EDITOR’S NOTE

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The Post-Cold War has inaugurated a new phase of international crisis. It is, first of all, the crisis of the liberal international order led by the US, supported by the discourse of unipolarity and the exclusive capacity of a “liberal democracy” to organize and manage interstate relations. In this sense, the U.S. has tried to design the institutions and constrain the less powerful to join these organizations, obeying their rules. Certainly, no order is lasting and its decline is linked to the same factors that form it. The idea that it would produce consensus around an ideal (liberal) political system led the U.S. power to adopt forced policies of Regime Change, to encourage cross-border movement and the delegation of decision-making authority to international institutions, as well as unrestricted globalization. It did not take long for these policies to be opposed by nationalism and new power-balconing policies in a scenario conducive to the emergence (or re-emergence) of new powers.

The change in the global balance of power ended the unipolarity on which the liberal order depended. New poles of power resulted from this new balance sustained by strong states, with national development projects, high rates of growth, technological increase and defense capacity. There is a profound transformation in the global geo-economy and, in particular, in peripheral areas. For states that still demand power structures that allow economic development, relations with new power poles are understood as an opportunity. Geo-economic changes will tend to stimulate changes in the political order and in international institutions.

Therefore, we must question this context full of challenges and possibilities: what is the position of the African continent in the reconfiguration of the post-Cold War international system? What is the role of the emerging powers in this new framework? What are the strategies of the Euro-American
power center to maintain the status quo? What are the African perspectives of state-building and autonomous development? What is the path to conflict resolution that still hinders stability in some states/regions? What is the role of the United Nations Peace Missions for the stability of the continent? These questions are discussed in this issue of RBEA.

In the article “Erratic behaviour of the United Nations and global governance in Africa: the State as a smokescreen for world security” the authors discuss the global governance of the United Nations and Africa to understand how the state has become a “smokescreen” for global security. In analyzing the case of Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, the study argues that the UN’s role in global governance has been rather reactionary to the challenges posed by political leadership in Africa, without considering the consequences. In “Cuba’s medical experience in sub-Saharan Africa: its contribution against Covid-19”, the author analyzes medical cooperation as one of the fundamental pillars of Cuban foreign policy. One of the dimensions of this cooperation has been the fight against preventable diseases, such as malaria, through the transfer of technology and drugs, the training of medical personnel in Cuba through a broad scholarship program for African students, and the creation of medical schools in several African countries, with the purpose of also contributing to this professional training. This cooperation gained a new dimension after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, when Cuba, at the request of several African governments, decided to expand the presence of its health personnel in the continent.

In the article “An analysis of optimal devolved government size for growth: Armey Curve in Kenya” the estimated ideal for government expenditure developed in 47 counties of Kenya using the ARDL regression panel and the Scully (2008) model for the period 2014-2018 is discussed. The estimation model examined Armey’s idea of a quadratic curve that explains the level of government spending in an economy and the corresponding level of economic growth. Still, with Kenya as the object of study, the text “The Horn of Africa and the refugee field in Dadaab in Kenya” deals with the crisis in Somalia that led to the creation of refugee camps such as Dadaab (Kenya), which has been maintained for over 28 years. According to the author, Somalia is a country that stands out in global geopolitics, but the political decline, the semi-arid climate and the militia action associated with al-Qaeda, an armed group al-Shabaab, have made it even more difficult for Somali refugees to pacify, stabilize and return to their country of origin.

Then, in “Western Sahara: history, U.N acting and foreign interests”, we analyze the main reasons that allow the impasse for the resolution of the
conflict in Western Sahara, which began in the 1970s, to last until today, even with the establishment of MINURSO in 1991. For the author, since the beginning of the conflict, the involvement of important geopolitical actors has contributed to the beginning and maintenance of the impasse over the years, motivated mainly by economic, strategic and geopolitical interests. In the article “Debating land in Africa: an analysis of the impacts of colonialism and neoliberalism in Guinea-Bissau’s agrarian transition”, the agrarian question on the African continent in general is problematized - correlated with the specific experience of Guinea-Bissau since the neoliberal period.

About Mozambique, two articles follow. The first, of historical character, “Leadership and decision making processes in Mozambique: governance of Samora Machel - 1975/1986”, analyzes the concepts and approaches for the types of decision making. For the author, Samora Machel is seen as a charismatic leader and can also be considered a dialogue leader. The following are important decisions taken by Samora Machel: the nationalization of buildings; communal villages; the Indicative Prospective Plan - PPI; and the closing of the border with Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. The article “The web of legal pluralism and traditional authorities in Mozambique” analyses the legal pluralism and the traditional authorities in Mozambique, their origin and operationalization in relation to the customary norms linked to the traditional authorities. The author also analyzes the origin of traditional authorities, their legitimacy and their framework in the various subsystems of governance, from the colonial period to the present day.

In “Protection regime for asylum applicants and refugees in law 10/15 of June 17, law on the right of asylum and refugee status in Angola”, the author evaluates the Angolan legislation because, after the civil war, Angola has welcomed asylum seekers and refugees from various parts of Africa. The devastation caused by the Nigerian Civil War in Igboland is analyzed in “Post-Nigerian civil war community reconstruction strategies in (Anioma) Western Igboland, 1970-1991”. This article explores the self-help strategies the people have adopted and states that the reconstruction programs were timidly and subtly structured to marginalize and dominate the Western Igbo people in the economic and political affairs of the Midwestern state of Nigeria. Finally, gender-based violence from the experiences of women in Sao Tome and Principe is analyzed in “‘Ome sa ome’ and ‘Mwala sa mwala’: gender violence in the experiences of stantomese women”. According to the authors, the approach is constructed from the perspective of African feminist and decolonial epistemologies. In this sense, gender relations are thought, considering the particularities of the colonization process that occurred in
the country, as well as the post-independence socioeconomic configurations, which are marked by social inequalities, mainly experienced by women.

RBEA publishes bilingual electronic and printed versions (Portuguese and English). Thus, we expect the contribution of colleagues from Brazil and abroad, with whom we intend to establish links to deepen our knowledge, and the construction of a vision of the South about the African continent and relations with them.

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