

DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN POLICY IN MOZAMBIQUE: THE FIRST POST-INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT – SAMORA MACHEL (1975-1986)

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Introduction

Mozambique is a country located in southern Africa, it borders to the north to Tanzania, to the northwest to Malawi, to the west to Zambia and Zimbabwe, to the southwest to South Africa and Swaziland, being bathed by the Indian Ocean to the east and south. It was colonized by Portugal, whose presence began in the 15th century. It was only at the end of the 19th century that the effective occupation of the territory occurred. The independence of Mozambique happened in 1975, under the leadership of FRELIMO (Liberation Front of Mozambique) and Samora Machel, independent Mozambique's first president. FRELIMO resulted from the union of three nationalist movements founded abroad: the National Democratic Union of Mozambique (UDENAMO) created in 1960 in Salisbury, Rhodesia; the Union of the African Nation of Mozambique (MANU) formed in 1961 by Mozambican workers in Tanzania and Kenya, the majority of the *Maconde* ethnicity; and the National African Union of Independent Mozambique (UNAMI), created in Malawi by Mozambicans exiled there from the province of Tete (Mondlane 1995).

In order to comprehend the international performance of the first independent Mozambican Government (1976-1986), the following questions were established: (i) what were the guidelines for diplomacy and foreign policy of Mozambique during the Samora Machel government? (ii) What was

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the performance of the Samora Machel Government in the face of national circumstance, dominated by the RENAMO² destabilization war, and regional circumstance, characterized by aggressions from the Rhodesian regime and South Africa's *apartheid*?

As for the methodological aspects, the qualitative method was used, allied with the bibliographic review of works, articles, reports, dissertations and theses on the historical and international relations of Mozambique. Another technique used was documentary research on the internet on official government websites, virtual libraries, public websites and private archives and the author's personal collection on the subject. Such collection consists of television reports, magazine and newspaper materials, reports from educational institutions on the subject.

In foreign policy, Figueira (2011) argues that the international structure determines diplomatic performance and that a country's foreign policy would be the result of the interactive dynamics between the domestic and international environments. Lopes and Nascimento (2011) argue that the factors that condition the formulation of a country's foreign policy can be analyzed according to the logic of concentric circles: internal, regional and international that mutually interconnect and influence. In the internal circle, economic and political stability stand out as factors supporting a vigorous and committed foreign policy. At the regional level, relationships distinguish themselves within the scope of closer neighbors and a wider neighborhood. The international circle includes the dynamics of participation in international organizations, of a multilateral nature, as well as relations with other countries, namely with international and regional powers (Lopes and Nascimento 2011).

Following the aforementioned theoretical and methodological assumptions, the article adopted the perspective of concentric circles, understanding that in the diplomacy and foreign policy of the countries, the internal, regional and international levels are interconnected and mutually dependent. The politics, the domestic economy and the well-being of Mozambicans depended on the environment in the region of Southern Africa and on the relations with neighboring countries. The relations of Mozambique with its neighbors were directly linked to the international arena, to the context of

² RENAMO is the acronym for Mozambican National Resistance, a nationalist movement founded in Rhodesia in 1976, which developed a war against the Government of Frelimo and Mozambique after the independence. The movement said it was fighting communism and the lack of freedom in Mozambique.

the Cold War between the United States (US) and the Soviet Union (USSR), to the blocs, rivalries and disputes.

The bibliographic review emphasized the interveners of Mozambique's foreign policy such as Mondlane (1995), Mozambican nationalist, founder and first president of FRELIMO and, Jardim (1976), Portuguese soldier, businessman, diplomat and state advisor who worked in Mozambique for twenty-two years, a tenacious defender of Portuguese colonization. Both influenced foreign policy in the colonial and post-independence period. On the other hand, Christie (1996), a foreign journalist, covered the struggle of African nationalist movements, having lived with FRELIMO, in addition to becoming the author of the first biography on Samora Machel.

In International Relations, Abrahamsson and Nilsson (1994) analyzed the political transition in Mozambique of 1974 — independence, socialist period and civil war — assessing the international and regional context of Mozambican strategy and the interaction between internal and external factors. The approaches of Zeca (2015), Castellano da Silva (2017) and Massangaie (2018) were verified.

Zeca (2015) addressed the genesis of Mozambique's foreign policy and diplomacy with FRELIMO, whose objectives were to raise support for the liberation struggle, the denunciation and isolation of the Portuguese colonial regime at the international level in UN forums and in the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Mozambique had two opponents: the western capitalist system and the region's white minority governments. The regional cooperation and the liberation of neighboring states were prerequisites for Mozambique's economic and future development (Zeca 2015).

Massangaie (2018) verified the insertion of Mozambique in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In the colonial war, FRELIMO established relations of friendship with nationalist movements of neighboring countries — the movement considered that the Mozambique's independence would only be effective when other countries in the region were free from colonial domination and racist regimes —, underlining the importance of organizations such as the Frontline States (FLS) and SADC.

Mozambique's international insertion was progressive, beginning in the 1960s with the efforts of FRELIMO's first president, Eduardo Mondlane. Mozambique's foreign policy had the objective to "create more friends and fewer enemies" in the context of Cold War ideological bipolarity. Portugal's refusal to comply with the UN resolution on the self-determination of peoples, the support that the Portuguese received from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the ideological conflict of the Cold War

influenced the foreign policy decisions made by FRELIMO. On the other hand, the threats posed by the South African and Rhodesian regimes and the political-economic orientation adopted by FRELIMO after independence, also had influences on the foreign policy of the independent Mozambican government (Massangaie 2018).

Castellano da Silva (2017) analyzed the state, the elites and the regional foreign policy in Mozambique between 1975 and 2015, verifying the context, the continuations and changes, as well as the state capacity and the relations between the state and society. He distinguishes the elites, their role in foreign policy and the government's regional foreign policy. He divides the Samora Machel Government into two periods: 1975 to 1983 and 1983 to 1986. The moment from 1975 to 1988 corresponds to the construction of the state and the foreign policy of the Machel Government, in which it was necessary a complete reformulation of the state, the economy and relations with society, in search of autonomy and development. The adoption of socialism and the state structure based on Marxism-Leninism were seen as more suitable alternatives by FRELIMO. The construction initiatives in the state of Mozambique by FRELIMO since 1975 are evaluated in the ambit of coercion, capital and legitimacy. The Machel Government, composed of the most radical wing of FRELIMO, sought to reform the state and strengthen itself through revolutionary measures. Mozambique's regional policy was derived from the complex state-building process, in which political elites sought to concretize their own political projects and respond to domestic and external pressures, according to available state capacities (Castellano da Silva 2017).

Colonial war and diplomacy

With the diplomatic channels exhausted, in 1964 FRELIMO resorted to armed struggle as a way to liberate the Mozambican territory from Portuguese colonization. In the following ten years, the Portuguese regime developed a colonial war against FRELIMO and the Mozambican people, with the logistical and military support of NATO and its natural allies: England, France and the US. Portugal also had the support of its African allies: *apartheid* South Africa, Ian Smith's Rhodesia and Kamuzu Banda's Malawi. FRELIMO's diplomacy has garnered African support among the already independent neighboring nations: Zambia, Tanzania and Algeria. It also obtained support from the USSR, East Germany and China.

In 1973, the crisis of the Portuguese colonial regime worsened as it became evident its inability to win wars overseas. On April 25, 1974, the dictatorial government in Portugal was overthrown by the Carnation Revolution. There was no alternative to the New Portuguese Government but to negotiate the end of the war with FRELIMO. Months after the April 25, the Portuguese government sent a diplomatic delegation to Lusaka, capital of Zambia, to meet Samora Machel's FRELIMO, proposing a ceasefire, followed by a referendum for the people of Mozambique to decide whether they wanted independence or the continuation of Portuguese tutelage. Samora vehemently refused the proposal, intensifying the war.

With the war's continuation, there were changes in Portuguese diplomacy with respect to Africa. The Portuguese Government and FRELIMO delegations met again in Zambia and, on September 7, 1974, the Lusaka Agreements between Samora Machel and Mário Soares were signed, ending the ten-year-old colonial war between Portugal and FRELIMO. The Lusaka Agreements established the transfer of powers, a transitional government and set the date for Mozambique's independence as June 25, 1975. This was the first major victory for FRELIMO's diplomacy and foreign policy, as will be seen in the following sections.

The diplomacy of FRELIMO

During the colonial war, the diplomacy of FRELIMO was well articulated. To inform Mozambicans about their work and objectives, as well as the situation experienced in the country and its position on the world scenery, FRELIMO had the Department of Information, Publicity and Propaganda (DIPP) that cooperated with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DRE) — in charge of relations with foreign governments and organizations, keeping the rest of the world informed about Mozambique and the struggle, organizing the dislocation of its representatives abroad, as well as participating in conferences and visits to other countries explaining what the movement was and its problems (Mondlane 1995).

FRELIMO maintained diplomatic relations with African, European and Asian countries; with the great polarized world powers, the USA, the USSR and China, with capitalist and socialist countries, such as Norway, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania, Vietnam, North Korea etc. It had offices or delegations in the capitals of different countries, the main ones being in Cairo, Algiers, Lusaka and Dar-Es-Salaam. Its first militants received

political and military training in Algeria, Zambia and Tanzania, as well as in China and the USSR, which disputed the hegemony of the socialist world.

It was in Tanzania that FRELIMO established its main base from 1963, in which its political and military elite was formed and drank from the socialist experience from an African perspective. In addition to the military base, still in 1963, the Front built its Secondary School in Dar-Es-Salaam, the capital of the country, where its cadres were formed. In the province of Mtwara, FRELIMO built a hospital as a fundamental support for the armed struggle, in which militants wounded and mutilated in the war and other victims of Portuguese colonization were treated. In the same location, it was created an Educational Center where the children of the combatants studied. In Dar-Es-Salaam, it was also built the Mozambican Institute, a link of friendship with other peoples, receiving foreign delegations and where the information and propaganda department operated. The political-military formation, the social and economic experience, the African socialism and the *Ujamaa* villages experienced in Tanzania, would serve as inspiration years later and would be tested in the areas liberated by FRELIMO and in its foreign policy (Wache 2017).

After Algeria's independence in 1962, FRELIMO contacted the leaders of that country, who offered military training to two hundred and fifty young Mozambicans. Later, his cadres were formed in the Soviet Union, China, East Germany and Cuba. FRELIMO obtained support and solidarity from different countries; Zambia and Tanzania were its main military partners during the armed struggle, providing logistical, political-military support, hosting bases and welcoming their guerrillas.

In 1970, Marcelino dos Santos traveled to the Vatican with the FRELIMO delegation, where they were received by Pope Paul VI, sympathetic to the cause of the independence movements³. However, since 1940, the Catholic Church had an agreement with the Portuguese regime and had collaborated with it in the colonization of Mozambique. Such a meeting revealed FRELIMO's intelligent foreign policy of "making more friends and fewer enemies", seeking international support, even among unlikely partners and friends of its enemies such as the Vatican and the USA. The visit to the Vatican represented a diplomatic victory for FRELIMO and generated discontent among the Portuguese government and society, leading to a cooling

3 The delegation was also composed of Agostinho Neto, representing the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola and, Amílcar Cabral representing the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde.

of traditional relations between the Portuguese Colonial Regime and the Catholic Church (Christie 1996).

Despite the socialist inclination, Samora Machel and FRELIMO opted for non-alignment in the bipolar conflict, neither with the USA, nor with the USSR and China — which disputed hegemony and influences of the Socialist Bloc. Even so, it was obtained financial support from the capitalist world and training and weapons from the socialist world for its guerrillas. FRELIMO obtained economic and financial support from European countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, which revealed a clear anti-colonial position and withdrew their investments in Portuguese enterprises in Africa.

The Lusaka Agreement

FRELIMO's diplomacy demonstrated positive results in the negotiations of the Lusaka Agreement with the Portuguese state, which led Mozambique to independence. The Agreement was signed in the capital of Zambia, on September 7, 1974, mediated by President Kenneth Kaunda. In the Agreement, the Portuguese state recognized the right of the people of Mozambique to independence, provided a transfer of powers until the date of independence, scheduled for June 25, 1975, the anniversary of the founding of FRELIMO. The Agreement created a Transitional Government and its governance structures — prime minister, ministers, secretaries and undersecretaries, police corps — led by FRELIMO (Portugal 1974).

The Transitional Government of Mozambique was led by Joaquim Chissano and comprised of Mozambicans and white Portuguese. It was marked by the departure of about two hundred thousand Portuguese settlers in 1974, following two episodes of violence after the Lusaka Agreements. The first, an uprising of Portuguese settlers that occupied some public institutions and the second resulting from clashes between Portuguese commands and FRELIMO guerrillas that caused bloody riots in black neighborhoods, with the murder of whites and blacks. Even though Samora had ensured that FRELIMO never fought against the Portuguese people, the Transitional Government did little to stop the Portuguese exodus. On the contrary, it saw the presence of a large Portuguese community as a risk to stability and a possible threat to FRELIMO's power (Christie 1996).

In FRELIMO's understanding, its struggle was against the colonial system of oppression and exploitation of man by man. Those who lived by

their honest work would have a positive contribution to make to the reconstruction of the country, including the white population. Despite the effort for the Portuguese community to stay to build an egalitarian and fair country, the exodus of Portuguese technicians and cadres continued because the colonial system had reserved for them the public administration and management and other services with numerous privileges for them (FRELIMO 1977; Machel 1979).

The departure of the Portuguese led to the shutdown of factories in the textile, metallurgical and chemical industries, and sectors such as education, leading to the collapse of important sectors. The Transitional Government revealed a lack of skill in conducting domestic diplomacy, using more of its police and military forces, hard power, than its power of persuasion, soft power⁴. In the international arena, FRELIMO proved to be competent and victorious in its foreign policy.

Independence and the first Government of Mozambique: internal challenges

On June 25, 1975, Mozambique's independence was proclaimed by Samora Machel and FRELIMO, who were aligned with most of the nationalist and socialist movements of Southern Africa. Mozambique changed its name, renamed for People's Republic of Mozambique (RPM), having its Constitution approved five days before Independence, on 20 June. The Constitution affirmed the popular character of the country, "a state of popular democracy and whose power belonged to workers and peasants", the Republic "being guided by the political line defined by Frelimo, the leading force of the State and society" (Mozambique 1975, 2nd and 3rd articles). FRELIMO's leaders become the leaders of Mozambique, in a single party system, in which the state confused itself with the Party.

On June 29, 1975, four days after independence, it was announced the first RPM Government, with Samora Machel as President of the Republic (PR) and a Council of Ministers constituted of fifteen ministries under the direction of the PR. All ministers were senior members of FRELIMO and

⁴ In this article, it is understood as hard power the utilization of aggressive force, armed forces, military power, intelligence services and even economic sanctions by states to assert their interests in foreign policy or in the international arena. *Soft power* refers to the use of convincing power using ideological, social, political, cultural and economic values and issues, as soft forms of power in foreign policy and the international arena.

simultaneously held portfolios in the Government and the Party, constituted of blacks, whites and mestizos.

After the independence, FRELIMO and Mozambique had as main challenges: (i) the exodus of Portuguese technicians and the lack of national cadres for technical, economic and social areas; (ii) external threats to the country's security due to attacks by minority South African and Rhodesian *apartheid* regimes and hostilities of Malawi; (iii) the RENAMO destabilization war. On July 24, 1975, Samora Machel nationalized the sectors of education, health, land, funeral companies and law services, prohibiting any type of private activity in these areas. By nationalizing education and health, Samora Machel reached the heart of the Catholic Church by statistizing schools, student homes and hospitals created by the Church.

On February 3, 1976, eight months later, the cycle was completed with the nationalization of income buildings; private housing leasing was prohibited, large companies in the air, land and rail transport sector, banking and insurance sector, industrial sector and factories were nationalized. The nationalization of the last three sectors ended the expectations of small and medium-sized Portuguese investors who had left the country, but maintained hopes for a possible return as soon as the situation calmed down. The nationalizations were a package of nationalization measures towards socialist organization and a response to popular concerns, constituting the most acclaimed measures in the eyes of the people.

FRELIMO saw in the nationalizations another blow to the structure of bourgeois colonial power, affecting the Mozambican petty bourgeoisie that owned thousands of small houses in the suburbs of cities (Cardoso 1978). During the Portuguese colonial administration, the traditional authorities were used as an intermediate administrative structure between the state and the native communities. At the internal level, the Party-State tried to end certain groups and social practices such as prostitution and idleness, considered as behaviors inherent to capitalism and colonialism (Bissio 1978). Traditional cultural practices, initiation rituals, traditional ceremonies for evoking ancestral spirits, *lobolo* etc. were forbidden, seen as retrograde and contrary to the "construction of the new man", free from traditional prejudices and inspired by scientific knowledge, through literacy campaigns and sending young people to attend high school and undergraduate education in socialist countries (FRELIMO 1977). It acted in the same way against religious groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, traditional authorities, kinglets, sepoys, healers and "reactionaries", accusing them of having collaborated with the colonial

administration and representing remnants of colonization. These actors were sent to "production" and "re-education" camps, spread across the country.

The regional geopolitics

Led by Samora Machel, FRELIMO and Mozambique projected themselves into the world because of their internationalism, with a proactive and challenging foreign policy in their speeches at the UN, denouncing aggressions of Ian Smith's Rhodesian and South Africa's *apartheid* regimes against their people, affirming its anti-imperialist and anti-colonial self-determination. Mozambique announced its solidarity with the struggles of the peoples of South Africa, Rhodesia, Southwest Africa⁵, East Timor, the Republic of Western Sahara and Palestine.

Mozambique's foreign policy was anti-imperialist and anti-racist. With its internationalism, Mozambique granted political asylum to ANC (African National Congress) militants, to militants from the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) and other Timorese citizens, offering scholarships to its students, political-ideological formation to its leaders and facilitating the opening of the country's Embassy in Maputo. It was one of the first countries to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), facilitating the opening of the embassy of the Arab Republic of Palestine in Maputo.

In early March 1976, the Government of Samora Machel was the first in the world to enforce UN sanctions applied to Rhodesia, closing the border with the country, in compliance with UN Resolution No. 216 of 12 November 1965. With the attitude, Mozambique challenged the regime of Ian Smith and at the same time sacrificed millions of dollars a year from trade and transit of goods through the port of Beira and railroad towards Rhodesia. Despite knowing the negative socio-economic impacts on the population and the retaliation of Ian Smith, Samora Machel did not hesitate to close the border by imposing such a sacrifice on the Mozambican people.

The relations with the governments of South Africa and Rhodesia were strained because they were racist white minority regimes that defended the *apartheid*, and were opposed to black majority governments in the region. Since 1965, the South African regime has opposed FRELIMO's liberation struggle against the Portuguese colonization, having collaborated with the

⁵ Territory corresponding to the current Republic of Namibia.

Portuguese regime, including the sending of military troops to act in Mozambican territory against FRELIMO guerrillas (Christie 1996; 1976).

South Africa waged war against FRELIMO for classic reasons: there were political convictions in the context of the Cold War and in its struggle against the advance of communism in Southern Africa; in addition, South Africa viewed the independence of Mozambique and Angola as a threat to their regional hegemony and political, economic and military power. Moreover, the role of South African political-economic elites and of an unbridled domestic policy of strengthening security, with the existence of a heavily armed and sophisticated army and the development of a military nuclear program were condemned by the Mozambican regime (Van Wyk 2014). To FRELIMO, the Portuguese, South African *apartheid* and the Southern Rhodesia colonial regimes represented the continuation of white colonization and oppression to be fought in Southern Africa.

On the other hand, Malawi, a country with which Mozambique shares the northwest border, Lake Niassa and the Chire and Zambezi rivers, was governed by Hastings Kamuzu Banda, who collaborated with the Portuguese colonial regime, maintaining close relations with the *apartheid* and Rhodesia regimes. Banda had strained relations with the Mozambican Government, particularly in the border region. Malawi does not have direct access to the sea, being its only possibility through the Chire and Zambezi rivers, which flow into the Indian Ocean, within the Mozambican border⁶. Malawi depended on the Mozambican port of Nacala to supply its territory. The opening to navigation of the rivers Chire and Zambeze in the Mozambican part has always been a dream of Banda, which would allow the construction of the port of Nsanje, in Malawi. Because of his pro-Western foreign policy, Banda's hostility towards FRELIMO and later towards the Government of Mozambique has been public knowledge since colonial times. In the colonial struggle, FRELIMO tried to use Malawian territory as a rearguard. However, Banda arrested FRELIMO militants and guerrillas who entered its territory and sent them to the Portuguese colonial authorities, under the agreement that Banda had signed with Portugal, in which he would help maintain the colonial situation in Mozambique in exchange for territorial annexation — on the *Marave Map*, as long as he did not support FRELIMO nationalists. On the other hand, Banda welcomed defectors from FRELIMO and the organizations created by

⁶ Former Niassaland, Malawi is a territory in the Southern African *hinterland*, nestled between Mozambique, Zambia and Tanzania, with rugged terrain and numerous lakes, not having access to the Indian Ocean maritime coast. It shares with Mozambique a land border and a maritime border with two rivers, Chire and Zambeze and Lake Niassa. The Chire and Zambezi rivers flow into the Indian Ocean, in Mozambican territory .

them — the Mozambique Revolutionary Committee (COREMO) created in 1965 and the African National Union of Rombezia (UNAR), created in 1968 in Malawian territory — which had offices in Malawi and whose actions of military provocation caused the closure of FRELIMO's military front in the province of Tete (Chambote 2015).

The "Malawian factor" represented, since the beginning of the armed struggle, an obstacle to the Mozambican foreign policy and FRELIMO. Several times, they tried negotiations with the neighboring country, without success. It was the return of one of these negotiations that resulted in the death of Samora Machel in 1986. Even so, Malawi's participation in the destabilization of Mozambique was smaller, if compared to the actions of South Africa, of Rhodesia and of Portuguese colonialism, because it never launched an open confrontation against Mozambique.

Flaws in internal diplomacy: the birth of RENAMO

In 1976, armed attacks against populations and socioeconomic infrastructures, classified by FRELIMO as actions of "armed bandits", began. Initiated in the rural areas in the center of the country, the attacks multiplied and spread to different regions, as well as the cruelty of their perpetrators, led by André Matsangaíssa, a former FRELIMO member. Matsangaíssa joined FRELIMO in 1972, being a former member of the Mozambican armed forces punished for infractions and sent to a re-education camp in Gorongosa, his homeland. Released during an attack by Rhodesian forces, he is taken to that country and is later appointed by the Rhodesian forces as leader of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR). Only years later MNR will adopt the Portuguese language nomenclature of *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO).

The MNR was created in 1975 in Rhodesia, by the Rhodesian army in response to the support given by FRELIMO to the Rhodesian nationalists of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), who were fighting for their country's independence from the center of Mozambique, region in which they maintained some bases and made incursions into Rhodesian territory for the liberation of Ian Smith's colonial yoke. In response, the Rhodesian army along with dissidents from FRELIMO and other disgruntled Mozambicans created the MNR, which received military training and began conducting guerrilla attacks in Mozambique from Rhodesia and under its sponsorship. The initial objective

of the Rhodesian forces was to create small groups on the border that would impede the actions of Zimbabwean nationalists from Mozambique.

In the beginning, Matsangaíssa specialized in attacking re-education camps, freeing the prisoners and recruiting them for his group. Gradually, the group of Matsangaíssa executed many riots in rural areas and made itself known through its English acronym, MNR. When negotiations began for the Lancaster House Agreements that resulted in the Independence of Rhodesia, the MNR transferred its base in Phalaborwa in Rhodesia to the forests and mountains of the provinces of central Mozambique, establishing it in Gorongosa, intensifying the attacks. In 1979, Matsangaíssa died in combat during an attack on Frelimo, being succeeded by Afonso Dhlakama.

In 1980, after Rhodesia's independence, commanded by nationalist and leader Robert Mugabe of the ZANU-Patriotic Front, the country was renamed Zimbabwe, and Mugabe became its first president. Thus Rhodesia's support for the MNR ceased, which began to be carried out by the South African *apartheid* regime. With Dhlakama as president and leader of RENAMO, such guerrilla gained momentum. Thanks to South African logistical support in weapons, fuel, food, uniforms and money, the MNR's guerrilla spread throughout Mozambique, increasing its military numbers, which, in addition to men, included children and women who were abducted during their attacks.

Samora Machel and FRELIMO censored and silenced news of the armed attacks, banning any mention of the rebel movement, even arresting journalists who reported attacks and news about the MNR. Samora refused any contact and negotiations with RENAMO, calling them "armed bandits", "matsangaíssas" or "matsangas", expressions with which the RENAMO guerrillas were designated during the civil war's period. Only after a decade of civil-military warfare, the MNR came to be known as RENAMO.

In the first Government of Mozambique, FRELIMO inherited a failed colonial capitalist system, but which, through a combination of populism and luck, soon managed to recover. On the other hand, due to FRELIMO's form of occupation of the political space, other nationalist projects were excluded and forced to make common cause with interests that were opposed to Mozambique's own independence. It was from this explosive mix of marginalized opportunism and conservative nationalism that Rhodesia, at first, and South Africa, subsequently, created and unleashed RENAMO (Darch 1992).

Samora and FRELIMO failed to recognize the state of war and negotiate with RENAMO, because the latter had its genesis outside the country, created by the Rhodesian intelligence services, a strategy formerly used by

the British army against the *Mau Mau* in Kenya to confuse the populations and make it difficult to support the liberation movement. In this way, the MNR started to carry out destabilization missions in Mozambique, with the command and support of Rhodesian intelligence. Later, with its consolidation as an insurgent movement, the MNR, renamed RENAMO, with the support of the South African armed forces, gained increasing autonomy. In the beginning, it was not foreseeable that RENAMO would carry out a civil-military war as destructive as that which developed in the first half of the 1980s, which led the Government of Samora to sign the Nkomati Agreement (*Acordo Incomáti*, in Portuguese) with South Africa and not with RENAMO.

The foreign policy

In 1970, FRELIMO supported ZANU guerrillas in their incursions into Rhodesia from Mozambican territory, as well as helping their recognition in countries like Tanzania and Zambia. At that time, FRELIMO was already collaborating with the *African National Congress* (ANC) with which it shared military training in Tanzania. Samora arrives in Tanzania for the first time on a flight chartered by the ANC in the company of Joe Slovo, a member of the *South African Communist Party* (SACP) (Christie 1996).

After the independence, in 1976, Mozambique and FRELIMO received visits from various representatives of African Portuguese-speaking countries, as well as visits by the heads of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere (1964-1985) and Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda (1964-1991) for the establishment and strengthening of friendship, mutual aid and cooperation relations. In February 1977, during the III FRELIMO Congress, held in Maputo — in which, for the first time, Party members and representatives of society were in liberated territory — FRELIMO radicalized, becoming a political party unique in Mozambique, with a Marxist-Leninist orientation, proposing to organize a modern state and a new society (FRELIMO 1977).

In this event, for the first time the Foreign Policy of Mozambique was defined, which denounced the racist imperialism in Southern Africa, the policy of Bantustans, the aggressions against the peoples of Western Sahara, East Timor, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola, with which the FRELIMO sympathized. FRELIMO acknowledged that the independence of Mozambique and Angola accentuated the change in the correlation of forces in Southern Africa with the end of Portuguese colonization, and, for the first time in the region where imperialism and racism dominated in Africa, states emerged

that engaged through the socialist revolution way. The Party defines the principles and guidelines of the foreign policy of the Republic of Mozambique, giving priority to the establishment of diplomatic relations with friendly and allied countries, establishing diplomatic relations with the African socialist, Asian and European countries that supported them.

In its Foreign Policy, the People's Republic of Mozambique strictly applies the principles of Frelimo's political line. In this context, the People's Republic of Mozambique gives priority to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the countries that have always engaged by our side. During the Transition, Frelimo agreed to establish diplomatic relations since the proclamation of Independence with African, socialist, Asian and European countries that have always supported us. The People's Republic of Mozambique has established and develops friendly and cooperative relations in all countries based on the principles of mutual respect for territorial sovereignty and integrity, non-interference in internal affairs and reciprocity of benefits (FRE-LIMO 1977, 81).

After the Congress, Mozambique's foreign policy started to emphasize non-alignment, with a clear inclination towards anti-imperialism and the need to reduce dependence on South Africa (Zeca 2015). In 1976, Mozambique founded, along with Angola, Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, the Frontline States (FLS), a regional organization encouraged by the OAU, with the objective of supporting African resistances in the face of the continuation of colonization, combating aggression of racist and segregationist white minority regimes in the region, politically isolate the South African regime, coordinating efforts for the liberation of Rhodesia and Southwest Africa.

Because of the option for one-party socialism and adherence to Marxism-Leninism, Mozambique was the target of an international embargo by Western capitalist countries, a reality that affected the country's society, economy and industries, leading to extreme poverty. On the other hand, the internal context marked by the exodus of Portuguese technicians, lack of national cadres, destabilization of RENAMO, military attacks and bombings by South African and Rhodesian forces, forced the Mozambicans to sacrifices.

On March 8, 1977, Samora Machel summoned the young people from across the country and made an appeal to them to contribute their knowledge and experiences in the reconstruction and development of Mozambique. Those who had the 9th, 10th and 11th grades, the last years of high school, should sacrifice themselves for the challenges that the country faced, being sent to the Training Center 8 of March, to study different areas defined by

the Party-State and "formation of the new man", giving up their dreams and vocations. From there, nurses, doctors, teachers, soldiers and varied technicians came out. Others went to take courses abroad in socialist countries, particularly in the military field to strengthen the country's army and defense. These young people became known as the "Generation 8 of March". The appeal was effective and demonstrated FRELIMO's ability to mobilize in the domestic scenery, amid difficulties and a hostile environment.

With the independence of Rhodesia and its transformation into Zimbabwe in 1980, renewing the objectives of the FLS and with the economic liberation mission of Southern Africa, in 1980, Mozambique, Angola, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe created the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), predecessor of SADC, whose goals were the reduction of the economic dependence of the countries in the region in relation to South Africa and a bigger cooperation between members for the economic balance (Massangaie 2018; Langa and Sacavinda 2019).

Due to the economic crisis in the early 1980s, Mozambique tried to join the Council For Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), a mutual aid organization between socialist countries. However, their adhesion to the Bloc was vetoed by the Soviets because of the non-alignment policy practiced by Mozambique, preventing the country from accessing the Organization's economic loans (Maloa 2016).

Approximation to the capitalist world

With the veto in the COMECON, there was a reorientation of Mozambique's foreign policy, aiming at "making more friends and fewer enemies", a principle that has guided FRELIMO since the liberation struggle. Mozambique developed efforts to improve the diplomatic relations with Western countries that had economic interests in South Africa. In this context, in 1983, Samora made an official visit to the most important countries in the European Economic Community (EEC), including Portugal.

Two years later, in 1985, Samora visited the Western world and the heart of the capitalist world, with two important meetings. On September 19, he met President Ronald Reagan at the White House in an attempt to align Mozambique's economy with the capitalist market. The meeting was important, because in the following months the United States reduced its support for the South African regime. The meeting between Reagan and Machel would have been facilitated by Margareth Thatcher, in return for

Samora Machel's mediation in the Lancaster House Agreements that led to Zimbabwe's independence.

Days later, on September 27, Samora Machel met with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in London. Such an unusual encounter between a convict communist and a conservative capitalist revealed the existence of past contacts. On the other side of Europe, the Soviets became furious with Samora Machel's approach to the Western world. Soon after, an "accident" occurred in the natural gas extraction mines of Pande, in southern Mozambique, which burned for more than a week, causing incalculable economic losses to the country. The exploitation of natural gas in the Pande mines was under the responsibility of Soviet engineers and technicians; therefore, the Mozambican authorities saw such an "accident" as Moscow's retaliation for Samora's visit to the heart of the Western world and its attempt to keep Mozambique independent from the Soviets.

Mozambique's economy has never had an abundance of easy resources available; its strategic importance for the socialist bloc was smaller, which left few alternatives for financial and military support to FRELIMO's action to impose itself strategically in the region and in its own territory. The geographical proximity to South Africa left the country vulnerable to attacks. On the other hand, the Party's institutional strength, including the political direction, was overshadowed by that of the PR. The formulation of foreign policy depended on the elites at the highest levels around the PR. Foreign policy in Mozambique was characterized by the reduced quantity of official and unofficial inputs, in a context in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out more than formulated policies (Castellano da Silva 2017).

The Nkomati Accord

With a gross domestic product twenty-five times higher than that of Mozambique, South Africa was the hegemonic power in southern Africa, in addition to being considered an obstacle to political and economic liberation in the region. Land attacks and bombings in Mozambique and economic and military support to RENAMO destabilized the country, impeding economic and agricultural development, in addition to sabotaging the electrical system with constant cuts. "Mozambique did not have a modern, well-equipped regular army. The guerrilla structure inherited from the days of the war for independence appeared to be inadequate in the face of the great infantry and artillery and strong air support" (Christie 1996, 157).

This scenery forced the Samora Machel Government to recognize South Africa's economic and military superiority and sign a non-aggression agreement with the *apartheid* regime. In March 1984, Samora Machel and P. W. Botha, Prime Minister of South Africa, signed in Maputo, on the banks of the Nkomati River (Incomáti), the "non-aggression and good neighborhood pact" known as the Nkomati Agreement (Acordo Incomáti, in portuguese). In the Agreement, Mozambique pledged to deactivate ANC bases and offices in its territory and South Africa to end its logistical and military support to RENAMO.

The Nkomati Agreement was a humiliation to Samora Machel and FRELIMO, being interpreted as a surrender by the nationalist movements allied to neighboring countries. In particular, the black South African majority was disappointed with Frelimo, feeling betrayed. Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda, heads of state of Tanzania and Zambia respectively, refused to participate in the ceremony because they did not agree to such an agreement, even though they respected the decision of Samora Machel and FRELIMO.

A few months later, it was realized that South Africa never stopped to provide support to RENAMO. Mozambique, in turn, deactivated the ANC bases and the logistical support it provided. It was clear that Samora Machel was deceived by the *apartheid* regime in the Nkomati Agreement. On October 19, 1986, Samora Machel and thirty-three other occupants of his presidential flight died in an air crash when their plane crashed in the South African town of Mbuzine. The Mozambican delegation was returning from a SADC meeting in Zambia, whose agenda was Malawi's strong relations with the *apartheid* regime. Samora and other leaders in the region were trying to convince Malawi to abandon such a stance, since it had joined SADC in 1980⁷. The fall of the presidential plane was considered an attack attributed to the *apartheid* secret services, which would have installed a false Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Range (VOR). Instead of sending signals that indicated the Maputo International Airport, it would have induced the pilot to the mountains of Mbuzine in South Africa.

⁷ A month earlier, on September 11, 1986, Samora Machel, Head of State of Mozambique, Kenneth Kaunda, Head of State of Zambia, and Robert Mugabe, Head of State of Zimbabwe, had traveled to Blantyre, in Malawi, to convince Kamuzu Banda that the interests of the Malawian people were no different from other SADC member states, as well as that Malawi's irresponsible attitudes could have unpredictable consequences (Chambote 2015).

Conclusion

In the liberation war, FRELIMO obtained support from different capitalist and socialist countries; it opted for a diplomacy whose objective was "to make more friends and fewer enemies". After the independence, Mozambique took a proactive stance, convincing other countries in the region to found two regional organizations: the FLS and the SADCC, in an attempt to end colonization and reduce South Africa's economic dependence. Such actions demonstrated the capacity for cooperation and regional and international convincing, as well as a *soft power* performance of the foreign policy of the first Government of Mozambique. In southern Africa, Mozambique was a small power, unable to maintain its own security. Still, it stood out for its regional leadership against colonization and *apartheid*. It tried to influence the regional scenery with notorious engagement, supporting the struggles of nationalist movements of neighboring countries. In the international arena, it opted for non-alignment, standing out for internationalism, activism and solidarity.

It had to face alone and simultaneously the RENAMO's destabilization war and the South African, Rhodesian and Malawian aggressions. Mozambique found itself weakened, having no technical, human, economic, material or military resources to protect its borders and air space, without the capacity for *hard power*, thus adopting a defensive posture. The unsustainable situation led Mozambique to recognize the enemy's superiority and sign the Nkomati Agreement. The genesis and external support for RENAMO prevented Samora Machel from recognizing the existence of internal support for the rebels and their nationalist character, underestimating it and rejecting any type of negotiation to end the war. At first, RENAMO was an instrument of the Rhodesian regime; in the second, it became part of the South African strategy. Any negotiations with RENAMO had to be assured by South Africa.

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes diplomacy and foreign policy in the first independent Government of Mozambique. In the theoretical analysis, the perspective of concentric circles moved, seeing the internal, regional and international dimensions as interconnected and mutually influenced. As a methodology, bibliographic surveys and documentary research were used. Internally, the performance of the Samora Machel Government in the construction of the nation-state and responses to domestic conflicts were

evaluated. At the regional level, Mozambique's relations with border countries were verified. Finally, the state's foreign policy on the continent and its international performance were observed. The Samora government adopted a Marxist-Leninist nationalist policy defined by the party-state and the country was experiencing armed RENAMO attacks that turned into civil-military war. In Southern Africa, Mozambique was a Frontline State (FLS) and founder of SADC, showing solidarity with neighboring peoples, supporting politically and militarily its African nationalist movements in the fight against white domination. In the international arena, the state opted for non-alignment and developed international activism against colonization and *apartheid*. Mozambican foreign policy and diplomacy have been proactive in the region and internationally, managing to move their soft power. However, the Executive Government faced internal difficulties, with political and economic failures due to the systematic destabilization promoted by neighboring South Africa and South Rhodesia, as well as refusing to recognize the state of war and to negotiate with RENAMO, seen as an extension of the regime's minority interests in the region.

KEYWORDS

Mozambique. International relations. Samora Machel. Government.

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