Franziska Rantzsch

5 The Negotiations of the Contract Labor Accord between the GDR and Mozambique

In October 1980, the Berliner Zeitung, one of the biggest dailies in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), published an article written by their popular economic journalist Dr. Karl-Heinz Gerstner about a visit by Mozambique's President Samora Machel:

The encounters with Samora Machel will be remembered for a long time. I am not only referring to the warmth of our friendly feelings. It was also nice to hear from our African friend that the GDR has really helped Mozambique so far. At the meeting with the workers of the "Schwarze Pumpe" one saw in the first rows workers from Mozambique, who received their training here. In Halle, our friend met students from his homeland studying at the Martin Luther University. In the LPG [Landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaft, agricultural production cooperative, F. R.] Lützen, he watched the potato harvest with modern farm machines. At the same time, 200 harvesters from Neustadt brought in the potato harvest in the Limpopo valley in Mozambique. Specialists in the blue shirts of the FDJ [Freie Deutsche Jugend, Free German Youth, F. R.] helped.¹

The article presented a general view of the various kinds of development cooperation between the GDR and Mozambique for GDR citizens. For example, the state combine "Schwarze Pumpe" Gerstner referred to was involved in the coal mining project in Moatize, in the Mozambican province Tete, which started in 1978.² The FDJ's Friendship Brigades helped to construct accommodation for

¹ Original quote: "Die Begegnungen mit Samora Machel werden uns noch lange in Erinnerung bleiben. Ich meine nicht allein die Herzlichkeit unserer freundschaftlichen Gefühle. Es war uns auch angenehm, von unserem afrikanischen Freund zu hören: Was die DDR bisher für Mocambique getan hat, ist wirklich eine Hilfe. Bei dem Meeting mit den Arbeitern der Schwarzen Pumpe sah man in den ersten Reihen Arbeiter aus Mocambique, die hier ihre Ausbildung erhalten. In Halle traf unser Freund Studenten aus seiner Heimat, die an der Martin-Luther-Universität studieren. In der LPG Lützen beobachtete er die Kartoffelernte mit modernen Rodeladern. Zur gleichen Zeit fuhren im Tal des Reises bei Limpopo in Mocambique 200 Mähdrescher aus Neustadt die Ernte ein. Spezialisten im Blauhemd der FDJ halfen dabei". See Dr. Karl-Heinz Gerstner, "Hilfeleistung bei Lichte besehen," *Berliner Zeitung*, October 11, 1980, 9. Own translation.

² Heide Künanz, "Das Steinkohleprojekt Moatize zwischen solidarischer Hilfeleistung und kommerziellen Anspruch," in *Die DDR und Afrika: Zwischen Klassenkampf und neuem Denken*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden et al. (Münster: Lit, 1993), 174–191.

miners at Moatize.³ Especially interesting is the fact that the article mentions the recruitment of contract workers from Mozambique among the numerous joint activities by the GDR and Mozambique that actually benefit Mozambique. In this respect, the article differs from the historical research on this subject. Most studies that focus on the economic history of the GDR read the recruitment of foreign workers as a strategy pursued solely to benefit the domestic economy of the GDR, not as part of a broadly conceived cooperation between the GDR and its allies in Africa and Asia.⁴ This approach has recently been questioned more frequently in historical research and instead analyses concentrate on the recruitment of contract workers from Mozambique in the context of the broader relations between the GDR and its partners.⁵ Admittedly, economic motives were crucial for the GDR's recruitment of contract workers, but nevertheless, in the Cold War era political-ideological motives were also important.

On February 24, 1979, the People's Republic of Mozambique and the GDR signed an accord on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises of the GDR in Maputo.⁶ This bilateral contract included nine-

³ Eric Burton, "Solidarität und ihre Grenzen: Die 'Brigaden der Freundschaft' der DDR," in *Internationale Solidarität: Globales Engagement in der Bundesrepublik und der DDR*, ed. Frank Bösch et al. (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2018), 152–185; Landolf Scherzer, "Meine Ankunft in Mosambik," in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft: Hintergrund – Verlauf – Folgen*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden et al. (Münster: Lit, 2014), 143–149.

⁴ Cf. Sandra Gruner-Domić, "Zur Geschichte der Arbeitskräftemigration in die DDR: Die bilateralen Verträge zur Beschäftigung ausländischer Arbeiter, 1961–1989", *Internationale wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* 32 (1996): 204–230; Mirjam Schulz, "Migrationspolitik in der DDR: Bilaterale Anwerbungsverträge von Vertragsarbeitnehmern," in *Transit. Transfer: Politik und Praxis der Einwanderung in die DDR* 1945–1990, ed. Kim Christian Priemel (Berlin: be.bra wissenschaft verlag, 2011), 143–168; Andreas Müggenburg, *Die ausländischen Vertragsarbeitnehmer in der ehemaligen DDR: Darstellung und Dokumentation* (Berlin: Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für die Belange der Ausländer, 1996).

⁵ Cf. Ulrich van der Heyden, *Das gescheiterte Experiment: Vertragsarbeiter aus Mosambik in der DDR-Wirtschaft (1979–1990)* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2019), 394; Marcia Schenck, "Between Hammer, Machete, and Kalashnikov: Contract Labor Migration from Angola and Mozambique to East Germany, 1979–1990," *Europe Now* 15 (2018), accessed March 2018, https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/02/28/between-hammer-machete-and-kalashnikov-contract-labor-migration-from-angola-and-mozambique-to-east-germany-1979-1990/.

⁶ Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (February 24, 1979) [Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (24. Februar 1979)], Political Archive of the Federal Foreign Office, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the GDR [Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes,

teen articles and was amended or supplemented by annual protocols and subsequent agreements. The content of the accord was broad and supposed to regulate almost every detail of the procedure. Next to the scope and duration of the assignment, it also determined the precise definition of the areas of application, the organization of health checks for the workers, and the allocation of repatriation costs in case of death. This detailed subdivision can also be found in other contract labor accords, which the GDR concluded with Poland (1963) and Hungary (1967), but also with Cuba (1975) and Vietnam (1980).7 The historical research often uses the finalized versions of the international accords as an analytical starting point. That the GDR profited from the contract labor accords cannot be denied, but it is also important to take a closer look at the interests of the sending country or in this case the Mozambican workers themselves.⁸ As Ulrich van der Heyden noted in his extensive analysis of Mozambican contract workers, neither state has been outright forced to sign a contract labor accord. Nor were the Mozambican workers physically forced to report for deployment in the GDR. Instead, he pointed out that this was a project of development policy that was intended to benefit both sides. I argue that an examination of the drafting and the process of negotiation of these accords as evidenced in the East German archives can contribute to a broader perspective on contract labor practices in the GDR. In this way, one can trace the range of possibilities in these negotiations, which allows us to draw conclusions about diplomatic relations between the GDR and Mozambique. Therefore, this analysis not only examines the intentions and demands that were made on both sides of the agree-

Archiv des Ministeriums für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten der DDR], Berlin (henceforth: PA AA, MfAA), ZR 970/87.

⁷ Cf. Rita Röhr, "Die Beschäftigung polnischer Arbeitskräfte in der DDR 1966–1990: Die vertraglichen Grundlagen und ihre Umsetzung," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 42 (2002): 211–236; Katalin Jarosi, "Umschwärmte Kavaliere und gewinnbringende Ehemänner: Ungarische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR," in *Arbeitsmigration: WanderarbeiterInnen auf dem Weltmarkt für Arbeitskraft*, ed. Thomas Geisen (Frankfurt a. M.: IKO, 2005), 197–216; Sandra Gruner-Domić, *Kubanische Arbeitsmigration in die DDR 1978–1989: Das Arbeitskräfteabkommen Kuba – DDR und dessen Realisierung* (Berlin: Ed. Parabolis, 1997); Christina Schwenkel, "Socialist Mobilities: Crossing New Terrains in Vietnamese Migration Histories," *Central and Eastern European Migration Review* 4 (2015): 13–25; Damian Mac Con Uladh, "Die Alltagserfahrungen ausländischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR: Vietnamesen, Kubaner, Mosambikaner, Ungarn und andere," in *Erfolg in der Nische? Die Vietnamesen in der DDR und in Ostdeutschland*, ed. Karin Weiss and Dennis Mike (Münster: Lit, 2005), 51–67.

⁸ See Machava, and Ibraimo and Schenck, this volume.

⁹ van der Heyden, Das gescheiterte Experiment, 394.

ment, but also, as far as possible, under what conditions the diplomatic negotiations were conducted.

In the first section, I discuss the historical precedents in creating labor migration agreements for both the GDR and Mozambique. Especially for the Mozambican side it is necessary to recognize, that the negotiation process of the contract labor accord constitutes a socialist encounter that stood at the end of the entangled labor history with South Africa and at the beginning of a new history of entanglement between the GDR and Mozambique and entailed new moorings, linked to the resulting labor migration to East Germany. After that, I focus on the role of the contract labor accord as part of a process of intensifying political relations between those states. In addition, it is important to take into account the development politics of the GDR in the "Third World," and especially in states that officially proclaimed a socialist political course, as this deeply influenced the ideological conceptions of contract labor accords. Thus, the meaning of "international solidarity" as an expression of mutual advantage as part of the creation of the bilateral accord will also be questioned. The analysis is based on negotiating guidelines and reports from the Secretariat for Labor and Wages and the related decisions of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, as well as agreements signed by the Secretariat for Labor and Wages and the Ministry of Labor of the People's Republic of Mozambique. These documents primarily help to reconstruct the intensions of the GDR, but they also give limited insight into the demands and reactions of the Mozambican side. Unfortunately, these documents cannot reflect the planning processes of the Mozambican government. The analvsis takes place from the perspective of the GDR and its dealings with the Mozambican side in the negotiation process. What demands did the GDR make on Mozambique and how did the GDR deal with the demands of the Mozambican side? In this context, it will be demonstrated that Mozambique had a voice in shaping the agreement and that controversies arose on both sides due to a lack of knowledge about each other, which had a lasting impact on the negotiations. Finally, a brief outlook on the further course of the labor agreement will be given.

¹⁰ In the GDR, and elsewhere in the post-war era, the term "Third World" was used to denote new states that emerged in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as part of the decolonization process that did not clearly fit into a bipolar Cold War division of the world. Based on theories of modernization these countries were also considered as being economically backward and thus "underdeveloped"; see Jürgen Dinkel, "'Dritte Welt' – Geschichte und Semantiken, Version: 1.0," Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte (2014), accessed October 6, 2014, doi:10.14765/zzf.dok.2.596.v1.

Previous Labor Migration Agreements

By 1978, the GDR was able to look back on extensive experience in the negotiation of labor migration agreements. The first accord on the employment of foreign workers was concluded by the Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, SED) with Poland in 1963. After that, a whole series of other bilateral agreements with socialist or at least socialist-leaning states followed: Hungary (1967), Algeria (1974), and Cuba (1975). Although the authorities had gained some experience in dealing with foreign workers since the 1960s, the specific characteristics of every country forced the responsible bureaucrats to adapt individually to the new foreign workers after each agreement - a task that involved the Ministry of State Security (MfS or Stasi), especially in monitoring the foreign workers. Thus, it was not unusual for the Stasi to prepare an evaluation of the planned agreement with Mozambique. 12 Since the surveillance of foreigners fell within the remit of state security, the so-called "Foreigners Working Group" (AG Ausländer) was created as part of the Department of Counterintelligence in 1980 to centralize this task. According to the Stasi, foreigners (Ausländer) were defined as "all people, who are not GDR citizens who reside in the territory of the GDR."¹³ This included Soviet occupying forces, political emigrants, foreign students, and also contract workers from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The special observation status was justified by the SED government, on the one hand, based on the almost paranoid fear of hostile attacks against the GDR and, on the other hand, the concerns for GDR prestige abroad.

For Mozambique, state-induced temporary labor migration was also not a novelty. Since the nineteenth century, labor migration between southern Mozambique and South African mines was one of the most significant aspects of the

¹¹ Cf. Röhr, "Die Beschäftigung polnischer Arbeitskräfte in der DDR 1966–1990," 211–236; Jarosi, "Umschwärmte Kavaliere und gewinnbringende Ehemänner: Ungarische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR," 197–216; Gruner-Domić, *Kubanische Arbeitsmigration in die DDR 1978–1989*; Mac Con Uladh, "Die Alltagserfahrungen ausländischer Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR," 51–67.

¹² Opinion on the draft decision about the deployment of Mozambican workers in the GDR (March 26, 1979) [Meinungsäußerung zum Beschlussentwurf über den Einsatz mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR (26. März 1979)], Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former German Democratic Republic Stasi Records Agency [Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik], Berlin (henceforth: BStU), MfS, Abt. X, Nr. 812, sheet 129 – 130.

¹³ Lecture as part of a political-technical training by the Ministry of State Security (undated) [Vortrag im Rahmen einer politisch-technischen Ausbildung durch das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (undatiert)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 28659, sheet 7–49. Own translation.

two countries' economic and social relationship. During Portuguese colonial rule, nearly one third of the male population in the south of Mozambique was contracted to the mines for between 12 and 18 months at a time; the vast majority of the migration took place within a state-managed framework, a few migrants found their way to South Africa along different routes. 14 The migration of Mozambican miners was an important economic factor for the Portuguese and also for the British colonial rulers in South Africa. For example, in 1928, it was agreed that at least 65,000 Mozambican workers should work in the mines in South Africa. This number increased to nearly 100,000 by the mid 1930s. The Great Depression of 1929, however, had a negative impact on almost all sectors of the South African economy and gold mining was no exception. As a result, many South Africans sought work in the mines, which eventually led to a decline in demand of Mozambican labor. 15 However, the number of Mozambicans working in the mines was still very high. That did not change until the mid 1970s. After Mozambique gained its independence under the leadership of the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, FRELI-MO) in 1975, the bilateral contracts for labor migration with South Africa remained basically in place, although the number of recruits dropped significantly. The main reasons for this were the consequences of investing in the mechanization of work, the will of mine operators to be less dependent on migrant workers, and the increased price of gold, which made it possible to pay higher wages and make work more attractive to the local population. While not all Mozambican migrant workers were dismissed because their experience could not be easily replaced, hardly any new workers were recruited.¹⁶

After independence, Mozambique faced major economic problems. The colonial economy the Portuguese rulers had built primarily based on the production of agricultural goods was labor export-oriented. Also the rapid exodus of the formerly Portuguese settlers—including many skilled workers—during and after the independence process left the Mozambican economy in disarray and was anoth-

¹⁴ Barry Munslow, "State Intervention in Agriculture: The Mozambican Experience," The Journal of Modern African Studies 22 (1984): 200; see also Sara Mercandalli, Christopher Changwe Nshimbi, and Inocent Moyo, "Mozambican Labour Migrations, Remittances and Development: Evidence, Practices and Implications for Policy," in Migration, Cross-Border Trade and Development in Africa: Exploring the Role of Non-State Actors in the SADC Region, ed. Sara Mercandalli et al. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 18.

¹⁵ Napoleão Gaspar, "The Reduction of Mozambican Workers in South African Mines, 1975 -1992: A Case Study of the Consequences for Gaza Province - District of Chibuto" (PhD diss., Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 2006), accessed May 16, 2008, hdl.handle.net/10539/4839, 31-32. 16 Gaspar, "The Reduction of Mozambican Workers in South African Mines," 41-42.

er obstacle to the industrialization of the country. ¹⁷ The decline in the use of migrant labor in the 1930s had already shown how much Mozambique was dependent on the South African economy, especially its labor market. Therefore, the leaders of FRELIMO initially stuck to this concept, because they were unable to create employment alternatives for migrant workers in the south of the country after taking power. 18 In the long term, however, FRELIMO decided that sending miners to South Africa should be discontinued. The Mozambican government, especially after the party congress in 1977, pursued a Marxist-Leninist policy that explicitly aimed to break away from dependence on the South African economy. Its new leaders believed that industrialization, strengthening of the public sector, and the development of collective peasant structures would finally raise Mozambique to the status of a developed socialist state.¹⁹ To this end, FRE-LIMO aimed to change the dynamics that created labor migration, mainly focused on the migrant workers to South Africa, and to productively reintegrate them into the Mozambican economy. Nevertheless, new methods had to be found to sustainably relieve the pressure on the domestic labor market and the intensification of relations with the GDR offered the Mozambican government an opportunity in this area. The sending of workers to the GDR was intended to remove unemployed unskilled workers from the domestic labor market for a certain period of time and then to reintegrate them after that as skilled workers into the domestic economy. Unlike the previous migrations to South Africa this time skills training was an important factor for the Mozambican government preparing to build a more industrialized country. After independence and the resulting departure of Portuguese skilled labor, it was urgently necessary for the Mozambican economy to make up for the ensuing shortage.²⁰

¹⁷ Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900 -1982 (Boulder et al.: Westview Press 1983), 145.

¹⁸ Ramos Cardoso Muanamoha, "The Dynamics of Undocumented Mozambican Labour Migration to South Africa" (PhD diss., University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2008), accessed March 2008, http://www.repositorio.uem.mz/handle/123456789/278, 39-40.

¹⁹ Hector Guerra Hernandez, "Cooperación para el desarrollo en tiempos de internacionalismo: Los hombres nuevos de Machel," Vibrant - Virtual Brazilian Anthropology 9 (2012): 567; Grete Brochmann, "Migrant Labour and Foreign Policy: The Case of Mozambique," Journal of Peace Research 22 (1985): 337.

²⁰ Cf. Hector Guerra Hernandez, "Ma(d)jermanes: passado colonial e presente diasporizado: reconstrução etnográfica de um dos últimos vestígios do socialismo colonial europeu" (PhD diss., Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2011), accessed August 19, 2018, http://www.repositorio. unicamp.br/handle/REPOSIP/280790; Hector Guerra Hernandez, "RAND à RDA? Modernização compulsória e práticas sociais e estratégias de mobilidade social," (con) textos: Revista d'antropologia i investigació social 3 (2009): 61-83.

Intensification of Foreign Relations

After the official founding of the People's Republic of Mozambique in 1975, the country faced numerous problems. Although FRELIMO had prevailed, a civil war lasting over 15 years against the anti-communist Mozambican National Resistance (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, RENAMO), backed primarily by South Africa, the USA and West Germany, followed formal independence.²¹ Apartheid South Africa, an important trading partner of the former colony Mozambique, also tried to undermine the new state and its economy. Furthermore, after the exodus of Portuguese settlers, Mozambique required skilled workers to develop its industries.²² Thus, the new government under the leadership of FRE-LIMO sought supporters. It focused mainly on the states of the Eastern bloc and, to an extent, to Scandinavian countries and their solidarity committees, because the NATO members had—if not officially, at least in their de facto politics—sided with their partner Portugal in the struggle over who was to rule Mozambique. Since the middle of the 1960s, the GDR had financially supported FRELIMO as a liberation movement against Portuguese colonialism. Based on this early financial aid FRELIMO hoped for a deepening of economic and political ties with East Berlin after it seized power. Around that time West Germany had abandoned its claim to be the only representative of Germany (in accordance with the so-called "Hallstein Doctrine"). In 1973, both states were admitted to join the United Nations and consequently East Berlin started opening embassies all over the world. At first, however, the GDR hesitated to upgrade its relations with Mozambique, because FRELIMO had not so far announced its economic and social orientation now that it had taken control of the former colony. Only in February 1977, after President Samora Machel clearly declared his support for socialism to the SED envoy Werner Lamberz²³ at the Third FRELIMO Congress

²¹ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 207–218; Margaret Hall and Tom Young, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique since Independence* (London: Hurst & Company 1997), 131–133.

²² Peter Meyns, *Konflikt und Entwicklung im südlichen Afrika* (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2000), 181.

²³ Werner Lamberz (1929–1978): since 1967 Lamberz was secretary of the Central Committee and since 1971 member of the SED-Politburo. He was founding vice president of the German-African Society and had considerable influence on the re-profiling of the Africa policy of the GDR. He died in a helicopter crash in Libya on March 6, 1978; see Ulf Engel and Hans-Georg Schleicher, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in Afrika: Zwischen Konkurrenz und Koexistenz 1949–1990* (Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1998), 110–113.

did the GDR agree to forge closer ties.²⁴ With its official commitment to socialism, Mozambique became one of the most important countries for the GDR's foreign policy of international solidarity in the ideological conflict between capitalism and socialism.

As a result, an "immediate program" (Sofortprogramm) was agreed upon by the two nations that same year at the Leipzig Autumn Trade Fair, which set in motion the deepening of economic ties between the two states. In November 1977, an "Agreement on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation", signed by Horst Sölle (Minister of Foreign Trade) and Marcelino dos Santos (Minister of Planning and Development), followed. It included a variety of joint projects for the extraction of raw materials in Mozambique, especially pit coal. Among other things, the GDR was supposed to send experts and advisors to provide and set up industrial equipment. The culmination of this partnership were Erich Honecker's trips to Africa in February and November 1979, visiting Libya, Angola, Zambia, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. He was accompanied by a high-ranked delegation consisting of Willi Stoph (Chairman of the Council of Ministers), Hermann Axen (Secretary of the Central Committee, foreign policy commission), Günter Mittag (Secretary of the Central Committee, economic issues), Oskar Fischer (Minister for Foreign Affairs), Julian Hollender (Ambassador of the GDR to the People's Republic of Mozambique, 1978 – 1981) and also by a group of "experts" from the Department of International Connections of the Central Committee of the SED, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade.²⁵ At the end of their visit to Mozambique, a "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation" was signed in Maputo. The conclusion of further agreements of a political or economic nature, including an agreement on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in the GDR, followed during Honecker's stay in Mozambique.²⁶

²⁴ Hans-Joachim Döring, "Es geht um unsere Existenz." Die Politik der DDR gegenüber der Dritten Welt am Beispiel von Mosambik und Äthiopien (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2001), 143–150.

²⁵ Schedule for the visit of the GDR party and state delegation headed by Erich Honecker in the People's Republic of Mozambique (February 1979) [Zeitplan für den Besuch der DDR-Partei und der Staatsdelegation unter der Leitung von Erich Honecker in der Volksrepublik Mosambik (Februar 1979)], PA AA, MfAA ZR, 2288/89.

²⁶ Döring, "Es geht um unsere Existenz," 159-161.

Planning and Shaping of "International Solidarity"

In view of diplomatic relations and the contracts concluded up to that point, at this time—from a GDR perspective—it was possible to speak of an "equal partnership" between the GDR and Mozambique. Though Mozambique was not indeed on the same level of experience in the negotiation of labor migration as the GDR, according to the official discourse, their economic relations would be following the principle of mutual benefit. According to the GDR Foreign Policy Dictionary of 1980, the term "international solidarity" encompasses an extension of the class-based behavioral principles of "togetherness, consensus, mutual support and commitment, support and sacrifice." "International solidarity" in this context stood for the "fraternal cohesion of the revolutionary department of a country with the international revolutionary labor movement, with all allies in the anti-imperialist struggle." In the correlation with development policy, priority has been given to the principle of so-called "socialist economic aid," which according to the dictionary definition was founded "on the basis of equality, nondiscrimination and mutual benefit" and should serve "free of exploitation, acquisition of property and sovereignty-infringing conditions [...] political independence, development of the national economy in general and social progress of young states."27 Socialist economic aid was closely linked to the concept of "international solidarity." However, with the Commercial Coordination Division (Bereich Kommerzielle Koordinierung, commonly known as KoKo), under direction of Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski and responsible for the procurement of convertible foreign currency, there was another level that had a lasting impact on the GDR's economic cooperation with countries in the Global South. As Berthold Unfried shows, it is difficult to draw a clear dividing line between regular economic relations and development policy measures, since the two levels often influenced each other.²⁸ That is what happened in regard to the contract labor accord between the GDR and Mozambique - educational aid merged with economic interests.

²⁷ Institut für Internationale Beziehungen an der Akademie für Staats- und Rechtswissenschaft der DDR, ed., Wörterbuch der Außenpolitik und des Völkerrechts (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1980), 150-152, 528. Own translation.

²⁸ Berthold Unfried, "Instrumente und Praktiken von 'Solidarität' Ost und 'Entwicklungshilfe' West: Blickpunkt auf das entsandte Personal," in Die eine Welt schaffen: Praktiken von 'Internationaler Solidarität' und 'Internationaler Entwicklung', ed. Berthold Unfried and Eva Himmelstoss (Leipzig: AVA, 2012), 77.

Already at the beginning of the 1980s, the GDR was facing rapidly increasing economic problems and Mozambique was no longer able to adhere to the terms of the treaties due to its intensifying civil war. This was the beginning, when the balance ran aground. Mainly because the railway connecting the pit coal mining complex Moatize with the port of Beira suffered from continuous sabotage from RENAMO rebels, Mozambique was not able to fulfill its coal delivery agreements; so as a result, debt began to accumulate towards the GDR.²⁹ Also, the GDR faced increasing economic problems and actively pursued the acquisition of foreign exchange. Thus, both states were confronted with problems that came to have a lasting effect on the further course of the contract labor migration.

The international development policy commitments of the GDR consisted of several branches: First, in the realm of foreign trade, there were preferential price contracts, awarding of favorable loans, bartering, and free services. This was intended to strengthen the economic relations between the GDR and Mozambique and, in accordance with the socialist principle of trade, both sides should benefit. As a result, the GDR countered its counterparties' lending terms and paid amounts well above normal market prices due to closed preference price agreements for commodity imports. Because of constant shortages of foreign exchange, which resulted mainly from the existing import surpluses, trade with Mozambique was mostly based on a direct exchange of commodities for commodities.³⁰ It is important to emphasize that bartering with countries of the Global South was in many cases beneficial for the GDR, as it enabled to cheaply buy raw materials, thus saved important foreign exchange.³¹ In addition to GDR development policy involvement, such as the supply of agricultural machinery and the assistance of Free German Youth (FDJ) brigades, the support also included "educational aid." For example, the GDR Solidarity Committee promoted the training of foreign students with scholarships.³³ However, the training

²⁹ Künanz, "Das Steinkohleprojekt Moatize zwischen solidarischer Hilfeleistung und kommerziellen Anspruch," 179-184.

³⁰ Verburg, Maria Magdalena, Ostdeutsche Dritte-Welt-Gruppen vor und nach 1989/90 (Göttingen: V & R Unipress, 2012), 24.

³¹ Cf. Anne Dietrich, "Kaffee in der DDR - 'Ein Politikum ersten Ranges'," in Kaffeewelten: Historische Perspektiven auf eine globale Ware im 20. Jahrhundert, ed. Christiane Berth et al. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 225-247; Immanuel R. Harisch, "Bartering Coffee, Cocoa and W50 Trucks: The Trade Relationships of the GDR, Angola and São Tomé in a Comparative Perspective," Global Histories 3 (2017): 43-60.

³² See Piepiorka and Buanaissa, this volume.

³³ There was no overarching ministry in the GDR that coordinated development measures. Instead, the management of the projects and the negotiation of agreements with the countries concerned fell within the area of responsibility of the respective state authorities, such as the Min-

of Mozambican workers was a mixture of development aid and economic benefits. Already in the run-up to the "Agreement on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation," concluded on November 15, 1977, the Mozambican government asked the GDR, if it is possible to send 50 to 100 Mozambican workers to the GDR for vocational training. Thus, from September 1978, the first group of 65 workers came to the GDR and was trained to work in the cement industry, the transporting sector, and in the sugar industry. This sector selection was based on the key industries of the Mozambican economy. The trainees had to complete a five-month language course in German before starting the two-year vocational training. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and the relevant Ministries of Economic Affairs were primarily responsible for the organization, financing, and implementation of the vocational qualification.³⁴

At this point, it is important to emphasize that the vocational training of workers based on the "Agreement on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation" – was not the same type of vocational training that was later part of the contract labor accord from 1979. Instead of vocational training, the contract labor accord stipulated that the assignment was linked to the simultaneous provision of practical work experience as a part of providing productive activity and vocational education and training in the context of in-company adult qualification.³⁵ In contrast to direct financial support, this form of "development aid" was feasible for the GDR since it was resource-efficient enough to be financed on the

istry of Foreign Affairs or the Secretariat for Labor and Wages. Despite this division of competence areas, all positions were subject to the instructions of the Central Committee of the SED. The only institution that commanded a concentrated coordination center for "development aid" was the Solidarity Committee of the GDR. This social organization was primarily responsible for the implementation of "international solidarity". The area of responsibility of the committee included the procurement of financial and material funds for development policy projects as well as the support of anti-imperialist liberation movements in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; see Hans-Joachim Spanger, and Lothar Brock, *Die beiden deutschen Staaten in der Dritten Welt: Die Entwicklungspolitik der DDR – Eine Herausforderung für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland?* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1987), 214–217.

³⁴ Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the GDR, resolution on the proposal on the professional qualification of citizens of Mozambique in the GDR (October 27, 1977) [Präsidium des Ministerrats der DDR, Beschluss zum Vorschlag über die berufliche Qualifizierung von Bürgern der VR Mosambik in der DDR (27. Oktober 1977)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 4–8.

³⁵ Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (February 24, 1979) [Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (24. Februar 1979)], PA AA, MfAA, ZR 970/87.

limited East German budget of convertible currencies. Moreover, such an approach was seen to be not only economically, but also ideologically useful.³⁶

In the first draft of the contract labor accord it was already stated that the vocational qualification was oriented both to the existing technical installations in Mozambique and to the key industries of the national economy. Furthermore, workers should only be employed in areas in which they had already gained practical experience.³⁷ This was intended to ensure that the workers could actually use the acquired knowledge after their return to Mozambique. It was also stipulated that workers should be given the opportunity to continue their professional education at GDR enterprises after their regular working time. In general, however, the Secretariat for Labor and Wages did not undertake any obligation to achieve specific qualification goals in its concept paper.³⁸ These were instead ultimately determined between the workers and the companies through respective qualification contracts.³⁹ This practice gave the contract workers a certain degree of individual responsibility, which was, however, fundamentally dependent on the actual implementation of the requirements of the enterprises.

Since the civil servants in the Secretariat for Labor and Wages, like Horst Rademacher (1967-1977), and later Wolfgang Beyreuther (1977-1989) already had some experience in the preparation of such negotiations, it took only a few months to finalize the negotiation plans with Mozambique. In September 1978, initial calculations were made internally to determine and optimize the economic value of the contract labor. In a letter to Wolfgang Beyreuther, an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that the "additional financial burden of training a foreign citizen to become a skilled worker" would cost between 8,000 and 9,000 East German Marks (DDM) per year, with the extra output generated in production amounting to 12,000 to 15,000 DDM. As a result, Beyreuther was ad-

³⁶ Eric Allina, "'Neue Menschen für Mosambik.' Erwartungen an und Realität von Vertragsarbeit in der DDR der 1980er-Jahre," Arbeit, Bewegung, Geschichte: Zeitschrift für historische Studien 3 (2016): 66.

³⁷ Concept paper for the temporary employment of working people from developing countries in the production process of national enterprises of the GDR (September 6, 1978) [Konzeption zur zeitweiligen Beschäftigung von Werktätigen aus Entwicklungsländern im Produktionsprozess volkseigener Betriebe der DDR (6. September 1978)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32493, sheet 63-67. 38 Ibid.

³⁹ See article 9, paragraph 2 in Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (February 24, 1979) [Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (24. Februar 1979)], PA AA, MfAA, ZR 970/87.

vised to suggest to the Council of Ministers "that it would be more expedient for the GDR from 1982 onwards—and with a lower foreign exchange burden—to aim for two years of vocational training followed by 2–3 years of work in the GDR."⁴⁰ A more detailed breakdown of these calculations can be found in an appraisal of the economic costs and benefits of using Mozambicans in GDR enterprises in the formal decision to implement the agreement of May 1979. It calculated that, for 2,000 Mozambican contract workers, the cost for the GDR would be around 15 million DDM, whereas the annual production value of the additional labor force was estimated to be 20 million DDM. Thus, the letter concluded: "Expenditure and economic benefits of the employment of Mozambican workers for the GDR are likely to balance each other."⁴¹ The GDR would not make a large profit, but would be able to maintain its own production.

The training of workers was also an important aspect of the FRELIMO policy program.

Increasing training of workers and peasants in the field of the science and technique of the productive process is a decisive front in the battle for complete independence. On a par with the development of education, all structures—state or private—should, in a co-ordinated way, launch permanent and successive professional training activities for the nation's workers.⁴²

Overcoming colonial structures and building up an independent economy was the top priority for Mozambique. In this context, especially the integration of young people into the labor market was particularly important.

We must give special attention to involving young people who have completed their studies in productive activity. To put an end to anarchy in the labour market, a body must be set up

⁴⁰ Note on the draft accord (September 19, 1978) [Anmerkung zum Abkommensentwurf (19. September 1978)], Federal Archives, Foundation Archives of Political Parties and Mass Organizations in the GDR [Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv], Berlin (henceforth: SAPMO-BArch), DQ3/1026. Own translation.

⁴¹ Decision of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the GDR on the implementation of the Agreement (February 24, 1979) with the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican working people in socialist enterprises in the GDR (May 31, 1979) [Beschluss des Präsidium des Ministerrates der DDR vom 31. Mai 1979 über die Durchführung des Abkommens vom 24. Februar 1979 mit der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 32–44.

⁴² Samora Moisés Machel, "Central Committee Report [to the Third Congress], Maputo" (published June 6, 1978. Translation into English by the Mozambique-Angola-Guiné Information Centre (MAGIC), London), 56-57.

to make sure these young people are employed in a planned way, taking into consideration their technical and political qualities, and the priorities for the country's development.⁴³

The labor accord with the GDR promised to carry out the economic plans, which were formulated on the Third Congress of FRELIMO, held in February 1977.

The agreement was supposed to benefit both sides. Mozambique profited from the training of its workers, the relief of the domestic labor market and the creation of professional prospects for young people. For the GDR, it solved the labor shortage that seriously threatened economic production. To maintain and increase production was a central aspect of the SED government's claim to power. After all, with his program of "unity of economic and social policy" (Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik) Honecker had promised an increase in the standard of living in the GDR. 44 In addition, the training of skilled workers in the designated workers' and peasants' state GDR represented a form of truly "international solidarity" for the SED leadership and its propaganda machine.

The Negotiations of the Contract Labor Accord

On October 12, 1978, one month after the initial calculations, the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the GDR decided to enter into negotiations with the Mozambican government for a contract labor accord that worked independently of the "Agreement on Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation." These documents formed the basis for the first talks on the draft accord with a delega-

⁴³ Ibid., 64.

⁴⁴ Joint decision of the Central Committee of the SED, the Federal Executive of the FDGB and the Council of Ministers of the GDR on social policy measures in the implementation of the main task of the five-year plan decided on at the 8th SED Party Congress, (April 28, 1972) [Gemeinsamer Beschluss des Zentralkomitees der SED, der Bundesleitung des FDGB und des Ministerrates der DDR über sozialpolitische Maßnahmen zur Umsetzung der Hauptaufgabe des auf dem 8. SED-Parteitag beschlossenen Fünfjahresplans (28. April 1972)], printed in Günter Benser, ed., *Dokumente zur Geschichte der SED, Vol. 3: 1971–1986* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1986), 73–74. 45 Decision on the guideline for negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Mozambique about the preparation of an intergovernmental agreement on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (October 12, 1978) [Beschluss zur Direktive für die Verhandlungen mit der Regierung der VR Mosambik zur Vorbereitung eines Regierungsabkommens über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (12. Oktober 1978)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 9–22.

tion from Mozambique, under the direction of Amandio Chongo⁴⁶ (Ministry of Labor, Department for Vocational Training), held in East Berlin.⁴⁷ As part of these negotiations, some questions, for example the determination of health suitability, early termination of the employment contract and vacation trips of the workers to Mozambique, remained open and had to be clarified internally by the SED. In addition, the Mozambican representatives had made some new proposals, like a vacation day for Mozambican workers on the Mozambican national day and the supply of workers with press products from Mozambique, which also needed to be discussed.⁴⁸ At the beginning of February 1979, a delegation of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages, consisting of Ingolf Noack (deputy), Ernst-Otto Jacobs (head of inspection) and Lutz Hoepner (interpreter), traveled to Mozambique to continue the negotiation of the agreement with the Mozambican Ministry of Labor, under direction of Alberto Cassimo (Minister of Labor).⁴⁹ Based on the revised version of the negotiating guideline, it is easy to understand which critical points had to be discussed in detail during this

⁴⁶ Amandio Rafael Moises Chongo (*1945) joined FRELIMO in Tanzania in the mid-1960s. There he received his first military training, which he perfected especially in the field of artillery with a training period in the Soviet Union in 1966. After that he was then an active military fighter but also took care of the military and political training of guerrillas. In the summer of 1970, he lost a leg during a fight and worked until 1976 as a diplomatic relations manager for FRELIMO in Italy. Then he joined the Ministry of Labor, Department for Vocational Training; source: "Amandio Rafael Moises Chongo", Archive portal of the IBC network of Emilia-Romagna, accessed July 26, 2020, http://archivi.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/ibc-cms/cms.find?&id=produttori&.titolo=chongo&numDoc=8&munu_str=0_1_2&.date=&archType=auther&perpage=30&realTemplate=templateRicercaProduttori&flagfind=customXdamsFindProduttori&.q=&fromId=y&qrId=3se4482248f8810101&physDoc=961&pos=0&archType=auther#nogo.

⁴⁷ Joint minutes of the delegation visit by representatives of the Mozambican Ministry of Labor in Berlin (November 6, 1978) [Gemeinsames Protokoll zum Delegationsbesuch von Vertretern des mosambikanischen Arbeitsministeriums in Berlin (6. November 1978)], SAPMO-BArch, DQ3/1026.

⁴⁸ Guideline for the negotiations with a delegation of the Ministry of Labor of the Republic of Mozambique in Maputo (February 1979) about the preparation of the intergovernmental Agreement on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in the GDR (undated) [Direktive für die Verhandlungen mit einer Delegation des Arbeitsministeriums der Volksrepublik Mosambik in Maputo (Februar 1979) über die Vorbereitung eines zwischenstaatlichen Abkommens zur befristeten Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR (undatiert)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 23–30.

⁴⁹ Telegram from the GDR ambassador Julian Hollender about the preparation of the delegation talks between the Secretariat for Labor and Wages of the GDR and the Ministry of Labor in Mozambique (January 17, 1979) [Telegramm des DDR-Botschafters Julian Hollender über die Vorbereitung der Delegationsgespräche zwischen dem Staatssekretariat für Arbeit und Löhne der DDR und dem Arbeitsministerium in Mosambik (17. Januar 1979)], SAPMO-BArch, DQ3/1026.

time. In it, individual paragraphs of the first draft accord were listed and clearly formulated along with how many concessions could be granted by the GDR representatives to the Mozambican delegation. These formulations were partially supplemented with detailed justifications.

As a first example, the GDR demanded a joint medical commission to determine the fitness of prospective contract workers. The primary aim was that Mozambique should cover all costs for East German doctors to travel to Mozambique as well as their room and board once they arrived. If this proposal was not approved by Alberto Cassimo, the delegation members could propose to share the costs, so that the GDR took over the travel expenses while Mozambique would finance the accommodation. If this should be rejected by the Mozambicans as well, it could also be agreed that the investigation be carried out by doctors from Mozambique alone. The guideline stipulated, however, that this provision should then be carefully enforced and that an involvement of foreign doctors presently deployed in Mozambique, mainly Chinese or Portuguese, should be excluded.⁵⁰ The results of the negotiations can be found in the report of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages from February 23, 1979, one day before the accord was signed: In the end, the Mozambican side agreed to take over the subsistence costs of the GDR doctors, which meant that the Mozambican government had rejected assuming the full cost of the inspections.⁵¹ This point shows that the GDR was willing to compromise, and that the SED negotiators did not aim to impose its demands by any means necessary, especially because the GDR economy would also benefit from the envisaged contract.

As we can see on the basis of the archived protocols of the negotiation process, the Mozambican representatives of FRELIMO were not merely reactive players during the phase of negotiations, and they brought their own interests and

⁵⁰ Guideline for the negotiations with a delegation of the Ministry of Labor of the Republic of Mozambique in Maputo (February 1979) about the preparation of the intergovernmental Agreement on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in the GDR (undated) [Direktive für die Verhandlungen mit einer Delegation des Arbeitsministeriums der Volksrepublik Mosambik in Maputo (Februar 1979) über die Vorbereitung eines zwischenstaatlichen Abkommens zur befristeten Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR (undatiert)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 23-30.

⁵¹ Report of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages on the negotiations on the Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the People's Republic of Mozambique (February 13 – 20, 1979) about the temporary employment of Mozambican working people in the GDR in Maputo (February 23, 1979) [Bericht des SAL über die Verhandlungen zum Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der VR Mosambik (13. - 20. Februar 1979) über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR in Maputo (23. Februar 1979)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 91-96.

ideas to the discussion. In the draft prepared by the GDR, the section on premature termination of employment contracts stipulate that this could be done if the worker made himself liable to punishment, violated so-called "socialist labor discipline,"52 or if he was out of work for more than three months due to illness.53 In return, Alberto Cassimo demanded, that it should be possible to initiate a premature termination of the employment contract in the event of a breach of duty by GDR enterprises or due to extenuating Mozambican state interests. Cassimo justified this demand with the fact that the party leadership of FRELIMO decided that workers who do not stick to their revolutionary mandate should be sent back immediately.⁵⁴ The GDR agreed to this proposal without protest. The report also stated, however, that further arrangements still had to be made in this regard. They decided that if an East German company does not fulfill its obligations, the employment relationship could but did not necessarily have to be dissolved. In cooperation with the Mozambican partner, it should be explored if the transfer of a worker to another enterprise could possibly solve the problem instead.55

In retrospect, the contract's paragraph on extenuating state interests introduced by Mozambican officials seems to have been a kind of back door that allowed the Mozambican state to bring home workers from the GDR without a specific substantiation. The reason why the GDR did not oppose the installation of

⁵² In the GDR labor code (Gesetzbuch der Arbeit, § 106), the term "socialist labor discipline" was defined as: "Socialist labor discipline manifests itself in the conscious action of the working people in asserting the common interests of all working people in the socialist society. It is based on the fundamental correspondence between the interests of society and the individual, and includes comradely cooperation, mutual help and respect, and the conscientious fulfillment of all work tasks for the realization of the operational plans. It is a crucial basis of the socialist organization of labor." Own translation.

⁵³ See article 5, paragraph 4 in Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (February 24, 1979) [Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (24. Februar 1979)], PA AA, MfAA, ZR 970/87.

⁵⁴ Report of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages on the negotiations on the Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the People's Republic of Mozambique (February 13–20, 1979) about the temporary employment of Mozambican working people in the GDR in Maputo (February 23, 1979) [Bericht des SAL über die Verhandlungen zum Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der VR Mosambik (13.–20. Februar 1979) über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR in Maputo (23. Februar 1979)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 91–96.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

such a back door could probably be found in the previous paragraph. With the undefined passage "violation of socialist labor discipline," the GDR also had the option of dissolving an employment relationship without stating specific reasons. Whether and to what extent these two loopholes were actually used in practice cannot be reconstructed, but it ultimately leads to the question of whether they were deliberately used for concealment. After all, both sides were interested in making the agreement a success.

A question that—in the view of Mozambique—was actually not a real question arose in relation to the leave entitlement. According to the GDR's understanding of the labor law, Mozambican workers were to be given one paid vacation back home during the four-year operational period of their contract. Based on the experience of designing earlier bilateral contract labor agreements, it was also required from GDR representatives that the holiday entitlements should be clearly regulated on the intergovernmental level, especially since this was ultimately about the payment of travel expenses. At this point, differences in the conception of labor law between the GDR and Mozambique came to the fore. For the GDR, it was logical to guarantee the foreign workers a paid holiday to return home during their vocational training period. For the Mozambican representatives, however, this practice was not particularly relevant in their understanding of the draft of the contract labor agreement. Thus, the report of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages stated, that the Mozambican side was not in a position to express a binding position on these issues.⁵⁶ It cannot clearly be identified, whether paid leave was simply seen as a luxury or whether considerations such as associated costs of getting the workers to their home provinces were seen as obstacles. Maybe there were concerns about security of internal travel and drafting of workers during the civil war in Mozambique. In order to avoid an unnecessary delay during the negotiations in Maputo, the request of the Mozambican representatives was accepted and no clear formulation regarding the regulations about paid vacations was included.

The last section of the negotiation report reveals how important the conclusion of the contract labor accord was for the Mozambican government. During their visit, the members of the GDR delegation were taken to a cement factory

⁵⁶ Report of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages on the negotiations on the Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the People's Republic of Mozambique (February 13 – 20, 1979) about the temporary employment of Mozambican working people in the GDR in Maputo (February 23, 1979) [Bericht des SAL über die Verhandlungen zum Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der VR Mosambik (13. – 20. Februar 1979) über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in der DDR in Maputo (23. Februar 1979)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 91-96.

and some railway repair centers in Maputo. This excursion shows that on site the Mozambican representatives repeatedly pointed out how urgently trained workers were needed. They emphasized that there was a large backlog, especially in the repair and maintenance of plant installations, since usually only one sufficiently qualified worker was available at any given point in time.⁵⁷ For the Mozambicans, it was important to demonstrate the social and economic needs that the deal would fulfill as part of the socialist revolution taking place in the country during the negotiation process.

The Further Course of the Contract Labor Accord

This contract labor accord was never fixed; instead it was subsequently amended or supplemented only by annual protocols and subsequent agreements that were negotiated in cooperation with the Mozambican Ministry of Labor. The first annual protocol from 1979 determined that only 440 Mozambican workers should be employed in the GDR. 300 of them were sent to the coal industry, where they were able to get a skilled worker training as a maintenance mechanic, electrician, motor vehicle repairman or vulcanizer – which was especially important for the pit coal project in Moatize. Another 100 workers should be employed in the smelting industry to get qualifications as metal craftsmen.⁵⁸ Before the training started, the Mozambican had to attend a compulsory language course in German. Of these, 40 people had to attend an intensive language course so that they could later be used as "language mediators" in the companies. The fulfillment of this condition was very important for the further course of the labor migration accord. The recruiting of more workers in this year was dependent on how quickly the training of Mozambican translators progressed.⁵⁹ The deployment of the contract workers should be carried out in groups of 50 people, a size that often varied in reality. In each group one worker was assigned by the Mozambican representative in East Germany as a so-called "group leader". Ac-

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Annual protocol 1979 of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages on the agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (undated) [Jahresprotokoll 1979 des Staatssekretariats für Arbeit und Löhne über das Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der Volksrepublik Mosambik über die befristete Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (undatiert)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 49-52.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

cording to the agreement, the group leaders must contribute to the close cooperation between Mozambican workers and the East German company manager. They also should take care of the fulfillment of the tasks, the observance of the work discipline and the political and cultural education in the group. According to the 1980 annual protocol, another 2,000 Mozambican workers should enter the GDR, and this time 100 of them should be trained as a language mediator. Also an alternative to the close cooperation of the should be trained as a language mediator.

However, the numbers on the size of the recruited workers agreed on within these protocols, did not correspond to reality, because in 1980 over 2,800 and, in 1981 over 2,600 Mozambican workers arrived in the GDR. But during the three following years, the total number of new arrivals was just 382.⁶² In 1985 there were about 5,000 Mozambican contract workers in the GDR. Because of the planned rotation principle and the maximal duration of four years enshrined in the agreement, many contracts were about to expire in the mid 1980s. Thus, the GDR created an agreement, which should regulate the procedure in the case of contractual extensions, in October 1984.⁶³ Both, the East German government and the employed contract workers in the GDR had an interest in contractual extensions. As a result, the Mozambican government agreed to an extension of deploy-

Agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (February 24, 1979) [Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VR Mosambik über die zeitweilige Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (24. Februar 1979)], PA AA, MfAA, ZR 970/87.

Annual protocol 1980 of the Secretariat for Labor and Wages on the agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (undated) [Jahresprotokoll 1980 des Staatssekretariats für Arbeit und Löhne über das Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der Volksrepublik Mosambik über die befristete Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Arbeitnehmer in sozialistischen Unternehmen in der DDR (undatiert)], BStU, MfS, HA II, Nr. 32490, sheet 54–59.

Secretariat for Labor and Wages: Overview on the development of the contract labor accord between Mozambique and the GDR (April 1989) [Staatssekretariat für Arbeit und Löhne: Überblick über die Entwicklung des Vertragsarbeitsabkommens zwischen Mosambik und der DDR (April 1989)], SAPMO-BArch, DQ 3/1813.

Arrangement on Article 1 (3) on the agreement between the Government of the GDR and the Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique on the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in socialist enterprises in the GDR (October 26, 1984) [Vereinbarung zu Artikel 1 Absatz 3 des Abkommens zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der Volksrepublik Mosambik über die befristete Beschäftigung mosambikanischer Werktätiger in sozialistischen Betrieben der DDR (26. Oktober 1984)], PA AA, MfAA, ZR 2331/89.

ment with a maximum of operational time of up to ten years.⁶⁴ Although at this time the decline in foreign trade relations between Mozambique and the GDR began, the number of contract workers continued to increase from the mid 1980s. Since 1987, the temporary employment of Mozambican workers in East German enterprises had been used as the primary clearinghouse for Mozambique's debt reduction to the GDR. As a result, from 1987 to 1989, a total of over 11,500 additional workers arrived, a number of which consisted of workers returning on a second contract.⁶⁵

In their internal correspondence, the responsible actors⁶⁶ in the GDR did not stop to emphasize that the mission should continue to be linked to professional qualification, as this was of "high political and practical importance" for the People's Republic of Mozambique.⁶⁷ Until the collapse of the GDR, the promise of vocational training formed an integral part of the contract workers' agreements. Testimonies by former contract workers, too, reported that they had always received training. Though, the quality of training and the tasks of the workers greatly varied from monotonous factory work to excellent vocational training opportunities.⁶⁸ And even if a worker could not complete his training successfully, he was offered opportunities in the GDR to achieve further "partial qualifications."⁶⁹ But previous research has argued that, with the increase in contract

⁶⁴ Information on the situation among Mozambican workers in the GDR economy (September 24, 1987) [Information zur Situation der mosambikanischen Werktätigen in der DDR-Wirtschaft (24. September 1987)], BStU, MfS, HA XVIII, Nr. 19422, sheet 9–14.

⁶⁵ Döring, "Es geht um unsere Existenz," 237.

⁶⁶ Paul Gerhard Schürer (Chairman of the State Planning Commission at the Council of Ministers of the GDR and member of the Politburo), Kurt Singhuber (Minister of Heavy Industry), Gerhard Beil (Minister of Foreign Trade), Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski (Head of the Commercial Coordination Division at the Ministry of Foreign Trade), Oskar Fischer (Minister for Foreign Affairs), Wolfgang Beyreuther (Secretary of State for Labor and Wages), and Ernst Höfner (Minister of Finance).

⁶⁷ Measures for the organization of the economic relations between the GDR and the VR Mozambique until 1995 in the sense of a mutually satisfactory solution to the reduction of the credit of the GDR (June 23, 1988), quoted according to Müggenburg, *Die ausländischen Vertragsarbeitnehmer in der ehemaligen DDR*, 63–73.

⁶⁸ Marcia C. Schenck, "From Luanda and Maputo to Berlin: Uncovering Angolan and Mozambican Migrants' Motives to Move to the German Democratic Republic (1979 – 1990)," *African Economic History* 44 (2016): 214 – 216.

⁶⁹ Julio Mussane, "Es war immer jemand da, der half, Probleme zu lösen: Interview mit Julio Mussane am 29. April 2013 durch Ralf Straßburg," in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR-Wirtschaft: Hintergrund – Verlauf – Folgen*, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden et al. (Münster: Lit, 2014), 229; Jose Reis, "Keine leichten Lebensumstände in der DDR: Interview mit Jose Reis am 31. Mai 2013 durch Ralf Straßburg," in *Mosambikanische Vertragsarbeiter in der DDR*-

workers from the mid 1980s on, the vocational qualifications defined in the agreements were no longer fully met.⁷⁰

Furthermore, the integration of workers trained in East Germany into GDRfinanced enterprises in Mozambique continued to be a decisive factor. To illustrate this point, I would like to quote an internal letter from the Commercial Coordination Division from November 9, 1984. In this letter, its leader Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski was informed by Klaus-Dieter Uhlig⁷¹ that a textile combine plant built by the GDR in Mocuba, a town in central Mozambique, was still under construction and would not be operational until two years later.⁷² In case their stay in Germany was extended, the trained Mozambican skilled workers could immediately start their work in this company after their return. He also warned that if the request to extend the period of residence was rejected, the returnees would not find work in Mozambique. Instead, they would be integrated into the armed forces, leading to a loss of skilled workforce.⁷³ This letter also stressed that Mozambique was also very interested in extending the period of residence because of its own economic problems. The arguments made demonstrate that the GDR was interested in furthering and securing its projects in the spirit of "international solidarity" and of course, it was also to boost exports as the machinery was usually bought by the recipient countries, either through barter with local goods or through credit lines with interest. However, it also clearly demonstrates that the recruitment policy of the GDR cannot be explained solely in the context of the GDR's domestic economic history. Instead, all joint activities with Mozambique need to be taken into consideration to properly analyze the GDR's contract labor policy.

Wirtschaft: Hintergrund – Verlauf – Folgen, ed. Ulrich van der Heyden et al. (Münster: Lit, 2014), 235.

⁷⁰ Müggenburg, *Die ausländischen Vertragsarbeitnehmer in der ehemaligen DDR*, 10; Andrzej Stach and Saleh Hussain, *Ausländer in der DDR: Ein Rückblick* (Berlin: Ausländerbeauftragte des Senats, 1994), 11; Gruner-Domić, *Geschichte der Arbeitskräftemigration*, 228.

⁷¹ Klaus-Dieter Uhlig was head of the trade policy department at the Commercial Coordination Division, responsible for the foreign offices in Tehran, Maputo, and Cairo.

⁷² See Bahr, this volume.

⁷³ Internal letter from the Department of Commercial Coordination Division regarding the extension of the period of residence for Mozambican workers in the GDR (November 9, 1984) [Internes Schreiben der Abteilung für Kommerzielle Koordinierung über die Verlängerung der Aufenthaltsdauer für mosambikanische Werktätige in der DDR (9. November 1984)], SAPMO-BArch, DL 226/1682.

Conclusion

Relations between the GDR and Mozambique date back to the time before the declaration of independence of 1975 when the GDR aimed to gain international recognition as a sovereign state in the 1960s and the SED regime sought diplomatic contacts with FRELIMO. The early support of the Marxist-oriented Mozambican liberation movement meant that once FRELIMO was in power, the two states moved closer to one another in the 1970s. On the part of the GDR, this was mainly due to the prestige-oriented idea of class struggle within the context of the East-West conflict. The Mozambican government was faced with the exodus of skilled personnel and simultaneously had to overcome the colonial legacies in the economic realm. The "Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation" concluded in February 1979 laid the foundation for further cooperation between Mozambique and the GDR. At the same time, the treaty formed the basis for a number of arrangements, including the agreement on the employment of Mozambican contract workers at GDR state-owned enterprises. According to the identity of the GDR's ideological conception of "international solidarity," the labor agreement had to be linked to a vocational qualification, but economic interests have always been part of the considerations. The education and training of workers should benefit Mozambique in the long term, whereas the GDR was able to counteract its shortage of labor in industrial production in the short term. For the Mozambican government, the sending of workers to the GDR provided an opportunity to further its economic development. The long tradition of sending miners to South Africa was to be discontinued and replaced by the transfer of these workers to the GDR instead. This practice not only made it possible to relieve the pressures on the Mozambican domestic labor market in the short term, but also contained the potential to develop much-needed skilled workers for their own economy.

The central requirement of the agreement was that both sides should benefit. On the part of the GDR, the drafting took into account a balanced cost-benefit principle. From a financial point of view, the GDR was not to incur any additional burden that could not be offset by the economic benefits. Although the framework agreements provided for the possibility of acquiring qualifications, successful completion of vocational training was not compulsory. The workers had to gain such qualifications through academic achievements; they were not awarded automatically at the end of their employment in the GDR. In this way, the workers were given personal responsibilities, which ultimately absolved the GDR from further obligations to the Mozambican government. Alberto Cassi-

mo⁷⁴ also emphasized that Mozambican workers who do not stick to their revolutionary duty should be sent back immediately. This ideological claim was a decisive aspect of the labor agreement, which the Mozambican side took very seriously. In the selection of the areas in which this would be applied, however, the decision lay on the Mozambican side. The negotiators of the ruling party FRELI-MO were able to decide which economic sectors skilled workers were needed for, and thus could also participate in shaping the transfer of its labor force.

As shown by the examples, the path to the accord was characterized on the one hand by mutual willingness to compromise and on the other hand by different understandings of the nature of certain aspects of contract labor migration. Both negotiating partners were able to bring their own ideas and even build in arbitrary loopholes that made early termination of contracts possible. The workers themselves, however, had no voice at this point in the process. In retrospect, the recruitment of foreign workers combined with vocational training was certainly a concept with potential and the agreement was supposed to benefit both sides. Mozambique was to profit from the training of its workers, the relief of the domestic labor market and the creation of professional prospects for young people. For the GDR, it contributed to addressing the labor shortage that seriously threatened economic production. In theory, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages for both sides according to the concept of "mutual benefit." In practice, however, the implementation of the agreement was influenced by political and economic constraints that came with the end of the Cold War on both sides.

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⁷⁴ Alberto Cassimo's commitment is still recognized in Mozambique. On November 1, 2016 the Instituto de Formação Profissional e Estudos Laborais Alberto Cassimo / Institute of Vocational Training and the Labor Studies Alberto Cassimo was founded. IFPELAC is a public vocational training institution headquartered in Maputo and overseen by the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security.

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