall in the style of typical East German prefabricated were built. Great importance was laid on green areas and outdoor facilities, such as the so-called "African village", which were covered wooden seating areas on a lawn, and various sport fields. Furthermore, there were administrative and warehouse buildings. The "African village" pointed to the culture-sensitive design of the entire site. For this purpose, a "pictorial conception" was specially developed to support the "emotional bond with the homeland".¹⁵⁷



Figure 4: in the picture students of the School of Friendship eating in the common dining room. In the background, the glass window depicting typical foods and utensils of Mozambique. Source: Lehrbuch für Klasse 7. Schule der Freundschaft. Berlin 1984, p. 57.

The students were accommodated in 3- or 4-bedrooms with recreation rooms, toilets with washing facilities and shower rooms in the basement. The Mozambican educators lived in fully equipped flats as well as German educational staff, who also

¹⁵⁶ See Staatliche Zentralverwaltung für Statistik (Hrsg.): Statistisches Jahrbuch 1981 der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik. year 26, section I: Übersicht über Gebiet und Bevölkerung. Berlin 1981, p. 5.

¹⁵⁷ BArch DR 2 D 687: Bildkünstlerische Konzeption OMS Staßfurt, p. 3

lived in the school facility due to an unreasonably long work journey. There was also a modern equipped medical area with the possibility of inpatient treatment.¹⁵⁸

Once arrived at the School of Friendship, the 899 children were divided into 30 groups and given intensive language training, since German was going to be the primary medium of their education, and they would also be taught by German staff. Mozambican staff was taking part to the teaching activity as well. Both East German and Mozambican teachers taught in thirty parallel classes, each with 30 pupils. However, the majority of the 25 Mozambican teachers and educators were employed in extra-curricular areas¹⁵⁹. The first year of schooling was dedicated to German language courses. During this first year, the number of East German teachers had been increased to one hundred people in order to enable language learning in small groups and, in particular, to provide teachers from Mozambique with adequate language training as well.

Teaching was geared towards three main objectives. The first was educating and providing the students with qualifications to promote the economic development of Mozambique. Secondly, it aimed to provide a socialist education in order to prepare the young elite of the 'brother state' for their activities. Thirdly, lessons had to help prevent the alienation of young Mozambicans from their real home. The GDR curricula were therefore specifically modified and some subjects, such as political education, history, geography and Portuguese, were taught in Portuguese by Mozambican teachers.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, basing on the school programme, they taught the students "cultural activities", which included the teaching of Mozambican typical dances, songs and prose. In addition, on public holidays of the People's Republic of Mozambique it was holiday at the School of Friendship.¹⁶¹

In their first four years of schooling and stay in Staßfurt, the lives of the young Mozambicans were strictly regulated in every aspect, meaning that every day was carefully organised and there were hardly any private retreats.¹⁶² The weekends were also "used to visit art and cultural institutions, in the broader sense to get to know the

¹⁵⁸ See Schretzenmayr, M., "Wohnungsbau in der ehemaligen DDR". In: DISP 133 (1989), pp. 41-48.

¹⁵⁹ Scheunpflug, A.; Krause, J., "Die Schule der Freundschaft: ein Bildungsexperiment in der DDR", in *Deutschland: Beiträge aus dem Fachbereich Pädagogik der Universität der Bundeswehr Hamburg*, 2000. p. 12.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 13.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. p. 16

¹⁶² Kruse, U. "Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt", p. 208

GDR, with excursions and hikes, they are filled with sporting events and artistic competitions and serve for recreation and the settlement of personal needs."¹⁶³ The pupils were allowed to leave the boarding and schooling complex only in groups and for special occasions, which included also visits to allocated guest families. Most of their free time was taken up by communal activities aimed to install a socialist, communal spirit.

In contrast, when professional training commenced in 1986, such situation changed radically. Traineeships didn't take place in Staßfurt, but in other East German cities. This often involved frequent travel, since sometimes it happened that the young Mozambicans should follow their apprenticeships in different towns during the working week.

The students, "who have distinguished themselves through good performances during the school year", were given the opportunity to spend their holidays in Mozambique, with their families.¹⁶⁴



Figure 5 Students of the School of Friendship during a botanical excursion. Source: Biologie. Lehrbuch für Klasse 7. Schule der Freundschaft. Berlin 1984, p. 42.

¹⁶³ Akademie der Pädagogischen Wissenschaften der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik – Jahrbuch, 1981, p. 11.

¹⁶⁴ Kruse, U. "Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt", p. 4.

4.2.3. Educational staff of the School of Friendship

A really interesting aspect of the School of Friendship was that not only young Mozambicans could stay and study in the GDR, but also some Mozambican teaching experts could go in the GDR to work as staff of the school. The educational staff consisted of trained teachers and trained educators both from East Germany and Mozambique. The number of German educational staff fluctuated considerably in the course of the project, in particular, from 200 at the beginning to 58 at the end of the project.¹⁶⁵ The number of Mozambican educators varied between 16 and 25¹⁶⁶. It is striking that the Mozambican pedagogues were in a clear minority over the entire period. Moreover, parallel to the GDR usual school party secretary, at the school there was a FRELIMO representative.

The selection of the German staff was carried out by taking into consideration the owned qualification, which was the most important prerequisite, but also other aspects were taken into consideration. In particular, experts who had already had experiences in Mozambique were sought, especially for management positions; a further desired requirement was SED membership. This latter aspect was meant to secure 'political safety' inside the School of Friendship and in the teaching activities that were carried out. Political attitude played also a quite fundamental role, as the personnel should show tendencies to the exercise of "practical solidarity".¹⁶⁷

On the other hand, Mozambican teachers and educators were not primarily selected for their qualification, but rather for political 'characteristics', such as their contributions to the liberation struggle, their proximity to FRELIMO, and of course special achievements during their life and career were taken into consideration.¹⁶⁸

The school was run by a German director, who could count on a school management that comprised several area directors. The school management also included a FRELIMO representative, to whom all Mozambican educators were subjected in disciplinary terms.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p.54

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 49

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 56 et seq.

4.2.4. Ideological and disciplinary challenges

Although the life of the students was organised in every aspect, and despite the fact the young Mozambicans had been handpicked, disciplinary problems emerged. This resulted in several students being sent back to Mozambique during their four years of general education. Having become adolescents and having begun their traineeship, difficulties increased throughout the two-year programme of the vocational training. One could argue that a possible reason, besides the fact students had to follow tight and strict schedule, can be that they were becoming aware about the fact many apprenticeships would not be viable professions in Mozambique once they would return home. Since 1982, plans to abandon the various joint ventures projects with Mozambique had gathered pace. This was partly a consequence of the rejection of Mozambique as a new member of the COMECON in 1981; a further and more evident reason for abandoning the joint ventures was widespread economic and political destabilisation as a consequence of increased counterinsurgency activities by the RENAMO, during which the FRELIMO government lost control over parts of state territory.¹⁷⁰

In concrete terms, about 30 youths were reported in relation to serious delinquency, but only a few of them were sent back to Mozambique prematurely. Among them, 28 girls were sent back because of pregnancy.¹⁷¹

In order to better control defiant behaviour or outright resistance, especially during the time spent in dorms or leisure time, the Stasi, the East German secret service, in cooperation with the FRELIMO representative at the *Schule der Freundschaft*, recruited some students of the school to report on possible defiance. Very interesting is the content of an interview to Mano, one young Mozambican, chief of his class, who was engaged in such activities. He described his recruitment and tasks as follows:¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Franz Ansprenger, *Politische Geschichte Afrikas im 20. Jahrhundert* (Beck Verlag, München, 1999); Döring, 'Es geht um unsere Existenz'; Jeanne Marie Penvenne, 'Mozambique: a tapestry of conflict' in David Birmingham and Phyllis Martin (eds), *History of Central Africa. The Contemporary Years since 1960* (Longman, London, 1998), pp. 231–66.

¹⁷¹ See Kruse, U. "Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt" and Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*".

¹⁷² The following is based on an interview of Tanja R. Müller with Mano on 12 June 2008 in Beira, in: Müller, Tanja R., "The 'German children' of Mozambique: long-term legacies of a socialist educational experiment," in *Comparative Education*, Routledge, London, vol. 48, 2012, p. 62.

Our [German] director chose some people, around 30, and he said ‘we have a celebration and we would like to take you along so you get an idea how our politics work [...]’ so we went, we ate and drank, then they said ‘we need your help, it is not easy to control all the students, we don’t know exactly what happens in the bedrooms and it would be a great honour for us if you could work with us and tell us if something wrong happens’ [...] and I knew among us also there were some few people who did things that were not good.

Mano recalls that his first reaction after being asked such thing was:

‘But if we agree to help you we need to be paid’ [...] they laughed but then I was elected to participate in the pioneer movement and I got money for that, I don’t know whether that was a reward for being a pioneer or for my work for the Stasi, for being quasi a spy.

Mano goes on saying he did report some students, but only when he personally felt what they were doing was really wrong. He tried mostly to speak to those causing minor troubles, trying to help them and understand why were they doing what they were doing. In fact, the majority of the students of the School of Friendship followed their education through without being recorded for any kind of behaviour against the rules. This happened because the predominant sentiment among the students was that, ‘we were all patriots, we really believed we will help and develop our country so we need to study and work hard, and that is what we did’.¹⁷³

Another matter of concern for the GDR and the SED was the “politics of FRELIMO” during the operation of the school from 1982 to 1990. In particular it was the kind of socialism developing in Mozambique that concerned SED officials, and that was being spread in the School of Friendship by Mozambican teachers.

As noted above, the teaching staff at the School of Friendship was made up of both Mozambican and East German instructors. As a consequence, one potential problem for GDR authorities was the lack of control they had over political education inside the classroom. East German instructors outnumbered Mozambican ones, and taught everything from German language to natural sciences, but Mozambican teachers had its own tasks as well. During the negotiations, FRELIMO officials had insisted that students learnt certain subjects from Mozambican teachers, a condition to which GDR officials, the Ministry for Education and the SED had agreed on. The subject that would be taught by Mozambican staff included

¹⁷³ Müller, T. R., “The ‘German children’ of Mozambique: long-term legacies of a socialist educational experiment,” p. 62.

Portuguese, geography, history, and political education.¹⁷⁴ Before the school started operating, the fact Mozambican would teach and have control over these subjects made sense, as one of the educational objectives of the school was not to alienate students from their country of origin. However, East German administrators and government officials eventually began to have doubts about the political lessons that the students at the School of Friendship were taught. After only a few months of operation, the government was already considering how to address the problem at the school. In November 1982, Werner Engst, the Vice-Minister for Education, remarked they “must be prepared to retrain the Mozambican teachers in the truest sense of the word, because they were trained to teach according to bourgeois methods and naturally also practice bourgeois methods. This retraining is necessary and we must consider how we can best accomplish it.”¹⁷⁵

What at first raised concern among authorities was the way Mozambican staff addressed specific themes and issues. For instance, Minister for Education Margot Honecker noted that “it must be checked how to best help the teachers respond more clearly to the students’ political questions.”¹⁷⁶ In detail, Mozambican teachers received and answered many questions about the division of Germany, which appeared to be the main issue.

Nonetheless, as the years went by, East German concerns extended far beyond about questions and the content of respective answers. This time it was the way that Mozambican instructors organised and ran their lessons and the way they managed their classrooms that came under increasing scrutiny. As especially troubling were regarded certain ‘bourgeois’ tendencies having “democratic traits,” like majority rule when it came to select students for certain tasks and positions or making simple decisions about trips or holiday travels. GDR authorities were concerned that students were receiving an “education towards autonomy/independence

¹⁷⁴ Ministerium für Erziehung und Kultur, Volksrepublik Mocambique, “Übersetzung. Memorandum. Zu prüfende Gesichtspunkte der Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Volksrepublik Mocambique und der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik,” 28 August 1980, BArch DR 2/50686, vol. 2; Rat des Bezirkes Magdeburg – Bezirksplankommission, “Ergebnisse und Vorschläge zur Ausbildung Betreuung und Unterbringung von Jugendlichen aus der VR Mocambique in Staßfurt,” 1.

¹⁷⁵ Werner Engst, “Niederschrift aus der Diskussion zur Information über die Schule der Freundschaft in der MDB am 9.11.1982,” 10 November 1982, 3, BArch DR 2/506118, vol.1.

¹⁷⁶ Engst, “Aktennotiz über diskutierte Probleme anlässlich des Besuches der Genossin Honecker an der Schule der Freundschaft (25.6.1983),” 5.

[Selbständigkeit]” of the worst possible sort for a socialist state as the GDR.¹⁷⁷ Such tendency to emphasise the individual strongly opposed the East German approach in place at the school. As it was reported by an internal document: “we operate from the well-known theoretical and methodological position that socialist character development cannot succeed without the collective and outside the collective.”¹⁷⁸

4.3. Considerations about the of the socialist education experiment of the School of Friendship

The feeling of being privileged, combined with the sense of obligation towards their homeland, was being reinforced by the fact that at the School of Friendship the students were constantly reminded that they would form part of a future professional elite and they would contribute to the socialist transformation of Mozambican society and its economic progress.

4.3.1. Results obtained by the students

The educational goal can be formally defined as successful: in line with such sentiments, the majority, 839 students altogether, completed their education and apprenticeship successfully, the grade average among the students was 2.2 (between B and B-), while only eleven students did not pass the examination for the *Fachabitur*.¹⁷⁹ Unluckily three pupils have passed away and a total of 46 students have been sent back to Mozambique for a variety of reasons, most of them related to disciplinary issues¹⁸⁰. As already mentioned above, 28 girls out of the total of 46 students were sent back due to pregnancy.

On the other hand, most of the students were unable to find jobs in Mozambique on their return, since the major joint industrial projects had been dismissed, both due to the political and economic situation and to the change in the bilateral relationship

¹⁷⁷ Claus Holzworth to Bezirkschulrat, 30 May 1985, 1-2, BArch DR 2/50618, vol. 1.

¹⁷⁸ “Zur Aufgabenstellung, zu Inhalten und Ergebnissen der Erziehungsarbeit im Internatsbereich,” 27 May 1983, 2, BArch DR 2/50616 vol. 2.

¹⁷⁹ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft* 2006, p

¹⁸⁰ Scheunpflug, A.; Krause, J., “Die Schule der Freundschaft: ein Bildungsexperiment in der DDR”, p. 30

between the GDR and Mozambique.¹⁸¹ The youth at the School of Friendship might not have been completely aware of all the details concerning their envisaged employment in newly created joint-venture enterprises; still, they knew the situation would have changed irrevocably in Mozambique with the death of Samora Machel in 1986, the same year they started their traineeship. The School of Friendship was rather a project connected to the FRELIMO guided by Samora Machel, and it suddenly became clear that his successor, Joaquim Chissano, would follow a different political line.

Moreover, the degree obtained in East Germany (which today would qualify for university entrance in Mozambique today) was not recognized in Mozambique; their School of Friendship leaving certificates, according to the original agreement, had to be considered equal to the completion of secondary school or Grade 12 in Mozambique. In fact, they were recognized as completion of Grade 10 only. As a consequence, the students had basically the same status of those who dropped out school and did not obtain any qualification.¹⁸² Accordingly, they would receive a lower salary within Mozambican labour market.¹⁸³ In addition, some graduates and their families became estranged and the students did only conserve a passive knowledge of their languages of origin, Portuguese, although they had been keeping in contact with their relatives via letters during their stay in the GDR. Moreover, in 1984 and 1985 two groups of up to 50 children were allowed to spend their summer holidays in Mozambique, trip that was granted as a reward for their exemplary grades and discipline. It was clearly not enough; this resulted in what Reuter and Scheunpflug defined as cultural and emotional uprooting and alienation.¹⁸⁴

An estimated number of 70-90 graduates from the School of Friendship stayed after the German reunification with a different residence status¹⁸⁵. Some of them have been able to find an employment in their chosen occupations, others found

¹⁸¹ Mozambique was denied admission to RGW due to its economic situation. As a result, the country opened to the West and began negotiations with the World Bank and the IMF in 1983 See Castiano, J., *Das Bildungssystem in Mosambik (1974-1996)* p. 44 et seq.

¹⁸² Lutz R. Reuter and Annette Scheunpflug submitted an equivalence report to the Mozambican Ministry of Education for examination, unfortunately without success.

¹⁸³ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 161 et seq.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 280 et seq.

¹⁸⁵ Schuch, J., *Mosambik im pädagogischen Raum der DDR. Eine bildanalytische Studie zur Schule der Freundschaft in Staßfurt*, p. 32

employment in aid organisations thank to their language knowledge and other skills.¹⁸⁶

4.3.2. Experiences of Mozambican youths at the School of Friendship

With no doubt the experience of spending the most crucial years of their lives in a foreign country with a different language and different cultural background deeply influenced the young Mozambicans. The majority of participants of the experiment of School of Friendship felt as their experience in the GDR had tangible effects on them, making them different. ‘We are German children to this day’¹⁸⁷ how Fabio puts it. This is what Müller referred to as ‘Germanness’; it made them feel different and yet they were role models who would influence future generations in Mozambique.

As Roberto, another former student of the School of Friendship remarks:

It made a big difference to have studied in Germany... I can say those who wanted to learn brought back many things. We are different from those who stayed behind [in my family] others now regard me as a role model and try to follow in my footsteps. (Interview, Beira, 14 June 2008)¹⁸⁸

This feeling of being different was related not only to the fact they became inclined towards socialist solidarity, but also secondary skills which gave them a different approach to one’s life. As Mia, another former student interviewed by Müller, explains:

We learned how to live and help each other, and we learned how to plan our lives. Here [in Mozambique] people simply live from day to day, they do not think about the consequences of what they do... but if you really want to achieve something you need to plan and work for it. What I am now I am because I was in Germany... and because of socialism, and now at least we have to help each other. (Interview, Chimoio, 9 June 2008)¹⁸⁹

It is clear that both of the interviewees feel that their time in Germany decisively influenced the trajectories of their adult lives, as Fernando further explains:

I am very happy I went to the GDR. I learned so many things. The foundations on which my present life rests, starting with my family and my work, were built in Germany, if I had stayed here I for sure would live a different life. (Interview, Chimoio, 9 June 2008)

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Müller, T. R., “The ‘German children’ of Mozambique”, p.64.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 65

Mia then both confirms and expands Fernando's sentiments when she describes what are the legacies of their stay in the GDR:

We have learned in particular how we should live and how we can help each other. At first for me it did not work to learn the profession I wanted [Mia wanted to become a medical doctor] because the government had certain ideas what we should learn and my favourite profession was not among those... but everything else was good. All the things I do now, the way I approach things, how I educate my children, all that comes from the time when we saw how people in Germany go about those things. Also with our children we try to educate them the same way we were educated there, and sometimes people think about [the older daughter] that she was actually born in Germany... If something like the School of Friendship would still exist I would send my daughters there. I would not have to think twice to let them go. (Interview, Chimoio, 9 June 2008) ¹⁹⁰

Nonetheless, neither Mia nor Fernando seriously contemplated returning to Germany as guest workers as some former students of School of Friendship did. They could apply for the guest workers programme, but they decided to remain in their homeland.

Clearly, the rejection by their government after their return to Mozambique did not destroy their strong sense of patriotism nor the general feeling that with the FRELIMO of Samora Machel, Mozambique was on the right track. As Mia explains:

The government simply left us, they did not profit from our experience... but what Samora had planned was a good project and we were unlucky it did not turn out the way he had planned it. Overall I think it was good here in Mozambique when we took that socialist way. We did not have such nice houses and cars, but we had food and the children went to school. Now there are some who own a lot and many who have nothing. Socialism has helped to balance that. (Interview, Chimoio, 9 June 2008) ¹⁹¹

Unluckily, the experiences of other students of the School of Friendship were not so positive after their return to Mozambique. The brilliant future that was promised to them couldn't exist any longer, given the fact the country was in the middle of the civil war. Many of them, after they returned to Mozambique, were forced to join the FRELIMO Army.

¹⁹⁰ Müller, T. R, "The 'German children' of Mozambique", p. 66

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

5. Military training of Mozambican troopers in East Germany

Besides economic, technical and educational cooperation, the GDR and Mozambique cooperated also in the field of military training, meaning that many Mozambican troopers stayed in the GDR to follow a military training.

It is well-known that the Cold War affected indirectly the African continent too. On the one side, South Africa's government, military and intelligence services saw themselves acting in the context of the Cold War, more specifically on the side of the West in a "proxy war", and they regarded themselves as a "bulwark against communist aggression"¹⁹². South Africa was viewed as a bastion against communism since that several of its northern neighbours, Mozambique and Angola, for instance, were led by socialist parties and backed by the Soviet bloc. Mozambique and the other South Africa's immediate or indirect neighbours therefore resulted to be "front states", they found themselves - intentionally or unintentionally - on the side of the Eastern Bloc and the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Soviet Union, the GDR, Cuba, and other states provided military support.¹⁹³

Since the GDR, was considered a relatively rich country among the Comecon states, and given its relative freedom of manoeuvre, it was held more than able to take on African aid. At the same time, East Germany was considered to be efficient in setting up political parties and organizing cadres and security organs. In supplying such assistance during the Cold War, the GDR had come to portray itself as 'the natural ally of former colonial peoples'.¹⁹⁴ As Erich Honecker underlined, East Germany was standing "side by side against common enemies. Common effort

¹⁹² Pfister, R., "Trying to Safeguard the Impossible: South Africa's Apartheid Intelligence in Africa, 1961–1994", in *Journal of Intelligence History*, vol. 7, Winter 2007/2008, p. 25.

¹⁹³ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität. Militärbeziehungen und Militärhilfen der DDR in die »Dritte Welt«*, Berlin, 2012, p. 244.

¹⁹⁴ Glass, G. A., "East Germany in Black Africa: A New Special Role?", in *The World Today*, Vol. 36, No. 8, Royal Institute of International Affairs, August 1980, p. 311.

inspires us to do everything for the good of working people, for peace and for social progress". Therefore, supporting the new government of Mozambique, as well as the liberation movement FRELIMO prior Mozambican independence was a natural step towards such policy.¹⁹⁵

In March 1980, *Der Spiegel* reported that the focus of GDR military support was not on arms supplies, but rather on the training of foreign military personnel both in Africa and especially in the GDR. This latter form of military aid will be taken in consideration in this chapter, as it represents a quite interesting phenomenon of regulated migration, even if the Mozambican military personnel was granted a stay of 2-4 years, depending on the length of training.

5.1. Stages of the GDR military aid towards Mozambique: building a 'socialist' army

In 1987, Hillebrand¹⁹⁶ dealt in great detail with the possible motives and goals of the GDR in its engagement in Africa, subsuming not only military aid but also all forms of cooperation. Hillebrand emphasised the importance of political and ideological training during the military training of Third World military personnel in the GDR. As action fields of the GDR military aid, he named material and weapon supplies, military and technical training of cadres, advice on how to build armies, political indoctrination as well as help in building defence industries. Thus, he underlined that weapon supplies represented rather a small part of military aid, as in fact the GDR had no significant weapons production of its own.¹⁹⁷

A much higher importance, as already mentioned, was given to the deployment of military advisors and the training of Third World military personnel in their homelands and on East German territory. A Warsaw-Treaty internal division of tasks provided that the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovak Republic and Poland had to take

¹⁹⁵ Glass, G. A., East Germany in Black Africa: A New Special Role? In *The World Today*, Vol. 36, No. 8 (Aug., 1980), pp. 305-312, Royal Institute of International Affairs p. 312

¹⁹⁶ See Hillebrand, E., *Das Afrika Engagement der DDR*, Berlin, 1987.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid. p. 201-203

care of arm deliveries, while the GDR had the task of providing advice and training.¹⁹⁸

In November 1974, for the first time Machel directly requested the East German Ambassador in Dar es Salam for military training. According to Machel's request, 300 FRELIMO fighters should have been trained in the GDR.¹⁹⁹ The realisation of such project would have meant a new form of military aid. In six months, the FRELIMO fighters should firstly have received a basic education and then a special education. They should have been employed in border control and security, in custom authorities, in the "fight against economic sabotage", in state security and in personal protection.²⁰⁰ Moreover, in this occasion Machel praised the GDR's great experience in these areas, especially referring to the protection of borders, which was, in Machel's words, "solved in a hasty manner".

Right after the request made by Machel, internal voting process began in the GDR. Subsequently to the request of the Central Committee on Security Affairs on the feasibility of such project, Army General Hoffmann replied, at the end of November 1974, that in principle such combined training could be approved. Among other things, the requirements for the trainees and most importantly the costs that had to be undertaken should have been clarified in the first place.²⁰¹

At the beginning of December 1974, during a visit in East Berlin, Samora Machel expressed his urgent and extensive wishes "for material assistance, consultants and experts especially in non-civil fields". In this occasion, he personally thanked the SED leadership and especially Honecker, "because the GDR in the most difficult moments was a faithful fellow combatant [Mitkämpfer] and a comrade in arms [Waffengefährte] of FRELIMO". However, he did "not come to bring flowers, but to explain the difficulty of our struggle and to find solutions here."²⁰² In particular, Machel asked for further support and advice aimed to build and control an army in

¹⁹⁸ See Boege, V., *Militärische und militärisch relevante Aspekte der DDR Südpolitik. Problemaufriß*, Hamburg, 1989, p. 5.

¹⁹⁹ BArch, DC 20/12851, pp. 31-36: MfAH, BSA, Oberst Schönherr, an Weiß, 19.11.1974, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²⁰⁰ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV B 2/12/55, Pp. 226-229: DDR Botschaft Daressalam, Aktenvermerk Gespräch mit Machel 14.11.1974, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²⁰¹ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 253.

²⁰² SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/3A/2618, p. 112: Zusammenfassung der Ausführungen Samora Machels am 4.12.1974 im Hause des ZK der SED, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

relation to the future state founding of the People Republic of Mozambique in June 1975.²⁰³ Machel made quite specific requests to the Central Committee for Security Affairs of the GDR, extending them considerably as well. With East German military aid, 250 soldiers should receive basic military training and special training in Mozambique in order to be employed in “decisive positions” such as police forces, border patrols and state security personnel from June 1975 onwards.²⁰⁴ Therefore, the training by the East German *Unterweisungskräfte*, the training forces, would have to start in January 1975 and be completed by 25 July, the planned Independence Day.

In December 1974, during a visit by the FRELIMO leadership in the GDR, Honecker declared his readiness to "continue to actively develop the alliance between the socialist community and the national liberation movement"²⁰⁵ It comes as no surprise that, as a result of the GDR's commitments, the FRELIMO leader expressed his deep satisfaction with the GDR's constructive attitude and quick response. He asked for a fast implementation of the proposed measures, especially in the field of military training.²⁰⁶

In early January 1975, under the supervision of Lieutenant general Borufka, officer of the NVA (National People's Army of the GDR), conditions and premises for the implementation of the project were sounded out on-site in Mozambique, in order to support the final decision of the SED Central Committee on the matter. Borufka reported that Machel reiterated his initial request: the training of 2,500 soldiers, police officers for border security, criminal investigators, personal protection and state security personnel. Through a more precise assessment of the situation, the large-scale project turned out to be not feasible: the FRELIMO volunteers neither had the necessary education nor sufficient Portuguese language skills. Hence, Borufka asserted that the conditions for an effective training in

²⁰³ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/3A/2618, p. 114, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²⁰⁴ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 255

²⁰⁵ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/J IV 2/3A/2618, P. 105: Information über den Aufenthalt der Delegation der FRELIMO in der DDR, 3.-10.12.1974, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²⁰⁶ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 254.

Mozambique did not exist. Machel eventually agreed to have 250 instructors trained in the GDR instead.²⁰⁷

In April and May 1975, as agreed, 250 FRELIMO members were trained in the "armed organs" of the GDR: 110 in the Stasi (the State Security Service), 90 in the Federal Police and 50 in border troops. According to the correspondence, the implementation of the agreement on the training of the 250 cadres was co-ordinated and controlled by the Central Committee on Security Affairs.²⁰⁸

A first interim report by the Central Committee on Security Affairs at the end of April highlighted the outstanding attitude of the Mozambican cadres; they were defined as "very disciplined and eager to learn".

5.1.1. The military clause included in the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty, 24 February 1979

Honecker's official visit in Mozambique in February 1979 marked the culmination of bilateral relations with the country, as already underlined in chapter 2. With the conclusion of the Treaty of Friendship of February 24, 1979, the military cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique reached therefore a new level. Indeed, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, which was concluded for a period of twenty years, contained two military clauses. The first is contained in Article 5:

In the interest of strengthening the defence capacity of the High Contracting Parties, they will govern cooperation in the military sphere through bilateral agreements. (Translated by the author, see p. 122 of the Appendix, Article 5, Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation)

The military passages of the agreement were by no means kept secret. The SED Central Newspaper *Neues Deutschland* published the text of Art. 10 on the front page of June 26th newspaper:

In the event of a situation that might threaten or violate peace, the High Contracting Parties will immediately contact each other to coordinate their positions to eliminate the threat or to restore peace. (Translated by the author, see p. 122 Appendix, Article 5, Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation)

²⁰⁷ BArch, AZN 32 633, Pp. 51-62: MfNV, Generalleutnant Borufka: Informationen. O.D., Eingangsstempel Sekretariat des Ministers 28.2.1975, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²⁰⁸ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 255

On June 28, 1980, in his speech to the People's Chamber of the GDR on the Friendship and Cooperation Treaties concluded with Angola and Mozambique, Minister of Foreign Affairs Oskar Fischer addressed military questions, yet without expressly mentioning neither the military aid from the GDR towards these countries nor the military clauses contained in the Treaty with Mozambique. In fact, military clauses were not contained in any other agreement concluded with any state outside the system of the Warsaw Treaty.²⁰⁹ According to Döring, Article 10 in particular was meant to guarantee the safety of a large number (ca. 1,200) of East German citizens who were working in Mozambique.

In accordance with Article 5, a Protocol of Military cooperation was agreed on May 1979 during the visit of Minister of National Defence of Mozambique Armando Emilio Guebuza, in East Berlin.²¹⁰ However, as already noted in chapter 2, the published military clause between the GDR and Mozambique promised by no means a definite military commitment of troops in the event of conflict.

5.1.2. Intensification of training support in the GDR from 1980

A principled agreement on the training of Mozambican military personnel in the GDR was reached in East Germany in November 1979, as a result of an official friendly visit by Armando Guebuza. The fact that military training mostly took place in East Germany meant that the GDR had the benefit of avoiding sending its officers as trainers in Mozambique. Whenever the leadership in Maputo insisted on the deployment of NVA officers in their country, the Ministry of National Defence of the GDR would suggest having them trained in the GDR instead. Qualified training could be carried out "more effectively" in the NVA, as argued by the head of the NVA, Günter Lorenz, during a visit in Maputo in 1985.²¹¹

On April 1, 1980 in Maputo, NVA Colonel General Helmut Fleißner, Deputy Defence Minister of the GDR, and Guebuza signed the corresponding agreement on the training of Mozambican military cadres in the GDR. The agreement provided

²⁰⁹ In the treaties of friendship and cooperation between the GDR and Afghanistan (1982) Ethiopia, (1979), Angola (1979), Cambodia (1980), Cuba (1980), Laos (1982), Mongolia (1977) and Vietnam (1977) such clause did not exist.

²¹⁰ *Neues Deutschland*, 28 May 1979.

²¹¹ BArch, AZN 31487, Pp. 90-93: MfNV, Meldung Generalmajor Lorenz, 18.10.1985, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

that the GDR had to train 279 Mozambican military personnel for a period ending in 1989. The subdivisions included 70 training units at Officers' School of the Land Forces, 62 at Officers' School of Air Forces, 62 at Officers' School of Naval Forces and 60 as Political commissars. In addition, 15 officers and 10 dog handlers of the border troops were trained. The duration of the training was set at rotating years for all the sub-forces and branches of service.²¹²

According to Fleißner's report, the NVA had originally planned a two-year apprenticeship, but the FRELIMO leadership had insisted on the making of a three-year training in Mozambique. After persistent negotiations, the Department of Defence in Maputo agreed to send its cadres to the GDR and to bear one-third of the training costs, a monthly allowance and a one-time clothing allowance of 400 Marks for each cadre. In addition, Maputo had to bear the travel expenses of its soldiers. In particular, Maputo's cost share, according to Fleißner's calculations, was \$ 7.3 million, or equivalent to \$ 13.8 million value date.²¹³ Annex 4 of the Agreement regulated in detail the cost allocation and the terms of payment. In total, according to the GDR Ministry of Defence, 263 Mozambican officers and non-commissioned officers were trained in the NVA between 1981 and 1990.

Month and year	12.1981 ²¹⁴	11.1983 ²¹⁵	11.1984 ²¹⁶	01.1986 ²¹⁷	01.1987 ²¹⁸	10.1989 ²¹⁹	Total
Number	178	192	78	40	8	18	263

Table 2: Training of Mozambican military authorities in the NVA

The data show significant differences over the years. First two years of the training project had the highest number of cadres, number that reached its peak in

²¹² BArch, DVW 1/54301: Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die Ausbildung von Militärkadern für die Volksbefreiungstreitkräfte in der DDR vom 1.4.1980, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹³ BArch, AZN 31487, Pp. 59-69: MfNV, Hoffmann, an Honecker, 7.4.1980, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁴ BStU, MfS, HA I, 12618, P. 34; MfS, HA II, 29466, p.2, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁵ BStU, MfS, HA I, 13695, P. 14, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁶ BStU, MfS, HA II, 27555, P. 2, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁷ BStU, MfS, HA I, 13350, P. 2, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁸ BStU, MfS, HA I, 5869, P. 183, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²¹⁹ BStU, MfS, HA I, 13289, P. 41, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

November 1983. Then the numbers shows a sharply decreasing trend in the following years.

Of the 178 Mozambicans who began their training in the NVA in 1981/1982, 61 were at the Officers' School of the Air Forces in Kamenz, 50 at the Officers' School in Prora, 15 at the Officers' College of the Border Forces in Plauen and 22 for the language training in Naumburg. In addition, 30 naval officers studied at the Officer's School in Stralsund.²²⁰ It should not be overlooked that the GDR also trained students of military finance and economics. They should have been employed to build up a functioning administration of the armed forces of Mozambique.²²¹

In 1985, given such decreasing trend regarding the sending of military personnel in the GDR, Günter Lorenz directly referred to a Mozambican politician and pointed out that Mozambique had clearly fallen below the agreed rates for training in the NVA from 1983 on. Mozambique, in response, offered to send over 380 military personnel in the GDR over the following years.

NVA Major General Lorenz explained that the training of officers in the GDR, who in turn could train Mozambican soldiers on a larger scale once having returned to their home country, was particularly important. Basically, the guiding principle was the 'training of the trainer' [Ausbildung von der Ausbilder]. This would provide a greater breadth, since in this way it was possible to reach a broader number of military personnel than with a direct training by NVA officers in Mozambique. The training approach was therefore the training of multipliers. Since it was impossible to train all Mozambican soldiers in the GDR, the key to the desired success laid in the training of the instructors.²²² However, for this plan to succeed it was also necessary that once the trained officers returned to Mozambique, they would be employed to train military personnel there. Lorenz expressed his concern to the Mozambican military leadership, as some Mozambicans who had been trained in the NVA until 1984 had not been employed in the armed forces after their return and had not been

²²⁰ BStU, MfS, HA II, 29466, P. 2, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²²¹ BArch, AZN 8487, Bd 1, P. 152: MfNV, Chef Aufklärung an Chef Hauptstab, 14.10.1983

²²² Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 275

appointed officers. The "investment of a four-year training" thus resulted to be "not effective".²²³

5.2. The stay of Mozambican troopers in the GDR: organisation of the training project

5.2.1. Legal aspects of the stay

The legal guidelines and organisational provisions for the stay of the soldiers in the GDR were regulated by the intergovernmental agreements with great detail. The contractual provisions were implemented by the orders of the Minister responsible for the training of the Mozambican military cadres, as well as the following orders of the chiefs of the armed forces responsible for the training, in whose responsibility the training took place. The orders reflected specifically the contractual arrangements.²²⁴ In 1980, general legal and organisational provisions were established with an order of the Minister and with following implementing orders of various Deputy Divisions.

During their stay in the GDR, the Mozambican military personnel were subordinated to the commanders of the training institutions, which had disciplinary authority towards the trainees. In order to facilitate and support internal organisation within the groups of trainees and to secure direct connection between the commander of the teaching facility and the military cadres, a senior among the trainees was appointed with command authority. It was the Defence Ministry of Mozambique that had to name the *Nationaliätenältester*. The seniors were responsible for tasks such as supporting the fulfilment of training goals, maintaining discipline and order, and ensuring the connection between the commanders of the teaching institutions and the military cadres and vice versa.

The intergovernmental agreement expressly stipulated that the soldiers were subject to the provisions of GDR law. In the event of serious violations of East German legislation, the stay permit could be withdrawn and the military trainee had to return to Mozambique. Indeed, the agreement provided for the possibility of early

²²³ SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/298, Pp. 292-297: Informationgespräch mit Marcelino dos Santos, 18.10.1995, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²²⁴ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 410

termination of training. The given reasons were "gross violations of discipline and order" [grobe Verstöße gegen die Disziplin und Ordnung] as well as "physical or mental unfitnes" [körperliche oder geistige Nichteignung], "serious violations of the legislation of the GDR" [schwerwiegende Verstöße gegen die Rechtsvorschriften der DDR] or it could simply be related to a request coming from the sending country.²²⁵

In general, while on service, the foreign military personnel had to wear the uniform of the GDR armed forces with the corresponding NVA military insignias, but without the national emblem of the GDR. The soldiers received a one-time allowance amounting of 600 Marks for the purchase of civilian clothing and a monthly allowance of 200 Marks for officers and 150 Marks for non-commissioned officers.

5.2.2. Prora, the chosen location for the training

Before starting the actual training of foreign troopers, the NVA had to take decisions on the location in which the training would have taken place. The Chief of the *Politischen Hauptverwaltung*, the supreme party organisation within the NVA, backed the decision of the Minister of not training foreign military personnel in East Berlin. The trainees should therefore not be trained at the Military Political College of Berlin-Grünau. As a consequence, the Military Technical School (MTS) in Prora seemed to be the ideal solution.²²⁶ However, in June 1980, when co-authorizing Operation No. 74/80 on the training of Mozambican military cadres in the GDR, the Chief of the Land Forces pointed out that the special training course at the MTS "Erich Habersaath" Prora had reached full capacity, and training further troopers would not have been possible.²²⁷ In other words, the sharp increase in the annual contingents of foreign military trainees brought the existing training structure of the Land Forces to their capacity limits. As a result, in order to "prepare and carry out the social science, military, technical and German-language training of foreign military cadres in the land forces", the Ministry of Defence of the GDR ordered the creation of another officer college in November 1980. The training facility settled in

²²⁵ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 412

²²⁶ BArch, DVW 1/61661, p. 113. MfNV, Chef PHV an Hauptinspektor NVA, 9.6.1980, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²²⁷ Ebd., p. 127

Prora, on the island of Rügen, was later named after the former Foreign Minister of the GDR, Otto Winzer.²²⁸ The largest construction investment in the context of this programme was the creation of an officers' college only for foreign military personnel.

The seclusion of the location and the access control possibilities on the island were decisive for the location choice, as well as the security of the site and the shield against Western observers, since the island of Rügen was foreclosed to Allied military forces.²²⁹ In addition, logistical, technical and organisational-practical reasons were also decisive for the election of Prora. First of all, the existence of a huge architectural complex, the "Colossus of Rügen", which could accommodate 20,000 guests, the buildings extend over a length of 4.5 kilometres. It was originally constructed during the third Reich, but it was never operational. After the onset of the Second World War, a diverting of resources stopped construction before the resort could be completed. After the formation of the German Democratic Republic's National Peoples Army in 1956, the buildings became a restricted military area, housing several East German Army units.²³⁰ In addition, in Prora the MTS land forces training facility "Erich Habersaath" was already operative, and had been training foreign military personnel for years, initially from Vietnam and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Therefore, qualified and trained teaching staff was available for new OHS. About the training of the foreign military, the NVS tried as little as possible to penetrate the public.

Secrecy issues played a major role. In particularly sensitive cases, the training agreements contained a special clause, according to which the military cadres had to keep their nationality or affiliation with their organisations secret from anyone else outside the educational establishment.²³¹ As stressed by Major General Geisler in 1988: "We exist, yet we do not exist. I do not need to explain this concept in detail. Issues of secrecy and vigilance had to be respected. The other side [...] was very interested in what happened in Prora"²³²

²²⁸ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 419

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 421

²³⁰ See Reinhardt, Dieter, *Meine Zeit*, ed. By KulturKunststatt Prora, Hüllhorst 2003, p. 2, for detailed information on the NVA and Prora.

²³¹ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 480.

²³² See Geisler, MGI 1988, P.6 and P. 16.



Figure 6: Picture of the Prora's architectural complex, taken on May 21, 2011. Source: Klugschnacker, own work.

5.2.3. Military training or ideological education?

The agreement explicitly stipulated that training should take place only in accordance with the military provisions of the NVA and exclusively on their weapons and equipment. As a consequence, the training was largely based on the contents and standards of NVA officer training, albeit adapted to the trainee groups. The need for modification became necessary before the start of training in September 1981. Both the military and the social sciences training programmes appeared to be unusable and were adapted to each group of trainees depending on each situation.²³³ For instance, the relatively low education level of the Mozambicans had to be balanced with measures aimed to expand and promote mathematical and scientific knowledge.²³⁴

The training of the Mozambican troopers was divided into a one-year basic course and a multi-year, one to four years, main course. Training language was German. In the basic course, counting a total of 1,600 training hours, 180 hours alone were dedicated to the teaching of German as a foreign language. Significantly less training time was allocated to further education in the fields of mathematics and natural

²³³ Grosche, W., *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der Offizierhochschule „Otto Winzer“ von 1981 bis 1986*, Militärpolitische Hochschule der NVA „Wilhelm Pieck“, Berlin (East), 1988, pp 19-21.

²³⁴ van der Heyden, U.; Schleicher, I.; Schleicher, H. G., *Engagiert für Afrika: die DDR und Afrika II*, Lit Verlag, Münster, 1994, p. 21.

sciences (160 hours of training), political education (180 hours of training) as well as basic military training and sports (90 hours each).²³⁵.

Ideological requirements and rules dominated the whole training process, which becomes rather clear after reading the Program for the training of foreign military cadres of the GDR Land Forces. The first point reads as follows:

The trainee officer is convinced of the rightfulness and victoriousness of Marxism-Leninism [...], of the legitimacy of the victory of Socialism [...], of the leading role of the working class and its Marxist-Leninist party as the political, ideological and organisational leadership centre of the society, as the most important source of force and strength of the armed forces, of the role of Socialism within the international community, lead by the Soviet Union as the main force of the world revolutionary movement, of the historical lack of perspective of imperialism and especially its neo-colonialist manifestation [...]. (Kommando Landstreitkräfte: Programm für die Heranbildung ausländische Militärkader, published on June 9, 1981, translated by the author).

Only the last three out of a total of eight points on the Program defined typical military demands. In those points soldierly virtues such as courage and bravery were rather emphasised. In point seven are set the requirements defining the concrete goals of the training in each field of training. Point eight defined that each foreign officer would receive close combat training, explosives expert training and driving instruction.

According to the program, the Mozambican troopers had to obtain a qualification as trainers and commanders and had to be able to use their knowledge and skills creatively basing on the conditions to be found in their home country.²³⁶

Other purposes of the training were politically related; among other things, the trainees should have been aware of the correctness of the anti-imperialist and socialist orientation and been loyal to the revolutionary party, meaning that they should have supported the struggle of their own people in this direction. Strongly ideological was also the goal of "strengthening the anti-imperialist attitude and unity in the fight against the reactionary, aggressive and neo-colonialist policies of

²³⁵ BArch, DVH 8-12/47543, pp.16-22: Auskunftbericht Kommandeur OHS "Otto Winzer" zum Besuch Botschafter und Militärattaché PLO und JAE, 20.4.1983, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

²³⁶ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 437

imperialism and the readiness and ability to deal with the phenomena of anti-communism, anti-sovietism, racism, neo-colonialism" among the trainees.²³⁷

5.2.4. Data about the number of Mozambican trainees and the length of their stay in the GDR

In the following table can be found the training directions and periods and teaching facilities for the training of 70 officers of the Land Force, 62 officers of the Air Force, 22 officers and 40 NCOs of the Navy, 15 officers and 20 NCOs of the border troops and 60 political officers from Mozambique. The training period lasted four years for officers and two years for non-commissioned officers²³⁸.

Military branch and training profile	Trainees	Period of time		Facility
		German Course	Political, military and technical training	
I Officers Land Forces	70			
Rifle units commanders	10	1981/82	1982/85	MTS LaSK Prora
Armoured units commanders	10	1980/81	1981/84	MTS LaSK Prora
Message units	10	1982/83	1983/86	MTS LaSK Prora
Tank service	10	1980/81	1981/84	MTS LaSK Prora
Motorists	10	1981/82	1982/85	MTS LaSK Prora
Weapon technical service	10	1981/82	1982/85	MTS LaSK Prora
Backward services	10	1982/83	1983/86	MTS LaSK Prora
II Officer School Air Forces	62			

²³⁷ From the 4. Durchführungsanordnung des Stellvertreters des Ministers und Hofs der Politischen Hauptverwaltung der NVA zur Anordnung Nr. 049(9/007 des Ministers, shorter version to be found in: Grosche, W., *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung der Offizierhochschule „Otto Winzer“*, p. 49.

²³⁸ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p., p. 402.

Helicopter pilots and aviation engineer service	8	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV ²³⁹
(Helicopters)	4	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV
Fighter controllers	5	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV
Aviation Engineer Service (Combat Aircraft)	21	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV
Anti-aircraft missile troops	16	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV
Radio-technical troops	8	1980/81	1981/84	OHS LSK/LV
III.a Officer School Naval Forces	22			
Marine officers		1980/81	1981/84	OHS VM ²⁴⁰
Ship engine officers		1980/81	1981/84	OHS VM
III.b NCO naval forces	40			
	8	1980/1981	1981/82	OHS VM
	8	1981/82	1982/83	OHS VM
	8	1983/84	1984/85	OHS VM
	8	1984/85	1985/86	OHS VM
	8	1985/86	1986/87	OHS VM
IV.a Officer school for border troops	15	1980/81	1981/84	OHS GT ²⁴¹
IV.b NCO student border forces (dog handler)	20	1981/82	1982/83	US IV of the GT ²⁴²
V Political Officers	60			
	12	1981/82	1982/85	MTS LaSK ²⁴³
	12	1982/83	1983/86	MTS LaSK

²³⁹ The German training should be carried out at the NCO School VIII of the LSK / LV "Harry Kuhn" in Bad Döben.

²⁴⁰ The German training should also be carried out at the Officers College of the *Volksmarine*

²⁴¹ German language training should be conducted at the Institute for Foreign Language Education (IfFA).

²⁴² The German training should be carried out at the IfFA.

²⁴³ The German training should be carried out at the IfFA.

	12	1983/84	1984/87	MTS LaSK
	12	1984/85	1985/88	MTS LaSK
	12	1985/86	1986/89	MTS LaSK

Table 3: Planned training courses and periods as well as teaching facilities for the education of the Mozambicans from 1980 to 1989. Source: BArch, DVW 1/61661, pp. 79-100: Befehl Nr. 74/80 des Ministers für Nationale Verteidigung über die Ausbildung von Militärskadern für die Volksbefreiungsstreitkräfte Mosambiks in der NVA der DDR vom 28.7.1980, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

6. Brief reference to the situation of Mozambican migrants right after the German reunification

Within the framework of the analysis carried out in this paper, a brief reference should be made regarding the situation of Mozambican migrants after the German reunification. Uncertainty and confusion characterized the period immediately following the reunification and Mozambican migrants found themselves in a rather difficult situation concerning their stay in Germany. Many of them felt forced to return to their country. This chapter therefore aims to provide a brief representation of such situation, here presented as a conclusive topic.

Particular attention was paid on contract workers, both because they made up the broader number of Mozambican migrants in the GDR, and because they spent longer time in East Germany than the other two groups. Moreover, the socialist education project of the School of Friendship was due on 1988 and was not renewed; therefore the young Mozambicans who arrived in the GDR in 1982 had already gone back to their country. On the other hand, military trainees spent from 2 to 4 years in the GDR and had not the chance to build a life in the country, as contract workers did. In fact, many contract workers had children with German women and men and many of them got married with German people. In other words, not only did they learn the language and work there, they integrated among the German population.

6.1. The end of the “socialist aid” period

As briefly mentioned in chapter 2, the collapse of Eastern Europe in 1989 marked the end of socialist aid to the developing world, while the future of people coming from Third World countries who were working in the GDR was uncertain due to the German reunification. East German interim Ministry for Economic Cooperation was disbanded right after the reunification. As a consequence, the aid programme came

fully under the jurisdiction of the FRG's Ministry of Economic Cooperation. Therefore, from that point onwards, only those projects that were compatible with the development principles of the former West Germany were to be continued.

Intergovernmental treaties between the GDR and other countries posed problems, since Federal Germany did not feel responsible for treaties concluded by the GDR. A total of 200 cooperation and intergovernmental agreements with 60 developing countries had been signed by East Germany up to 1989. In addition, at that time there were as well as 72,000 foreign workers in East German factories, among them 15,500 Mozambicans, the second largest group after the Vietnamese.²⁴⁴ Undeniably, within the reunification context, there was no time for in-depth analyses or plans to solve such situations in the most effective and logical way, and many contract workers were put in a rather difficult and uncertain position.

As already mentioned above, the Federal Republic did not feel responsible for the contract workers, even if organisations kept pointing out that such issue lied in the joint responsibility of both German governments, since the status of Mozambican contract workers was comparable to that of guest workers in the former Federal Republic. Nonetheless, in autumn 1989, the situation of the Mozambican contract workers in the GDR suddenly changed: the German reunification meant the de facto the end of the agreements between the GDR and Mozambique. Thus, many East German companies could not survive the conversion process from a socialist system towards a free-market unified German state. As a consequence, many companies were then taken over by West German companies. For foreign contract workers, this generally meant dismissal, although their contract was theoretically not terminable before its official end. As Almuth Berger, Federal Commissioner for Foreigners of the State of Brandenburg, summarized, the fundamental problems that accompanied the reunification of Germany were to be found in the fact that "it was clear that this type of intergovernmental agreement could no longer function: in a free-market country, the government cannot assign any workers to any factory and make them work there."²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ "Rechenschaftsbericht der Länderabteilung", M.W.Z., Berlin, 2 October 1990, p. 37.

²⁴⁵ Berger, A., "Schwierige Wendezeit", in: *Mosambik-Rundbrief*, Nr. 63, April 2004, p. 22.

According to Berger, for the Mozambican contract workers the new situation meant that they economically became a "disagreeable cost factor", since the employment of the contract workers was a state organized employment, which was possible in a state-controlled planned economy but impossible under the conditions of the free market economy.²⁴⁶ Therefore, within the reunification context, the government of the GDR firstly stopped the planned entry of contract workers. The next step was to propose amendments to the intergovernmental agreements with Mozambique. The result was a new agreement that was concluded on 28 May 1990 between the GDR and Mozambique. The agreement was to be valid until 31 December 1990. As stated by Berger, who took part to the talks in Maputo as representative, the negotiations on this point were extremely difficult.²⁴⁷ According to the original agreement of 1979, a termination of the contract of employment was only possible with the agreement of both contracting parties:

The premature termination of the employment contract in accordance with subparagraphs b and c of this paragraph shall be effected with the agreement of the authorized representatives of both parties. (Art 4, Treaty of February 24, 1979, translated by the author)

While according to the amended agreement of May 28, 1990, this same article reads as follows:

The hiring company of the German Democratic Republic can prematurely terminate the agreed employment contract with Mozambican workers upon notification of the partners of the agreement if it has compelling reasons or must reduce the production staff for economic reasons for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the production due to the change of the production profile or because of the change in the production profile or because of cessation of production for reasons of environmental protection. (Art 4, Treaty of May 28, 1990, translated by the author)

The agreement was clearly adapted to the economic needs of the GDR.

All this resulted in approximately 12,300 Mozambican contract workers leaving the GDR within a year from 31.12.1989 to 31.12.1990.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ Berger, A., quoted in: Döring, H.; Rüchel, U., *Freundschaftsbande und Beziehungskisten*, p. 123.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ See Marburger, H., „*Und wir haben unseren Beitrag zur Volkswirtschaft geleistet*“ – Eine aktuelle Bestandsaufnahme der Situation der Vertragsarbeitnehmer der ehemaligen DDR vor und nach der Wende. Verlag für interkulturelle Kommunikation, Frankfurt/Main, 1993.

6.2. A compulsory choice for Mozambican contract workers

After the German reunification, the status of contract workers was not clear and there were hardly any information about their stay permit. In fact, after months of silence, Federal Germany, as reported by von Lucius in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, mentioned that no one would be expelled against his will. However, in the meantime, the silence had created great uncertainty among foreign workers.²⁴⁹

However, as reported by von Lucius, contract workers were actually given three options by Federal Germany. They could either return home, apply for a continuance of employment until the termination of the standing labour agreements (most ending in 1994, at the latest) if they weren't already been dismissed by the company, or obtain an individual work permit, that would be valid as long as the contract workers could prove they had both a job and a residence.

Therefore, in theory, it was possible to stay in Germany, however, in practice, the conditions were not so easy to comply with. The Mozambicans who were dismissed by East German companies were even entitled to unemployment benefits, support, a work permit or a business license, and they could rent somewhere.²⁵⁰ These rights were rather difficult to claim, due the vicious cycle of "no home without work and no work without home". Mozambican people in East Germany, by virtue of being employed as contract workers, were accommodated in dorms; after their contract of employment was terminated, Mozambican former contract workers had to personally find other accommodations, which was not so easy, since many of them couldn't find a new job.

In this regard, there were also hardly any consulting options for the contract workers.²⁵¹ There was little information on how contract workers would be treated in the future, what rights, duties and opportunities they would have.

Moreover, many authors reported that right-wing extremism and xenophobia exploded against foreign working people right after the German reunification. After

²⁴⁹ von Lucius, R., "Nostalgie trotz unerfüllter Versprechen", in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 30, 1994.

²⁵⁰ Reimer, J., "Interview mit der Ausländerbeauftragten des Landes Brandenburg, Almuth Berger: Schwierige Wendezeit." In: *Mosambik-Rundbrief*, Nr. 63, April 2004, pp. 22-23.

²⁵¹ See Ahrens, E., "Im Osten was Neues. Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter/innen in der DDR zur Zeit der Wende", in: *Mosambik-Rundbrief*, Nr. 73, September 2007, pp. 22-23.

“The Turnaround”, a widespread fear towards the future and unemployment spread especially among East German population, who felt as second-class citizens, compared to the West German ones. Several East German companies had to operate mass layoffs for economic reasons. Added to this was the feeling of not being employed and lack of prospects. In Berger’s opinion, such circumstances led to xenophobia and open racism in part of German society.

Cost-of-living and rent increases after the currency reform, dismissal, xenophobic pressure and a lack of information therefore led approximately 2.000 Mozambicans to choose premature return.²⁵² The contract workers were entitled to a severance payment of DM 3,000 if they chose to leave, plus two full months’ salary. They were also offered help with transporting possessions and paid free flight. Sums that companies would have to pay under governmental agreements. However, there were some cases of embezzlement on the side of the companies, which paid either none or only part of the money. Not to mention the fact that several East German companies went into default because of the conversion towards free-market and were not able to pay any due money to contract workers.²⁵³

Eventually, of the 15,100 Mozambican who were registered in East Germany in 1989, only 2,800 Mozambicans were left by the end of 1990²⁵⁴ while by the end of June 1991, the number of former contract workers from Mozambique in the new federal states and Berlin had fallen to just under 1,000.²⁵⁵

²⁵² Von Lucius, R., “Nostalgie trotz unerfüllter Versprechen”, in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 30, 1994.

²⁵³ See Unknown, “Lächeln zum Abflug”, in: *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 41, 1990, p. 77.

²⁵⁴ Berger, Almuth, “Annäherungen – Bericht der Ausländerbeauftragten des Landes Brandenburg, Potsdam, Die Ausländerbeauftragte des Landes Brandenburg, 2006, p. 38;

²⁵⁵ Marburger, H., “*Und wir haben unseren Beitrag zur Volkswirtschaft geleistet*“, p. 39.

Conclusions

Starting from a detailed reconstruction of the bilateral relations between GDR and Mozambique and by systematically analysing the rationale behind the migratory projects that were agreed between the two states, it was possible to obtain a full picture of the migration of Mozambicans into the GDR. This work took into consideration the 'causes' upstream of such migratory phenomenon, in order to better document the phenomenon itself, contributing to provide a description in which the cause-effect relationships of what has occurred are never ignored, also by taking into account the results expected by the two countries. Contract workers, students and troopers have indeed had the opportunity to spend a period of their lives in East Germany by virtue of bilateral treaties, as has been amply discussed throughout this research. This migration represented a particular movement in a country where East German citizens would rather emigrate. It is evident that the migration of Mozambicans into the GDR was a particular exception to the current system in the GDR. Such migration, however, could only take place thanks to the relatively close intergovernmental relations between Mozambique and the GDR. Over the period 1975-1989, the two countries cooperated intensively on many fields, in particular on the exchange of knowledge and expertise, which were aimed at long-term economic cooperation. This latter, nonetheless, could not take place due to two main factors. The civil war in Mozambique, on the one hand, resulted in the destruction of a nation already impoverished by the long colonial rule. The dissolution of the Soviet Bloc and the collapse of the GDR on the other hand marked the end of the aid policy carried out during the Cold War. As a consequence, joint cooperation projects between the two nations were then dismissed. Those who have been most affected by these happenings were and still are the Mozambican returnees.

It proved to be very complicated to allow the approximately 16,000 former contract workers to integrate back into Mozambique. High unemployment due to the civil war made it almost impossible to integrate the many former contract workers

into working life. Most of them had received the compensation of 3,000 DM, but in order to survive, many former contract workers spent this compensation quickly, since they had no other source of income. Furthermore, contract workers could have their belongings shipped with containers: clothes, furniture and household appliances. The latter were rather useless, since in some areas there was still no electricity. The returnees eventually parted with their newly acquired goods from abroad in order to survive. Returnees found themselves catapulted into conflict economies that were not able to provide employment and facing governments that no longer had the ability to provide them with appropriate jobs, for which they received training in the GDR. Moreover, towards the end of the 1980s, it was clear that skilled workers were no longer needed in Mozambique, at least in the foreseeable future. The Mozambican government kept attaching great importance to sending young people to the GDR, since the country became increasingly insecure, as it was unsettled by a series of raids by the insurgent group RENAMO. As a result, at that specific moment the best option for young Mozambicans was to go to migrate in the GDR as contract workers.

Once returned to their country, the former contract workers were, socially speaking, marginalised by the ones who couldn't or didn't want to leave. The returnees were called *Madgermanes*, a compound word made up by the English "German" and Bantu-prefix "ma", and literally translates to "the Germans".

The contract workers in the GDR had also the opportunity to transfer part of their net pay to Mozambique, which they were to receive back after their return. From 1979 to 1985 one could transfer up to 25% of the wage to Mozambique according to the 1st Additional Protocol. With the 2nd Additional Protocol of 1986 this clause was amended, it was then made obligatory to transfer 60% of their wages to Mozambique. The purpose of this measure was that the contract workers could use this money once they returned to Mozambique to start a new life there. However, according to some authors, like Oppenheimer and Döring, this money - or part of it - was used to reduce Mozambique's debts towards the GDR. In fact, such funds were paid only sporadically and sometimes chaotically to the former contract workers by the Mozambican government. Pacific protests are still taking place in Maputo, where the 'headquarters' of the *Madgermanes* can be found. They are fighting to receive

parts of their salaries, as well as their social insurance contributions. The total amount still owed to the *Madgermanes* is still unclear. However, according to the Federal Foreign Office, East Germany transferred a total of 74.4 million US dollars in wage deductions and 18.6 million US dollars in social insurance payments to the Mozambican government. This totals 93 million dollars. On average, they would be 4,300 dollars for each worker.²⁵⁶

After their return to Mozambique, the students of the School of Friendship project were sent straight to the army in order to complete compulsory military service, since in 1988 the civil war between FRELIMO and RENAMO was still going on. As a result of the prolonged war, by the time the School of Friendship youth were demobilised, Mozambique had become one of the world's most impoverished countries offering few opportunities for formal employment²⁵⁷. The students thought they would have gone back to their provinces and started working there. However, when they got back to Mozambique, most of them could not return to their provinces because the civil war that affected certain rural areas. Since they had to undertake military training, they were separated from their friends. Such state of affairs began to change slowly only after the 1992 peace accord. Then, qualified personnel was needed for the process of reconstruction, but there were scant opportunities for the former students of the School of Friendship, as they had acquired technical skills which were at best useful for industries that no longer existed in the country, since the major joint industrial projects had been dismissed, both due to the political and economic situation and to the German reunification. Furthermore, their certificates, that according to the original agreement should have been equal to the completion of secondary school after grade 12 in Mozambique, were recognised as completion of grade 10 only. This denied the School of Friendship graduates to access further education in Mozambique. One can argue that such training program had a crucial weakness; the long-term goal was to educate and train personnel who would obtain a degree and know how but, in fact, the devastation of the civil war prevented the implementation of contractually regulated

²⁵⁶ Hess, A. *Das große Warten*, Brand eins, Issue 06/2009

²⁵⁷ See Hall, M., and Young. T., *Confronting Leviathan. Mozambique since independence*, London, Hurst and Company, 1997.

economic projects and the implementation of the plans to build a high-performance industry in Mozambique, for which educated personnel was needed.

In addition, some graduates did only conserve a passive knowledge of their language of origin, Portuguese, although the young Mozambican had kept in contact with relatives back home via letters during their stay in the GDR.

The post 1992 reconstruction process, which was mainly financed by foreign aid and based on structural adjustment programmes, free market and democratisation, resulted in the monopolization of political and economic power in the hands of a small elite.²⁵⁸

Eventually, there was a discrepancy between the socialist code of conduct that the Mozambican migrants were taught during their stay in the GDR and the Mozambican reality characterised by corruption and devoid of concern for the common good. This reinforced a distinct group identity among the returnees. Forgotten by their government, they took and are still taking part to an active political engagement, as the case of the protest of *Madgermanes* for their ‘socialist’ payday. Solidarity in the private realm between returnees also flourished. In addition, meetings are held on a regular basis among returnees, and thank to mobile phones they still keep in touch after many years.²⁵⁹

One could then argue that the long-term results of such cooperation were not successful, especially for the returnees, who were promised a brilliant future and a decisive role in the development of their country. Two nations with different needs and interests, and a project of solid economic and scientific-technical cooperation that faded away, mainly because of the civil war in Mozambique and the German reunification. It left returnees, who should have been the players through which such cooperation was to be realised, with unfulfilled promises. Clearly, the two states couldn’t have possibly foreseen what would happen in the future; however, it is quite self-evident that all the efforts taken – both by the two states and by the migrants –

²⁵⁸ Hanlon, J., “Do donors promote corruption?: The case of Mozambique.” In *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 4, 2004, pp. 747–763.

²⁵⁹ Interview to Mateus, Nampula, 17 June 2008, in Müller, T. R., “The ‘German children’ of Mozambique”, p. 64.

were quite ineffective. From the second half of 1980's on, it was clear that it could be no longer possible to build an industrial economy in Mozambique due to the civil war and the destabilising activities of RENAMO, yet, at that moment, for more than 21,000 people was still better to migrate to the GDR rather than staying in a country in which there were no possibilities.

Today, this large-scale migration of Mozambican migrants to East Germany is a faint memory of a bygone era: both The German Democratic Republic and the People's Republics of Mozambique ceased to exist. Yet legacies of this migration keep on influencing the present day lives of thousands of Mozambicans, who now are *Madgermanes* and whose government apparently forgot about their existence.



Figure 7: demonstration of the *Madgermanes* in Maputo. Source: Joan Bardeletti, own work.

Appendix

VOLKSREPUBLIK MOÇAMBIQUE

Vertrag über Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und der Volksrepublik Moçambique 24. Februar 1979

Die Deutsche Demokratische Republik und die Volksrepublik Moçambique haben,
ausgehend von der brüderlichen Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen ihren Parteien und Völkern, die bereits während des bewaffneten nationalen Befreiungskampfes des moçambiquanischen Volkes geschmiedet wurden und auf der Grundlage des Marxismus-Leninismus und des proletarischen Internationalismus beruhen;
fest entschlossen, zur Schaffung günstiger Bedingungen für die Fortführung des revolutionären Prozesses in der Welt beizutragen;
von dem Bestreben geleitet, mit der weiteren Vertiefung der brüderlichen Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und der Volksrepublik Moçambique einen Beitrag zur Festigung des natürlichen antiimperialistischen Bündnisses zwischen den sozialistischen Staaten und den nationalen Befreiungsbewegungen sowie zum weiteren Zusammenschluß aller für Frieden, Demokratie und gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt kämpfenden Kräfte zu leisten;
erfüllt von den Idealen des Kampfes gegen Imperialismus, Kolonialismus, Neokolonialismus, Rassismus und Apartheid;
entschlossen, zur Festigung des Friedens und der Sicherheit aller Völker beizutragen;
gewillt, die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Errungenschaften beider Staaten weiterzuentwickeln und sich dabei gegenseitig zu unterstützen;
ihre Treue zu den Zielen und Prinzipien der Charta der Vereinten Nationen bekräftigend;
beschlossen, diesen Vertrag über Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zu unterzeichnen, und folgendes vereinbart:

Artikel 1

Die Hohen Vertragsschließenden Seiten bekunden feierlich ihre Entschlossenheit, die Freundschaft zwischen beiden Staaten und Völkern zu festigen und zu erweitern und im Interesse der Weiterentwicklung der sozialökonomischen Errungenschaften ihrer Völker zusammenzuarbeiten. Sie werden ihre politischen, wirtschaftlichen, wissenschaftlich-technischen und kul-

turellen Beziehungen weiterentwickeln und sich dabei von den Prinzipien der Achtung der Souveränität, der territorialen Integrität, der Nichteinmischung in die inneren Angelegenheiten und der Gleichberechtigung leiten lassen.

Sie werden die Zusammenarbeit und die direkten Kontakte zwischen den politischen und gesellschaftlichen Organisationen beider Staaten vertiefen.

Artikel 2

Die Hohen Vertragsschließenden Seiten werden alle Anstrengungen unternehmen, um die gegenseitig vorteilhafte wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit zu erweitern sowie den Austausch von Erfahrungen auf den Gebieten der Industrie, der Landwirtschaft, des Fischfangs, des Transports, des Nachrichtenwesens, bei der Ausbildung von Kadern und auf anderen Gebieten zu vertiefen.

Beide Staaten werden die Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet des Handels auf der Grundlage der Prinzipien der Gleichberechtigung, des gegenseitigen Vorteils und der Meistbegünstigung weiterentwickeln.

Artikel 3

Die Hohen Vertragsschließenden Seiten werden ihre Zusammenarbeit in Wissenschaft und Technik, Kunst, Literatur, Bildung, Gesundheitswesen, in Presse, Rundfunk, Film, Sport und auf anderen Gebieten entwickeln, um das gegenseitige Kennenlernen des Lebens und der Errungenschaften beider Völker zu fördern.

Artikel 4

Die Deutsche Demokratische Republik und die Volksrepublik Moçambique verfolgen eine Politik des Friedens, die auf die Festigung der Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen allen Völkern gerichtet ist.

Die Deutsche Demokratische Republik schätzt die Friedenspolitik der Volksrepublik Moçambique als einen wesentlichen Faktor für die Erhaltung des Weltfriedens, für Entspannung und internationale Sicherheit und würdigt die von der Volksrepublik Moçambique praktizierte Politik der Nichtpaktgebundenheit.

Die Volksrepublik Moçambique schätzt die Friedenspolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik als einen wesentlichen Faktor für die Erhaltung des Weltfriedens, für Entspannung und internationale Sicherheit.

Artikel 5

Im Interesse der Stärkung der Verteidigungsfähigkeit der Hohen Vertragsschließenden Seiten werden sie die Zusammenarbeit auf militärischem Gebiet durch zweiseitige Vereinbarungen regeln.

Artikel 6

Die Hohen Vertragsschließenden Seiten werden den Kampf für den Frieden in der Welt und für die Festigung der internationalen Sicherheit fort-

Teil III: Beziehungen zu den Staaten Asiens, Afrikas und Lateinamerikas

setzen. Sie unternehmen Anstrengungen für die Vertiefung der internationalen Entspannung, um sie auf alle Regionen auszudehnen und unumkehrbar zu machen. Um den Krieg endgültig aus dem Leben der Völker zu verbannen, treten sie für die allgemeine und vollständige Abrüstung, einschließlich der nuklearen, unter effektiver internationaler Kontrolle ein.

Artikel 7

Die Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten sprechen sich für die Schaffung einer neuen internationalen Wirtschaftsordnung auf gleichberechtigter und demokratischer Grundlage, frei von imperialistischer Ausbeutung, aus. Sie unterstützen das souveräne Recht der Völker, über ihre Naturreichtümer zu verfügen.

Artikel 8

Die Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten werden auch künftig konsequent gegen die Kräfte des Imperialismus, für die endgültige Beseitigung des Faschismus, des Kolonialismus, des Neokolonialismus, des Rassismus und der Apartheid kämpfen. Sie setzen sich für die vollständige Verwirklichung der Deklaration der Organisation der Vereinten Nationen über die Gewährung der Unabhängigkeit an die kolonialen Länder und Völker ein. Sie unterstützen das Recht der Völker auf freie Wahl ihres Entwicklungsweges. Beide Staaten unterstützen den gerechten Kampf der Völker für Freiheit, nationale Unabhängigkeit und sozialen Fortschritt und werden zur Erreichung dieser Ziele gemeinsame Anstrengungen unternehmen und mit allen anderen friedliebenden Staaten zusammenarbeiten.

Artikel 9

Die Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten werden zum Zweck der Vertiefung und Erweiterung ihrer Zusammenarbeit, zur Abstimmung außenpolitischer Aktivitäten und zur Erörterung beide Seiten interessierender internationaler Fragen gegenseitig Informationen und Meinungen austauschen und Konsultationen auf verschiedenen Ebenen durchführen.

Artikel 10

Falls eine Situation entsteht, die den Frieden bedroht oder ihn verletzt, werden die Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten unverzüglich miteinander in Kontakt treten, um ihre Positionen zur Beseitigung der entstandenen Gefahr beziehungsweise zur Wiederherstellung des Friedens abzustimmen.

Artikel 11

Jede der Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten erklärt feierlich, daß sie keinerlei Bündnisse eingehen oder an Aktionen teilnehmen wird, die gegen die andere Hohe Vertragschließende Seite gerichtet sind.

Artikel 12

Die Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten erklären, daß die Verpflichtungen dieses Vertrages nicht im Widerspruch zu früher abgeschlossenen interna-

Moçambique

tionalen Verträgen stehen, und verpflichten sich kein anderes internationales Abkommen einzugehen, das mit diesem Vertrag unvereinbar ist.

Artikel 13

Alle Fragen, die zwischen den Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten hinsichtlich der Auslegung oder Anwendung irgendeiner Bestimmung dieses Vertrages auftreten, werden im Geiste der Freundschaft, der gegenseitigen Achtung und des gegenseitigen Verständnisses in direkten bilateralen Verhandlungen gelöst.

Artikel 14

Dieser Vertrag bedarf der Ratifikation und tritt am Tage des Austausches der Ratifikationsurkunden in Kraft, der in Berlin, der Hauptstadt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, erfolgt.*

Artikel 15

Dieser Vertrag hat eine Dauer von zwanzig Jahren und wird automatisch um jeweils weitere fünf Jahre verlängert, wenn nicht eine der Hohen Vertragschließenden Seiten zwölf Monate vor Ablauf der Geltungsdauer schriftlich den Wunsch äußert, ihn zu kündigen.

Ausgefertigt in Maputo am 24. Februar 1979 in zwei Exemplaren, jedes in deutscher und portugiesischer Sprache, wobei beide Texte gleichermaßen gültig sind.

Für die
Deutsche Demokratische Republik
Erich Honecker
Generalsekretär des Zentralkomitees
der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei
Deutschlands und
Vorsitzender des Staatsrates
der Deutschen Demokratischen
Republik

Für die
Volksrepublik Moçambique
Samora Moises Machel
Präsident der Partei der FRELIMO
und Präsident der Volksrepublik
Moçambique

Gesetzblatt der DDR, Teil II, 1979, Nr. 4, S. 60 f.

* In Kraft getreten am 23. 8. 1979.

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Summary – Riassunto esteso in lingua italiana

I. La politica estera della Repubblica Democratica tedesca nei confronti del continente africano e del Mozambico

Fin dai primi tempi dopo la sua costituzione, la Repubblica Democratica Tedesca si impegnò in una politica di ricerca di una propria legittimazione come stato indipendente e sovrano tramite il riconoscimento da parte di altri stati. Allo stesso tempo, la RDT rappresentava il tramite d'eccellenza tra l'Europa e l'Unione Sovietica, che mirava ad espandere la propria influenza. La Germania Est era uno dei più fedeli ed attivi alleati dell'Unione Sovietica, pertanto le fu concessa una certa libertà di manovra nella sua politica estera, specialmente per quanto riguardava la sua *Afrikapolitik*. La politica estera della Germania Est nei confronti degli Stati dell'Africa merita quindi di essere sottoposta ad una seria analisi, proprio perché essa agì in modo relativamente indipendente dall'URSS. Di recente, come teorizzato dagli storici, la RDT non rappresentava uno stato fantoccio o una mera appendice delle attività sovietiche nel continente, come era ritenuto fino a quel momento. Il suo ruolo è stato piuttosto quello di agire come un “affiliato” dell'Unione Sovietica. Dal punto di vista storiografico, la RDT seguì consapevolmente un percorso di “affiliazione”, anzitutto appoggiando le scelte dell'URSS, finendo con l'essere considerata come un utile ed efficiente alleato. Ne conseguì la libertà di manovra nella politica estera, soprattutto in Africa.²⁶⁰

Gli interessi perseguiti in Africa dalla Germania Est, secondo la storiografia, furono principalmente due. Innanzitutto, durante gli anni '60 la RDT mirava ad ottenere il riconoscimento da parte degli Stati africani. In seguito, il continente africano venne coinvolto negli scontri ideologici e le conseguenti tensioni della Guerra Fredda. Perciò, a partire dagli anni '70 l'obiettivo della Germania Est divenne quello di diffondere idee e principi socialisti per poter espandere l'influenza del Blocco Sovietico. In particolare, da un lato la essa appoggiò i movimenti

²⁶⁰ Cf. *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, pp. 9-14.

anticoloniali di paesi come l'Angola e Mozambico.²⁶¹ Dall'altro lato, si oppose fortemente all'operato della Germania Ovest, apostrofata più volte come neo-colonialista. Molti autori continuano tuttavia a sottolineare che, in realtà, la politica di aiuti perseguita dalla RDT era piuttosto simile a quelle delle controparti capitaliste, enfatizzando come l'interesse economico abbia giocato un ruolo vitale nello sviluppo di tale programma di aiuti. Gli autori sono generalmente convinti che la RDT, come i paesi capitalisti occidentali, mirasse ad ottenere forniture di materie prime per favorire la propria industria, promuovendo al tempo stesso un mercato per i suoi prodotti, rappresentato dai paesi del Terzo Mondo.

Nel frattempo, nel Mozambico di inizio anni '70 imperversava ancora la guerriglia contro il potere coloniale del Portogallo, portata avanti dal movimento di liberazione nazionale FRELIMO, di orientamento Marxista-Leninista. Per tale ragione, i paesi del Comecon e in particolare la RDT supportarono la campagna finalizzata all'indipendenza, con l'obiettivo di poter supportare il movimento nella costruzione di un futuro Stato socialista. Dopo aver ottenuto l'indipendenza nel giugno del 1975, FRELIMO cessò di essere un movimento di liberazione nazionale convertendosi in un partito di governo. Tuttavia, quest'ultimo prese in mano le redini di un paese che versava in una situazione economica e finanziaria a dir poco disastrosa. Il mercato lavorativo era inoltre saturo, mentre invece vi era una grave mancanza di personale specializzato e con particolari expertise. Elementi che, come si vedrà, costituiranno una delle basi per la cooperazione tra Mozambico e RDT.

La Repubblica Democratica Tedesca fu infatti il primo stato a stringere accordi con il movimento FRELIMO prima che il paese ottenesse l'indipendenza.

II. Relazioni bilaterali tra la RDT e il Mozambico (1975-1990)

Dopo che il Mozambico ottenne l'indipendenza e FRELIMO passò alla guida del paese, le relazioni tra i due Stati divennero più intense. Innanzitutto, il 25 giugno 1975, data dell'indipendenza, la RDT procedette con il riconoscimento della Repubblica popolare del Mozambico, che fece altrettanto.²⁶² Le relazioni diplomatiche ebbero quindi ufficialmente inizio. Benché il FRELIMO avesse

²⁶¹ *The foreign policy of the GDR in Africa*, p. 47.

²⁶² *Dokumente zur Außenpolitik der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Berlin (East), Staatsverlag der DDR, 1975, vol. 1, p. 605.

programmato complesse misure di cooperazione, la RDT prese impegni vincolanti solamente dopo aver accuratamente valutato la situazione. I progetti di cooperazione ricevettero maggior impulso dopo che la situazione economica della Germania Est peggiorò a partire dalla seconda metà degli anni '70, e i progetti con il Mozambico vennero considerati una soluzione al problema economico.²⁶³ Di conseguenza, nel periodo 1975-1978 vennero conclusi numerosi trattati concernenti vari ambiti: cooperazione tecnico-scientifica, cooperazione nel settore ittico, avvio di progetti congiunti riguardanti l'estrazione di materie prime, l'avvio di industrie in Mozambico e trattati commerciali. Nel 1978 fu inoltre fondato *il Wirtschaftssauschuss* (un comitato economico congiunto) con lo scopo di coordinare la cooperazione tra i due paesi e di valutarne i risultati. La svolta nei rapporti bilaterali giunse con il Trattato di Amicizia e Cooperazione, firmato il 24 febbraio del 1979, concluso in occasione del primo viaggio in Africa di Honecker, che segnò l'apice del successo del coinvolgimento della Germania dell'Est.²⁶⁴ Il trattato promuoveva la cooperazione in numerosi settori quali scienza e tecnologia, politica e cultura. Particolarmente enfatizzate furono le relazioni economiche, la cooperazione industriale e commerciale, la cooperazione nel settore delle telecomunicazioni e la formazione dei lavoratori mozambicani. Inoltre, nell'articolo 2 si stabiliva che i rapporti economici dovevano essere realizzati sulla base di vantaggi e di interessi reciproci.

Nella prima metà degli anni '80 numerose visite ufficiali ebbero luogo; nel quotidiano *Neues Deutschland* l'atmosfera amichevole e collaborativa tra i rappresentanti dei due paesi veniva sempre enfatizzata.

Nella seconda metà degli anni '80, la cooperazione su alcuni progetti, tra cui erano la fabbrica tessile di Mocuba e la rete ferroviaria di Moatize, dovettero essere fermati a causa dei numerosi attacchi alle infrastrutture da parte del RENAMO, movimento reazionario contrario al FRELIMO, e del conseguente peggioramento delle condizioni economiche. Alcuni tecnici inviati dalla RDT furono inoltre presi di mira dai militanti del RENAMO ed ebbero luogo alcuni incidenti.

²⁶³ Die Beziehungen DDR – VR Mosambik zwischen Erwartungen und Wirklichkeit – ein Gespräch, pp. 20-21.

²⁶⁴ K. Willerding, "Zur Afrikapolitik der DDR", in *Deutsche Aussenpolitik*, vol. 24, 8 (1979), p. 5.

Negli anni successivi, ossia nel biennio 1989-1990, il crollo della RDT e la riunificazione tedesca comportarono la fine della politica di aiuti e cooperazione nei confronti dei paesi del Terzo Mondo. Il Ministero per la Cooperazione Economica della Repubblica Democratica fu sciolto subito dopo la riunificazione e il programma di aiuti passò sotto la giurisdizione del Ministero della Cooperazione Economica della Repubblica Federale Tedesca. Da allora in avanti furono perseguiti solo i progetti conformi e compatibili con i principi di sviluppo della Repubblica Federale Tedesca.

III. Lavoratori mozambicani in Germania Est

Come già accennato, nel febbraio 1979 fu concluso il Trattato di Amicizia e Cooperazione tra Mozambico e Germania Est. Lo stesso giorno i due Stati conclusero un altro trattato, sulla base del quale un determinato numero di mozambicani sarebbe potuto emigrare in RDT in qualità di *Vertragsarbeiter*, lavoratori a contratto. Tale programma veniva considerato un'eccezione nell'ambito di un paese da cui la popolazione preferiva piuttosto emigrare. Alla base dell'accordo vi furono numerose motivazioni. Un progetto del genere poteva essere in grado, da un lato, di alleggerire il Mozambico dal surplus di forza lavoro, dall'altro di fornire forza lavoro ad un paese, come la RDT, che invece non ne aveva a sufficienza. Durante il periodo coloniale, i giovani mozambicani erano soliti emigrare per lavorare nelle miniere del Sud Africa, nelle piantagioni e nelle imprese industriali degli Stati dell'apartheid. Quando il Mozambico divenne indipendente nel 1975, i flussi migratori verso i suddetti paesi diminuirono drasticamente. Quindi, il mercato del lavoro mozambicano ebbe improvvisamente un surplus di forza lavoro. Pertanto, l'accordo intergovernativo con la RDT avrebbe alleggerito il mercato dal costante aumento della disoccupazione. Al contrario, la RDT stava subendo una perdita di forza lavoro: milioni di cittadini emigravano in Germania Ovest, anche 10 anni dopo la costruzione del Muro di Berlino.²⁶⁵ Gli effetti a lungo termine dell'esodo di massa, insieme a tassi di natalità piuttosto bassi, lasciarono la Germania dell'Est con una carenza di manodopera.

²⁶⁵ Göktürk, D. et al., editors. "Our socialist friends. Foreigners in East Germany" in *Germany in transit. Nation and migration, 1955-2005*, University of California Press, London, 2007, p. 67.

"Arbeit und Ausbildung", lavoro e formazione, era il motto del programma, concordato da entrambe le parti. L'obiettivo a lungo termine era quello di educare e formare lavoratori che avrebbero così ottenuto qualifiche e know-how. I lavoratori a contratto avrebbero quindi dovuto assumere il controllo della produzione nel giovane paese nel sud-est dell'Africa, sia nelle miniere, nell'industria tessile o in altre aree, per combattere il sottosviluppo e la povertà.

Sono stati identificati due distinti stadi nell'impiego dei lavoratori a contratto dal Mozambico. Il primo va dal 1979 al 1985. Durante questi anni, i lavoratori che furono inviati in RDT furono accuratamente selezionati da tutto il paese. La loro formazione in RDT era ben organizzata e sarebbe dovuta durare dai tre ai quattro anni. Successivamente, nel periodo tra il 1985 e il 1989, il Mozambico continuò ad inviare un numero crescente di forza lavoro. Quindi, anche i lavoratori con qualifiche inferiori furono accettati. A causa della situazione economica sempre più difficile nella RDT, l'attuazione degli accordi era più orientata alle esigenze economiche, mentre il Mozambico mirava ad alleggerire il proprio mercato del lavoro. Non va inoltre dimenticato che la guerra civile provocò sempre più insicurezza in Mozambico, pertanto molti mozambicani ritennero che l'opzione migliore era quella di emigrare, seppur temporaneamente, in Germania Est, approfittando del progetto.

I lavoratori a contratto furono selezionati da tutte le province del Mozambico. Dovevano essere di età compresa tra i 18 e i 25 anni. Prima di essere considerati idonei, i lavoratori erano sottoposti ad un esame medico che ne dimostrasse la buona salute e l'idoneità al lavoro. Infine, era richiesto almeno un livello di istruzione primaria corrispondente alla quarta elementare. Al loro arrivo, gli fu fornito un permesso di soggiorno temporaneo. Infatti, con la partenza dalla RDT, il permesso di soggiorno rilasciato sarebbe scaduto. Una volta arrivati in Germania Est, i *Vertragsarbeiter* erano tenuti a seguire un corso di lingua tedesca durante l'orario di lavoro, per il quale era garantito un permesso pagato.²⁶⁶ Al 20 per cento dei lavoratori che presentavano i migliori requisiti relativamente alle prestazioni e qualifiche venne concessa una proroga di un anno del permesso di soggiorno, e in seguito poteva

²⁶⁶ Cf. Beyer, H., "Entwicklung des Ausländerrechts in der DDR", in: Heßler, Manfred, *Zwischen Nationalstaat und multikultureller Gesellschaft. Einwanderung und Fremdenfeindlichkeit in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin, 1993, pp. 211-229.

essere concessa una proroga per un massimo di cinque anni. Con un successivo emendamento, la durata del soggiorno fu estesa a un massimo di dieci anni.²⁶⁷

Gli aspetti organizzativi alla base del progetto erano vari, ma piuttosto interessanti. Ad esempio, il Ministero del Lavoro della RDT coordinava sia quanti lavoratori avrebbero dovuto lavorare in quale azienda, sia in quale periodo avrebbero dovuto essere impiegati. Persino la compagnia aerea con cui i lavoratori a contratto sarebbero dovuti essere trasportati veniva designata dal Ministero. Al fine di assicurare che lo svolgimento del progetto rispettasse quanto disposto dal trattato, lo *Staatssekretariat für Arbeit und Löhne*, la più alta autorità statale della RDT per il lavoro, aveva il compito di verificare la conformità dell'impiego con il trattato, tramite dei sopralluoghi nelle aziende in cui i lavoratori a contratto erano impiegati.

Molti autori hanno sostenuto che in realtà i lavoratori mozambicani furono sfruttati dalle aziende della Germania Est in quanto gli furono affidate mansioni semplici che i cittadini tedeschi non volevano svolgere. Ciò era vero all'inizio dell'occupazione, poiché il lavoro qualificato richiedeva delle qualifiche. Dopo aver fatto alcune esperienze e aumentato le loro conoscenze teoriche e pratiche, ai lavoratori a contratto vennero affidati incarichi che richiedevano una qualifica.²⁶⁸

Il sistema di pagamento dei lavoratori fu un aspetto rilevante del programma e, pertanto, non dovrebbe essere omissis. I lavoratori a contratto ricevevano salari e bonus in conformità con le disposizioni della legislazione sul lavoro della RDT. All'inizio, a discrezione del lavoratore, fino al 25 per cento del salario poteva essere trasferito in Mozambico. Tuttavia, dal 1986 in poi, i lavoratori si trovarono obbligati a trasferire il 60 per cento delle loro retribuzioni mensili nette superiori a 350 Marchi in Mozambico. Secondo molti autori, questi fondi servirono ad adeguare gli attuali obblighi di pagamento del debito che il Mozambico aveva nei confronti della RDT.²⁶⁹

Per quanto riguarda l'impiego di lavoratori a contratto, esso rimase stabile fino alla fine degli anni '80. Nel 1987 si registrò il numero più elevato con l'entrata di 3.203 lavoratori mozambicani; questo numero raddoppiò nel 1988 con l'entrata di

²⁶⁷ van der Heyden, U., "Zu den Hintergründen und dem Verlauf des Einsatzes mosambikanischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft" in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe, Verlauf, Folgen*, p. 58.

²⁶⁸ Straßburg, R., "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen", p. 106

²⁶⁹ Loc. cit.

6.464 lavoratori.²⁷⁰ Tale situazione portò inevitabilmente ad un maggiore sforzo di controllo da parte delle autorità competenti, che non fu tuttavia sufficiente a controllare la totalità di oltre 200 imprese in cui lavoravano migliaia di Mozambicani. In alcuni casi le autorità si resero conto troppo tardi che in alcune aziende l'occupazione non era conforme alle condizioni dell'accordo. Alla fine del 1988, 18.886 lavoratori mozambicani erano impiegati in ben 245 imprese industriali, edili e agricole della Germania Est. Nel febbraio 1989, 14.675 lavoratori del Mozambico erano impiegati in 220 società.²⁷¹

Secondo una valutazione congiunta redatta nel febbraio 1989, due terzi dei lavoratori, dopo il loro incarico quadriennale, furono in grado di ottenere delle qualifiche come lavoratori specializzati mentre un terzo di loro ricevette degli attestati per aver ottenuto competenze e specializzazioni.²⁷²

La maggior parte dei lavoratori a contratto del Mozambico ebbe la possibilità di acquisire know-how, ottennero qualifiche durante il soggiorno. I mozambicani furono pagati e trattati allo stesso modo delle loro controparti tedesche, ovviamente considerando anche la percentuale della loro retribuzione trasferita in Mozambico. Ciò è stato confermato da molte interviste con gli ex *Vertragsarbeiter*. Poiché le esperienze personali sono piuttosto soggettive, non si può sostenere che tutti i lavoratori a contratto siano stati trattati allo stesso modo, ma le interviste prese in considerazione nell'elaborato confutano quanto sostenuto da alcuni autori, ossia che i lavoratori furono sfruttati e che furono oggetto di trattamenti degradanti e razzisti.

IV. Giovani studenti mozambicani in Germania Est: l'esperimento della "Schule der Freundschaft"

La cooperazione tra Mozambico e RDT non si realizzò solamente in campo lavorativo, ma anche in quello dell'istruzione, che rappresentava uno dei capisaldi

²⁷⁰ Straßburg, R., "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen", p. 120.

²⁷¹ Gemeinsame Einschätzung des SAL und der mosambikanischen Vertretung für die Leitung des SAL, Privatarchiv Straßburg. See also: Ralf Straßburg, "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen" in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 122-124.

²⁷² Gemeinsame Einschätzung des SAL und der mosambikanischen Vertretung für die Leitung des SAL, Privatarchiv Straßburg. See also: Ralf Straßburg, "Persönliche Reminiszenzen zu den Verträgen" in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft. Hintergründe - Verlauf - Folgen*, pp. 122-124.

della politica di aiuti della RDT nei confronti dei paesi in via di sviluppo. In tale ambito, venne ideato uno dei progetti educativi considerato tra i più ambiziosi mai realizzati: la *Schule der Freundschaft*, letteralmente “scuola dell’amicizia”, il cui obiettivo era quello di educare giovani studenti mozambicani nella città di Staßfurt. Tra gli stati del Comecon, la RDT era considerata lo stato socialista con il miglior sistema di istruzione, reputato uno tra i più avanzati; questo lo rese quindi il paese ideale per "istruire una futura élite socialista".²⁷³ Dopo che nel 1979 fu firmato il Trattato di Amicizia e Cooperazione tra la RDT e la Repubblica popolare del Mozambico, il FRELIMO iniziò a guardare alla RDT per ricevere ulteriore sostegno nella creazione di un sistema educativo basato sui valori socialisti e che enfatizzasse una relazione simbiotica tra studio accademico, pratica e la sua applicazione produttiva.²⁷⁴

Nell'ottobre del 1981, i due paesi firmarono un accordo per istituire la *Schule der Freundschaft*. Come previsto dell'accordo, tra il 1982 e il 1988 un totale di 899 bambini mozambicani completò sei anni di scuola secondaria e di formazione professionale presso la scuola. Sia il Mozambico che la Germania dell'Est ebbero interesse nella realizzazione di questo esperimento educativo. La logica alla base della creazione della scuola era duplice, combinando obiettivi economici e ideologici. Si intendeva formare una élite di professionisti che avrebbero assunto posizioni cruciali nel futuro sviluppo del Mozambico come stato socialista ed industrializzato. Allo stesso tempo, gli studenti furono istruiti col fine di poter essere inseriti in nuove joint-venture tra la RDT e il Mozambico.²⁷⁵ Dal punto di vista del Mozambico, il principale obiettivo educativo era la creazione di un *homen novo*. Il termine era un concetto pedagogico originariamente formulato nella RDT. Si riferiva alla personalità socialista universalmente sviluppata, che alla fine divenne centrale nei progetti educativi del Mozambico. L'*homen novo* era rappresentato come una persona il cui background sociale e culturale non interferiva nello sviluppo e la

²⁷³ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 31

²⁷⁴ Delegation from Maputo to the Conference of Education of African Member States, “Education policy in the People's Republic of Mozambique”, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 14, 2 (1976), pp. 331–339 and Tullner, M., “Die Zusammenarbeit der DDR und Mosambiks auf dem Gebiet der Bildung und die Tätigkeit der Bildungsexperten der DDR in Mosambik”, in Voß, *Wir haben Spuren hinterlassen!*, pp. 388–406.

²⁷⁵ Cf. Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft. Eine Fallstudie zur Bildungszusammenarbeit zwischen der DDR und Mosambik*, Waxmann, Münster, 2006.

formazione della sua personalità, un concetto ideale per un giovane stato multietnico come il Mozambico, dove la necessità di una nuova e unificante immagine di cittadino avrebbe potuto forse porre fine alla guerra civile e favorire la creazione di uno stato solido.

Per realizzare questo obiettivo, vennero reclutati bambini provenienti da tutto il paese, comprese le aree rurali. 900 candidati furono originariamente selezionati, sulla base di una rappresentanza equa di ogni provincia, con particolare preferenza per i figli di lavoratori, contadini e rivoluzionari. I criteri di selezione erano la vicinanza politica delle famiglie degli studenti al FRELIMO, il rendimento scolastico, disciplina a scuola, comportamento sociale, stato di salute, ed età. Idealmente, i bambini avrebbero dovuto avere tra i 12 e 14 anni.²⁷⁶ Quando arrivarono a Staßfurt, i giovani mozambicani avrebbero dovuto avere tra i dieci e i dodici anni; in realtà, avevano tra i nove e sedici anni.²⁷⁷ Per gli studenti stessi, una ragione personale per candidarsi era la prospettiva di una carriera professionale e la speranza di un conseguente progresso sociale ed economico del Mozambico. Naturalmente, un ruolo importante era giocato dalla possibilità di evitare i pericoli posti dalla guerra civile.²⁷⁸ Gli studenti selezionati, dopo quattro anni di scolarizzazione e due anni di formazione professionale, avrebbero ottenuto il diploma. Le professioni in cui i giovani mozambicani si sarebbero qualificati corrispondevano a quelle necessarie per il funzionamento delle joint-venture pianificate tra la Germania dell'Est e il Mozambico. Gli apprendistati erano quindi incentrati sull'industria della lavorazione dei metalli, sulla costruzione e l'edilizia, sull'ingegneria elettrica e sulle tecnologie agricole.²⁷⁹

Una volta arrivati a Staßfurt, gli 899 bambini furono divisi in 30 gruppi e furono sottoposti a corso intensivo di lingua, poiché il tedesco sarebbe stato il mezzo principale della loro istruzione. La maggior parte del corpo docenti era costituita da insegnanti tedeschi, ma furono coinvolti anche insegnanti mozambicani che avrebbero insegnato materie come la lingua portoghese. Anche gli insegnanti emigrarono quindi in RDT. Nei primi quattro anni di scuola e soggiorno a Staßfurt,

²⁷⁶ Müller, T. R., "Memories Of Paradise", p. 455

²⁷⁷ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*, p. 44 et seq..

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Müller, T. R., "Memories Of Paradise", p. 456

le vite dei giovani mozambicani erano rigorosamente regolamentate sotto ogni aspetto. La maggior parte del tempo libero era occupato da attività comuni incentrate sullo spirito socialista e comunitario. Al contrario, quando la formazione professionale iniziò nel 1986, tale situazione cambiò radicalmente. I tirocini non si sono svolti a Staßfurt, ma in altre città della Germania dell'Est. Questo spesso comportava frequenti viaggi, poiché a volte accadeva che i giovani mozambicani seguissero i loro apprendistati in diverse città durante la settimana lavorativa.

Sebbene la vita degli studenti fosse organizzata in ogni aspetto, emersero problemi disciplinari. Ciò ha comportato il ritorno di numerosi studenti in Mozambico durante i loro quattro anni di istruzione generale. In termini concreti, circa 30 giovani sono stati segnalati in relazione ad atti considerati di grave delinquenza, ma solo alcuni di loro sono stati rimandati in Mozambico anticipatamente. Tra questi, 28 ragazze furono rimpatriate a causa della gravidanza.²⁸⁰ Al fine di controllare meglio il comportamento deviante, specialmente durante il tempo trascorso in dormitori o nel tempo libero, la Stasi, il servizio segreto della Germania dell'Est, in collaborazione con il rappresentante FRELIMO della *Schule der Freundschaft*, reclutarono alcuni studenti della scuola per riportare eventuali violazioni.

In conclusione, l'obiettivo educativo può formalmente definirsi un successo: la maggioranza degli studenti, in tutto 839, completò con successo istruzione e apprendistato, mentre solo undici studenti non superarono l'esame per il diploma.²⁸¹ Sul totale di 899 studenti, tre erano deceduti e 46 furono rimandati in Mozambico per una serie di motivi, la maggior parte dei quali disciplinari.²⁸² Tuttavia, in pratica, dopo il ritorno in Mozambico, le esperienze degli ex studenti non furono positive. Il brillante futuro che era stato loro promesso non poteva più esistere, vista la situazione in cui versava il paese.

²⁸⁰ Cf. Kruse, U. "Die "Schule der Freundschaft" in Staßfurt" and Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft*".

²⁸¹ Reuter, L. and Scheunpflug, A., *Die Schule der Freundschaft* 2006, p

²⁸² Scheunpflug, A.; Krause, J., "Die Schule der Freundschaft: ein Bildungsexperiment in der DDR", p. 30

V. Addestramento militare dei soldati mozambicani in Germania Est

L'ultimo gruppo di migranti mozambicani preso in considerazione è quello dei soldati che furono addestrati in RDT. Non si tratta di un movimento migratorio vero e proprio, tuttavia i soldati trascorsero dai 2 ai 4 anni in Germania Est ed erano relativamente numerosi, pertanto hanno costituito un fenomeno piuttosto interessante. Anzitutto poiché, come già noto, la Germania Est non era specializzata nel fornire armi e strumenti militari, ma nell'addestramento di soldati. Una divisione interna dei compiti del trattato di Varsavia prevedeva che l'Unione Sovietica, la Repubblica Cecoslovacca e la Polonia dovessero occuparsi delle consegne di armi, mentre la RDT aveva il compito di fornire consulenza e formazione in campo militare.²⁸³

Dopo una lunga negoziazione, su richiesta di Machel, nell'aprile e maggio 1975, 250 membri del FRELIMO furono addestrati negli "organi armati" della RDT: 110 nella Stasi (il servizio di Sicurezza dello Stato), 90 nella polizia federale e 50 nelle truppe di frontiera.²⁸⁴

Con la conclusione del Trattato di Amicizia e Cooperazione del 24 febbraio 1979, la cooperazione militare tra la RDT e il Mozambico fu portata su un nuovo livello. Conformemente a quanto disposto dall'articolo 5 del trattato²⁸⁵, un protocollo di cooperazione militare fu concordato nel maggio 1979 durante la visita del Ministro della Difesa Nazionale del Mozambico, Armando Emilio Guebuza, a Berlino Est. Un accordo sulla formazione del personale militare mozambicano nella RDT fu raggiunto in questo contesto nel novembre 1979. La formazione militare si sarebbe svolta in Germania Est. Il concetto alla base del progetto era "l'addestramento degli istruttori", che a loro volta avrebbero potuto addestrare i soldati del Mozambico su larga scala una volta tornati nel loro paese d'origine. Dal momento che era impossibile addestrare tutti i soldati del Mozambico nella RDT, la chiave del successo desiderato era quindi la preparazione degli istruttori.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Cf. Boege, V., *Militärische und militärisch relevante Aspekte der DDR Südpolitik. Problemaufriß*, Hamburg, 1989, p. 5.

²⁸⁴ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 255

²⁸⁵ "Nell'intento di rafforzare la capacità di difesa delle Alte Parti contraenti, esse disciplineranno la cooperazione nel settore militare attraverso accordi bilaterali".

²⁸⁶ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität.*, p. 275

Il 1 aprile 1980 a Maputo, Helmut Fleißner, vice Ministro della Difesa della RDT, e Guebuza firmarono il corrispondente accordo sulla formazione dei quadri militari mozambicani nella RDT. L'accordo prevedeva che la RDT addestrasse 279 militari per un periodo che sarebbe terminato nel 1989. In totale, secondo il Ministero della Difesa della RDT, 263 ufficiali e sottufficiali mozambicani furono addestrati nelle forze della NVA tra il 1981 e il 1990.

Per quanto riguarda l'organizzazione dell'addestramento, durante la permanenza nella RDT, il personale militare del Mozambico era subordinato ai comandanti delle istituzioni di addestramento, che avevano autorità disciplinare nei loro confronti. Al fine di facilitare e sostenere l'organizzazione interna nell'ambito dei gruppi militari e di assicurare una connessione diretta tra il comandante della struttura didattica e i quadri militari, un senior tra i soldati veniva nominato e appuntato con l'autorità di comando, il cosiddetto *Nationalitätenältester*. I senior erano responsabili di compiti quali favorire il raggiungimento degli obiettivi di allenamento, mantenere la disciplina e l'ordine e assicurare il collegamento tra i comandanti delle istituzioni didattiche e i quadri militari e viceversa. L'accordo intergovernativo prevedeva espressamente che i soldati fossero soggetti alle disposizioni della legge della RDT. In caso di gravi violazioni della legislazione, il permesso di soggiorno poteva essere ritirato e l'interessato veniva rimpatriato.²⁸⁷ I soldati ricevevano un'indennità una tantum pari 600 Marchi per l'acquisto di indumenti civili e un'indennità mensile pari a 200 Marchi per gli ufficiali e a 150 Marchi per i sottufficiali.

La formazione delle truppe mozambicane era suddivisa in un corso base di un anno e un corso pluriennale, da uno a quattro anni. La lingua utilizzata era il tedesco. Nel corso base, costituito da un totale di 1.600 ore di formazione, 180 ore venivano dedicate all'insegnamento del tedesco come lingua straniera. Significativamente meno tempo fu destinato all'istruzione superiore in materie quali matematica e scienze naturali (160 ore di formazione), educazione politica (180 ore di formazione), nonché formazione militare di base e sport (90 ore ciascuno), mentre l'ideologia socialista dominava piuttosto chiaramente l'intero addestramento.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁷ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 412

²⁸⁸ BArch, DVH 8-12/47543, pp.16-22: Auskunftsbericht Kommandeur OHS "Otto Winzer" zum Besuch Botschafter und Militärattaché PLO und JAE, 20.4.1983, originally quoted by Storkmann, K., in *Geheime Solidarität*.

I militari mozambicani avrebbero ottenuto la qualifica di istruttori e comandanti, e sarebbero stati in grado di utilizzare le loro conoscenze ed abilità in modo creativo, basandosi sulle condizioni che avrebbero trovato nel proprio paese d'origine.²⁸⁹ Gli altri scopi della formazione erano politicamente correlati; tra le altre cose, secondo il programma, i tirocinanti dovevano essere resi consapevoli della correttezza dell'orientamento antimperialista e socialista ed essere leali al proprio partito rivoluzionario.

VI. Cenni sulla situazione dei migranti mozambicani dopo la riunificazione tedesca

Incertezza e confusione caratterizzarono il periodo immediatamente successivo alla riunificazione e gli immigrati mozambicani si trovarono in una situazione piuttosto difficile relativamente alla loro permanenza in Germania. Poche informazioni erano rese disponibili su come i lavoratori a contratto sarebbero stati trattati in futuro, quali diritti, doveri e opportunità avrebbero avuto.

I trattati intergovernativi tra la RDT e altri paesi rappresentavano piuttosto un problema, poiché la Germania federale non si sentiva responsabile per i trattati conclusi dalla RDT. A quel tempo un totale di 72.000 lavoratori stranieri erano impiegati in Germania dell'Est, tra cui circa 15.100 Mozambicani, il secondo gruppo di stranieri più numeroso dopo i vietnamiti. Molte aziende della Germania Est non riuscirono a continuare le proprie attività a causa del processo di conversione dal sistema economico pianificato verso un libero mercato unificato. Di conseguenza, molte aziende furono rilevate da società della Germania Ovest. Per i lavoratori a contratto stranieri, questo in genere implicava il licenziamento, sebbene il loro contratto non fosse teoricamente risolvibile prima della fine ufficiale.

I lavoratori a contratto potevano, in teoria, restare in Germania, tuttavia avrebbero dovuto procurarsi un altro lavoro e un domicilio. In pratica, le condizioni non erano così facili da rispettare, a causa del circolo vizioso creato da queste ultime: senza lavoro non era possibile trovare un domicilio e viceversa. Inoltre, molti autori hanno riferito che correnti estremiste e xenofobe contro i lavoratori stranieri si diffusero tra la popolazione tedesca subito dopo la riunificazione.

²⁸⁹ Storkmann, K., *Geheime Solidarität*, p. 437

Gli aumenti del costo della vita e dell'affitto dopo la riforma valutaria, il licenziamento, la pressione xenofoba e la mancanza di informazioni hanno quindi portato circa 2.000 mozambicani a scegliere un ritorno prematuro.²⁹⁰ Alla fine, dei 15.100 mozambicani che furono registrati nella Germania dell'Est nel 1989, solo 2.800 mozambicani erano rimasti alla fine del 1990²⁹¹, mentre alla fine di giugno del 1991, il numero di ex lavoratori a contratto dal Mozambico era sceso a poco meno di 1.000.²⁹²

Conclusioni

Al loro ritorno, i mozambicani che studiarono e lavorarono in RDT non furono ricompensati con le posizioni lavorative che gli erano state promesse dal proprio governo. Il Mozambico versava in una situazione disastrosa: a causa della guerra civile, il paese era distrutto; non vi era alcuna possibilità per lo sviluppo industriale auspicato, nel contesto del quale gli ex lavoratori a contratto e studenti erano destinati ad assumere un ruolo lavorativo essenziale. Coloro che fecero ritorno, dai propri connazionali venivano – e sono tutt’oggi – chiamati *Madgermanes*, “i tedeschi”. Ancora oggi i *Madgermanes* si stanno battendo per ricevere i contributi che, ai tempi della loro permanenza in Germania Est, furono detratti dal loro stipendio e inviati in Mozambico con la garanzia di poterli riottenere al loro ritorno.

In conclusione, la cooperazione ha certamente avuto il merito di garantire una istruzione, sia scolastica che professionale, ai mozambicani che emigrarono; tuttavia, tale forma di cooperazione fu continuata persino quando divenne chiaro che il suo obiettivo – creare una economia industrializzata in Mozambico – era ormai chiaramente irrealizzabile nel breve termine. Così, oggi ai *Madgermanes* rimangono ricordi nostalgici del periodo passato in Germania Est, mentre continuano tutt’ora a sentirsi dimenticati dal proprio paese.

²⁹⁰ Von Lucius, R., “Nostalgie trotz unerfüllter Versprechen”, in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, August 30, 1994.

²⁹¹ Berger, Almuth, “Annäherungen – Bericht der Ausländerbeauftragten des Landes Brandenburg, Potsdam, Die Ausländerbeauftragte des Landes Brandenburg, 2006, p. 38;

²⁹² Marburger, H., “Und wir haben unseren Beitrag zur Volkswirtschaft geleistet“, p. 39.