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Comrades in Arms: Yugoslav Military Aid to Liberation Movements of Angola and Mozambique, 1961–1976

In New Belgrade, slicing through Blocks 58 and 70a, runs a street named after Dr. Agostinho Neto. The Angolan poet, revolutionary and the country's first president, is largely forgotten by the inhabitants of this post-socialist metropolis. Yet, thanks to the present day connections between the Serbian military-industrial complex and the Angolan Armed Forces, Neto's name escaped the decommunization that purged names associated with socialist Yugoslavia.¹ Neto's presence in the topography of the former Yugoslavia's capital stands not only as a symbol of the lucrative business deals of today but also as a resilient reminder of connections between Yugoslavia and Angola that went back to the early 1960s.

Yugoslav military assistance to liberation movements from Portuguese colonies has been addressed sporadically in the existing historical scholarship. Piero Gleijeses in *Conflicting Missions* (2003) noted the importance of Yugoslavia's military aid to the Angolan revolutionaries. Alvin Rubinstein in his seminal book *Yugoslavia and the Non-aligned World* (1970) asserted that "anti-colonialism has become the Yugoslav credit card to the Third World", mentioning how the Yugoslavs often hosted leaders of "illegal movements".² Other scholarly works in English referenced in passing Yugoslavia's role in Angola. Odd Arne Westad in *The Cold War: A World History* (2017) noted how Yugoslavia, Cuba, and the USSR were the main supporters of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola, MPLA).³ John Marcum

1 Because of these contemporary links, in 2010, Serbian and Angolan officials dedicated a small plaque dedicated to Neto. "This plaque will be important for the New Belgradians because a number of them who live on this street do not know who was Dr. Agostinho Neto", the official website of the Novi Beograd municipal government stated. See "Otkrivena spomen-ploca u ulici Dr. Agostina Neta", *Novi Beograd*, 17 September 2010, <http://back.novibeograd.rs/otkrivena-spomen-ploca-u-ulici-dr-agostina-neta> (accessed 10 October 2018). The plaque was stolen and re-dedicated in 2014.

2 P. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003; A. Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-aligned World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970, pp. 91–92.

3 O.A. Westad, *The Cold War: A World History*, New York: Basic Books, 2017, p. 483; Westad, however, did not mention Yugoslavia in his more detailed account about the Angolan revolution in:



Fig. 9: Photo of street sign with A. Neto's name and memorial plaque in Novi Belgrade [source: Milorad Lazic, private archive]

wrote how the MPLA built its “superior stature as a revolutionary Third World force” through cooperation with Cuba and Yugoslavia.⁴ Natalia Telepneva’s dissertation “Our Sacred Duty” (2014) provided new insights into Soviet policies toward the liberation movements in Lusophone Africa. Telepneva also mentioned Yugoslavia’s assistance to these movements in the context of broader efforts of socialist countries to help the revolution. Tvrtko Jakovina’s *Treća strana Hladnog rata* [The Third Side of the Cold War] (2011) is thus far the only work in Croatian/Serbian that addressed Yugoslavia’s policy toward the liberation movements in Lusophone Africa. Jorge Santos Carvalho’s *As Relações Jugoslavo-Portuguesas* (2012) described relations between Yugoslavia and Portugal, including Yugoslavia’s relations with the three liberation movements from Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. In addition, Carvalho’s book provided a selection of Yugoslav documents (translated into Portuguese) related to Belgrade’s aid to these liberation movements.

This chapter builds upon the works of these scholars and makes a number of contributions to the existing scholarship by providing an in-depth analysis of Yugoslavia’s military involvement in the decolonization of Portuguese Africa. Aid to the liberation movements was inextricably tied to Yugoslavia’s policy of non-alignment and its intensity and scope depended upon vicissitudes of global politics in the 1960s and 1970s and Yugoslavia’s foreign policy objectives. This chapter demonstrates how Yugoslavia’s assistance to the liberation movements was essential for elevating the country’s revolutionary credentials in Africa. It analyses how Yugoslavia’s involvement in Lusophone Africa affected Yugoslavia’s relations with superpowers, but also its struggle with Cuba for primacy in the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). This work looks also at personal connections between Yugoslav and African actors and investigates how these contacts influenced official policies. Finally, my research adds to the growing body of literature on the history of the global Cold War in the 1960s and 1970s.

Telling the story of Yugoslavia’s involvement in Angola and Mozambique requires multiarchival research. I investigated Yugoslavia’s connections to Angola and Mozambique at the Archives of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije, AJ), where the records of the Cabinet of the President or the Republic, the Socialist Alliance of Working People (Savez socijalističkog radnog naroda Jugoslavije, SSRNJ), and the League of Communists of Yugoslavia have proven the most useful. By reading cable traffic from and to Conakry, Dar es Salaam, Havana, Luanda, Moscow,

O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

⁴ J. Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution: Exile Politics and Guerilla Warfare (1962–1976)*, Vol. 2, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978, pp. 225–226.

and Washington at the Foreign Ministry Archive of the Republic of Serbia I was able to get a clearer picture of Yugoslavia's assistance to the liberation movements, but also its relations with regional states, Cuba, and superpowers. I supplemented these documents with materials from the Archives of Slovenia that provided additional information that documents from Belgrade could not deliver. Records from the US archives were helpful in getting a more balanced view of Yugoslavia's role in Angola and Mozambique. Although the United States became interested in Angola only in 1975, documents from the Ford Library show Washington's discontent with Yugoslavia's activity in Angola. Finally, I relied on a number of Yugoslav newspapers and magazines that regularly brought stories about the liberation movements in Southern Africa, its heroes and its villains, suffering and triumphs of decolonization struggles to the Yugoslav public.

Beginning with the Algerian War of Independence in the late 1950s, Yugoslavia was an avid supporter of African Liberation Movements. The programmes of foreign military aid were an expression of "a long-standing, constant foreign policy orientation of our country", a Yugoslav report stated.⁵ This assistance served to facilitate Belgrade's foreign policy objectives. Solidarity with other non-aligned countries or liberation movements expanded the number of potential Yugoslav allies in multilateral bodies such as the UN or the NAM, which was particularly important in the contexts of the Sino-Soviet split, US intervention in Vietnam, and the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. Military assistance, as the Yugoslavs believed, acted as a deterrent from foreign interventions, and helped toward "the diffusion of defence capabilities."⁶

Foreign interventions in Vietnam and Czechoslovakia led Yugoslavia in 1969, after years of improvisation, to institutionalize its programmes of foreign military aid. In order to facilitate better distribution of this aid – under the umbrella of the SSRNJ – the Yugoslavs established two bodies: the Fund for Aid to Victims of Aggression and Colonial Domination, and the Coordination Committee for Aid to the People of Vietnam-Indochina, both of which served to collect and distribute aid. The Fund's sole role was to provide aid to African Liberation Movements and although the Fund had permanent financial problems, it streamlined Yugoslav military aid to those in need.⁷

5 Zabeleska o nekim pitanjima saradnje i pomoci antikolonijalnim, nacionalno-oslobodilackim i drugim pokretima u svetu, 24 October 1974, Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), Savez socijalistickog radnog naroda Jugoslavije (SSRNJ) Fond 142, Komisija za medjunarodne odnose, box A-226.

6 A.J. Pierre, *The Global Politics of Arms Sales*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 4.

7 Zabeleska o nekim pitanjima saradnje i pomoci antikolonijalnim, nacionalno-oslobodilackim i drugim pokretima u svetu, 24 October 1974, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, A-226.

Yugoslavia's aid to liberation movements in Portuguese Africa exemplified this foreign policy stance. Yugoslavia considered the MPLA, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (Partido Africano para an Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde, PAIGC), and the Mozambique Liberation Front (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, FRELIMO) among the "strongest and best-organized national-liberation movements in Africa."⁸ In the context of Yugoslavia's policy of non-alignment, these three movements warranted Belgrade's deliberate support. Military assistance to the MPLA, the PAIGC, and FRELIMO elevated Yugoslavia's prestige and confirmed the country's revolutionary credentials in the Global South. For the aid recipients, Yugoslavia's assistance was sometimes crucial in sustaining their fighting capabilities, as in the case of the MPLA in 1974/75. Moreover, besides Yugoslav guns, this aid included medical care for the wounded fighters, the training of military, political, and technical cadres, and dissemination of propaganda, which positively affected the movements' combat morale and removed their sense of isolation.

Military aid implied frequent and constant contacts between the benefactor and the recipients of this aid. Meetings between diplomats, experts, military commanders, revolutionaries, and political leaders forged personal connections between the Yugoslavs and their African partners, thus fostered intimacy and emotional and psychological identification between the parties involved. Yugoslav communists understood anti-colonialism as an "objective and inevitable social process" and Yugoslavia's "greatest generation" often identified their own struggle against foreign occupation and domestic "reactionary forces" during World War II with the anti-colonial struggle. As Tito stated, "Non-aligned is the expression of historical continuity of the Yugoslav revolution."⁹ Thus, solidarity with these movements was not only driven by political considerations imposed by the global developments in the 1960s and 1970s, but was inseparable from the Yugoslav revolutionary identity. These two factors – strategic calculations and personal connections between revolutionaries – were critical in determining the scope and the forms of Yugoslavia's military assistance. These factors help explain why Yugoslav aid was distributed unevenly among these movements and why its character and quantity changed over time. Although Yugosla-

⁸ Informacija o nacionalnooslobodilackim pokretima portugalskih kolonija i odnosima SSRNJ s njima, 30 October 1967, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, Komisija za međunarodne odnose, PAIGC, box I–557. While Yugoslavia provided less aid to the PAIGC than it did to the MPLA, the Yugoslavs believed that, of the three movements, the PAIGC had the best prospects to succeed in its armed struggle.

⁹ J.B. Tito, "Politika nesvrstavanja je izraz kontinuiteta jugoslovenske revolucije", *Politika*, 27 November 1976, p. 1.

via considered the three movements equally successful in their struggle against colonial rule, most Yugoslav aid went to the MPLA.

“Yugoslavia has a Special Place in Our Hearts”: Yugoslavia’s Military Aid to the MPLA

The first contacts between the Angolan Liberation Movements and Yugoslavia were not established with the MPLA but with the Union of Angolan Peoples (União das Populações de Angola, UPA), whose leader Holden Roberto visited Yugoslavia in 1960. However, the first summit of the NAM in 1961 brought both Angolan political factions, the UPA, and the MPLA, represented by Mário de Andrade, to Belgrade. Although the Yugoslavs maintained relations with both movements, in the early 1960s Belgrade tilted slightly toward the UPA for a number of reasons. The Yugoslavs believed that Roberto’s movement was better organized and stronger militarily. Also, the UPA received wider support from other African countries than the MPLA. The Algerian support to Roberto was particularly appealing to the Yugoslavs because of their emotional connections to the Algerian Revolution.¹⁰ In contrast, the MPLA was less successful in its armed struggle and largely shunned by other African states because of the movement’s alleged “leftist extremism.” Furthermore, the MPLA appeared reluctant to join its forces with the UPA, a development that Yugoslavia wholeheartedly encouraged.¹¹

However, the Yugoslavs were wary of the UPA’s connections with the West and its supposed pro-American stance.¹² Unsure about UPA’s allegiances and

10 Yugoslavia understood that its support to Algeria was crucial for the affirmation of the new Yugoslav foreign policy orientation of non-alignment and the country’s revolutionary credentials in Asia and Africa. The Algerian Prime Minister Ahmed Ben Bela stated that “Yugoslavia re-lived its recent past through our liberation war.”

11 The Yugoslavs noted that Mário de Andrade became “very agitated” when he heard that “Gilmore” – Roberto’s nom de guerre – would also be in Belgrade for the summit. Zabeleska o razgovoru sa angolskom delegacijom koja je ucestvovala na konferenciji neangazovanih zemalja, 14 September 1961, Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), Centralni Komitet Saveza komunista Jugoslavije (CKSKJ), Fond 507, Komisija za medjunarodne odnose i veze, Angola, IX, 3/I–2.

12 The MPLA’s president Mário de Andrade told his Yugoslav interlocutors in 1961 that the UPA was militarily stronger because of the military aid from the US and Tunisia. Moreover, he accused the UPA of participating in the conspiracy against Patrice Lumumba. Zabeleska o razgovoru sa angolskom delegacijom koja je ucestvovala na konferenciji neangazovanih zemalja, 14 September 1961, AJ, CKSKJ, Fond 507, Komisija za medjunarodne odnose i veze, Angola, IX, 3/I–2.

unclear about the situation in Angola, Belgrade used Mário de Andrade's visit to establish relations with the MPLA. Yugoslavs pampered de Andrade and friends. Their itinerary included, among other things, a wine fair and festival, universities, but also the sites of the Yugoslav revolution. De Andrade delivered several talks on the situation in Angola and met with Yugoslav politicians, artists, and intellectuals. The Yugoslavs were particularly pleased that de Andrade showed interest in self-management and the ways in which Yugoslavia structured its political and mass organizations. In many ways, de Andrade's visit to Yugoslavia was a success for the MPLA.¹³ Although Yugoslavia did not stop its support to the UPA, de Andrade's trip put the MPLA on a long list of parties and organizations that received Yugoslav financial support.

Yugoslavia continued to send a majority of its aid to the UPA (renamed the National Liberation Front of Angola [Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola, FNLA] in 1962), largely because the Organization of African Unity (OAU) recognized Roberto's movement as Angola's only legitimate liberation movement.¹⁴ Yet, by 1964, Yugoslavia completely abandoned the FNLA and concentrated its political and material support on the MPLA. The reasons for this shift were two-fold. First, the MPLA gave more attention to courting Yugoslav officials. Roberto twice postponed his visit to Yugoslavia in 1963 and 1964, which made the Yugoslavs dissatisfied.¹⁵ In contrast, a number of MPLA officials used every opportunity to meet with the Yugoslavs. In 1963, a high-ranking member of the MPLA,

13 De Andrade used the presence of a large number of leaders of independent African countries and political organizations to lobby for the MPLA and against Roberto. Although he was unable to make any progress with Tunisia, other African countries showed more willingness to help his movement. Zabeleska o razgovoru sa angolskom delegacijom koja je ucestvovala na konferenciji neangazovanih zemalja, 14 September 1961, AJ, CKSKJ, Fond 507, Komisija za medjunarodne odnose i veze, Angola, IX, 3/I-2.

14 In 1962/63, Belgrade sent US\$ 3,000 to the FNLA and a half of that sum to the MPLA; over 1,700 kg of medical material was divided evenly; Yugoslavia provided six scholarships for members of the FNLA and only three for members of the MPLA. Informacija o Robertu Holdenu, predsedniku Nacionalnog fronta za oslobodjenje Angole (FNLA) i ciljevima njegove posete Jugoslaviji, no date 1964, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, Komisija za medjunarodne veze, Angola 1964-1970, I-553.

15 After 1961 Roberto never visited Yugoslavia again. However, in late 1973, the Yugoslav Embassy in Kinshasa re-instated contacts with Roberto. These contacts extended throughout 1974 but without results. Yugoslavia's reasons for these talks were pragmatic because Belgrade believed that the FNLA would participate in government after Angola's independence. Yet, "our sympathies and our support should go to the MPLA, but in the future we should not ignore other two movements", a report stated (Informacija povodom Sporazuma o nezavisnosti i obrazovanju privremene vlade Angole, 31 January 1975, Diplomatski arhiv [DA] Ministarstvo spoljnih poslova [MSP], Politicka arhiva [PA] 1975, Angola, fascikla 226, dosije 1, signature 44740).

Gonçalves Benedito, after a trip to China, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR, visited Yugoslavia for medical treatment. During his stay in Yugoslavia, Gonçalves probed Yugoslavia's willingness to provide military aid to the movement. He also praised Yugoslavia's political system and hospitality and said that he learned more from his short visit to Yugoslavia than from his six-month-long stay in Czechoslovakia.¹⁶ In January 1964, one of the leaders of the MPLA, Luís de Azevedo Júnior went to Yugoslavia at his own request to familiarize himself with the experiences of the Yugoslav liberation struggle during WWII. The Yugoslavs found both Gonçalves' and Azevedo's visits useful to "find out directly about the situation in the Angolan Liberation Movement that [...] became more complicated."¹⁷ In their assessments of the situation in Angola, the Yugoslavs became increasingly dependent on the MPLA's reports.

The second factor that led to Yugoslavia's shift from Roberto to his competitors was linked to larger Cold War issues of the 1960s. In the context of the Sino-Soviet split, Beijing intensified its attacks on non-alignment and tried to counter alleged Soviet influence over the movement with calls for Afro-Asian solidarity. This Chinese interference led to divisions within the NAM that escalated around the 1964 summit in Cairo. Under the Chinese influence, the "militants" such as Cuba, Indonesia, and Algeria, challenged Yugoslavia's position within the movement.¹⁸ To enhance their revolutionary credentials, the Yugoslavs turned toward movements such as the MPLA that were more "progressive" in their ideological orientation.

In January 1965, the president of the MPLA, Agostinho Neto, wrote a personal letter to Tito requesting material, financial, and military aid, but also asking for Yugoslavia's political support in lobbying African states to recognize the MPLA as the only legitimate representative of the Angolan resistance. In March 1965, Neto sent another letter, this time to the SSRNJ informing the Yugoslavs that the Ministerial conference of the OAU that met in Nairobi recognized the MPLA as the "only national force [in Angola] that conducts the struggle against Portuguese colonialism."¹⁹ Although Belgrade was still cautious and did not commit itself to lobbying efforts on behalf of the MPLA, the Yugoslavs

¹⁶ Poseta Benedita Goncalvesa, zamenika angolske armije MPLA, Jugoslaviji, 1 March 1963, AJ, CKSKJ, Fond 507, IX, 3/1–13.

¹⁷ Informacija o poseti Luja Azevede, clana rukovodstva Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (FNLA), 6 March 1965, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, Komisija za medjunarodne veze, Angola 1964–1970, I–553.

¹⁸ Rubinstein, *Yugoslavia and the Non-aligned World*, pp. 303–304.

¹⁹ Angolski pokret posle konferencije u Najrobiju (povodom pisma dr. Netoa, predsednika MPLA), 29 March 1965, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, Komisija za medjunarodne odnose, Angola, I–553.

ramped up propaganda at home to popularize MPLA's struggle with the Yugoslav public. Moreover, Yugoslavia sent material and financial aid that it had promised to Azevedo during his visit in the winter of 1965.²⁰ However, Yugoslavia stopped short from sending weapons to Neto.

Prior to 1968, Yugoslav aid to the MPLA consisted mostly of money, food, and medical material.²¹ Despite pleas for guns, the Yugoslavs refused to send any because, as one Yugoslav report stated, "it would be easy to establish their origin", which could create political problems for Belgrade.²² Moreover, the Yugoslavs believed that liberation movements should send their requests for weapons to independent African countries, in order to avoid the appearance of outside interference in African affairs.²³ On similar grounds, Yugoslavia rejected MPLA's requests to provide military training for its members.²⁴ Despite Yugoslav inability to provide weapons and military training, financial aid to the MPLA grew. In 1966, Yugoslavia sent US\$ 6,000, and a year later, that sum increased to US\$ 10,000.²⁵ Additionally, Yugoslav hospitals admitted a small number of wounded MPLA fighters to recuperate in Yugoslavia.

In the mid-1960s, contacts between the Yugoslav officials and MPLA functionaries grew in frequency. These connections were particularly important to Yugoslavia because after the Cairo summit the NAM was in a hiatus, it being unclear whether the movement would ever convene again.²⁶ In order to remain relevant in Africa, Yugoslavia had to substitute the moribund organization with bilateral contacts with African independent states and liberation move-

20 Ibid.

21 Predlog pomoci MPLA, 5 February 1965, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

22 Informacija o Robertu Holdenu, predsedniku Nacionalnog fronta za oslobodjenje Angole (FNLA) i ciljevima njegove posete Jugoslaviji, no date 1964, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

23 In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Yugoslavia furnished the Algerian National Liberation Front with infantry and artillery weapons. These actions elevated Yugoslavia's status in Africa, but also endangered Yugoslavia's relations with France.

24 Informacija o poseti Luja Azevede, clana rukovodstva Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 28 February 1964, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-533.

25 Informacija o pomoci SFR Jugoslavije Narodnom pokretu za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 5 March 1971, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-3. According to Angolan claims, monthly expenses for 1,000 soldiers were around US\$ 18,000 per month. In 1965, the MPLA needed US\$ 100,000 to develop and expand their military operations. See Zabeleska o razgovoru Dobrivoja Vidica sa Lujom de Azevedom, clanom rukovodstva Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 1 February 1965, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-5-b/3-1.

26 In the 1960s the challenge to the NAM's primacy in the Global South from the PRC, despite Beijing's failure, caused "wounds [...] to Non-alignment [...] [that] needed healing". See L. Luthi, "Non-alignment, 1961-74", in: S. Bott et al. (eds.), *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War. Between or Within the Blocs?*, London: Routledge, 2016, p. 96.

ments. These connections allowed Yugoslavia to have a voice in the Global South and counter the influence of the “militants”, i.e. China, Cuba, and Algeria. In January 1966, Luís de Azevedo, on his way back home from the Tri-Continental Conference in Havana, stopped in Belgrade. Yugoslav officials used Azevedo’s visit to find out more about the situation in Angola, but also to criticize the MPLA because the movement did not object to Yugoslavia’s exclusion from the conference. Azevedo’s interlocutors noted that the Angolan did not “understand neither [Cuban] demagoguery nor the consequences of the Cuban policy.”²⁷ The Yugoslav conversation with Luís de Azevedo about Cuba was a prelude of later Cuban-Yugoslav competition for the soul of the Angolan revolution. However, the conference served to publicize the MPLA’s struggle and strengthened its relations with Havana.²⁸

Despite this minor friction in their relationship, the MPLA and Yugoslavia expanded their cooperation. The MPLA was wary of the consequences of the Sino-Soviet split on liberation struggles in Africa and tried to stay above the fray. The relationship with Belgrade provided them with a steady, if insufficient, source of political and material assistance and helped them avoid the controversies of the split.²⁹ Moreover, Yugoslavia’s unambiguous support to the MPLA stood in contrast with the uncertain policies of other Eastern European socialist countries and the USSR. Although the MPLA remained Moscow’s favourite, that did not “prevent us from maintaining contacts with the movement of Holden Roberto”, the Kremlin stated.³⁰ Yugoslav embassies in Eastern European capitals reported that the socialist bloc “took a qualitatively new approach” toward the FNLA, chiefly to neutralize Bonn’s influence in Angola. Moreover, as Natalia Telepneva has noted, in 1964 “[Jonas] Savimbi launched a campaign to gain the attention of the socialist countries” and the Soviets did not reject his initiative.³¹ It comes as

27 Informacija o boravku Luja Azevede, člana rukovodstva Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) i o razgovorima vođenim s njim u Komisiji za međunarodnu saradnju i veze SO SSRNJ, 29 January 1966, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–553.

28 Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. 225.

29 In 1967, Neto told his Yugoslav interlocutors that they in the MPLA “feel sorry about the situation in the IWM [international workers movement] and they want to stay out of the USSR-China conflict.” Other MPLA officials echoed Neto’s sentiments about the Sino-Soviet split. See Informacija o nacionalno-oslobodilačkim pokretima portugalskih kolonija i odnosima SFRJ sa njima, 31 October 1967, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I–5–b/3–1.

30 P. Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1948–1968*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 108.

31 N. Telepneva, “Our Sacred Duty: The Soviet Union, the Liberation Movements in the Portuguese Colonies, and the Cold War, 1961–1975”, Ph.D. thesis, London School of Economics, 2014, pp. 116–118.

no surprise that this Soviet attempt to have it both ways made the MPLA uneasy and Yugoslavia, despite its limited ability to help, a desirable partner.

The Angolans emphasized the necessity of frequent interactions with the Yugoslavs. Two MPLA functionaries, Nicolau Spencer and Sebastião Garrido, attended the Sixth Congress of the SSRNJ in June 1966. Later that year, Neto visited Yugoslavia and in 1967, he again met in Moscow with Yugoslav officials during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Great October. During these encounters, Neto requested, in addition to financial aid and military training, “permanent political contacts [and] exchanges”.³² The Angolans also suggested that these contacts should not be limited to high-level political meetings. The MPLA offered to send “additional delegations of women, pioneers [youth], partisans [...] to familiarize with organizational forms and to have some rest. These contacts will help them to develop their [class] consciousness.”³³ Yugoslavia responded to these requests by providing additional scholarships for MPLA cadres. Moreover, Belgrade increased propaganda efforts at home in order to popularize the MPLA and its struggle. In 1967, Yugoslav leading film journal *Filmske novosti* made a documentary film about liberated territories in Angola. A year later, Yugoslav publishing company *Kultura* (Belgrade) released a collection of Neto’s poems and organized meetings between the author and Yugoslav poets and writers during Neto’s visit to Yugoslavia in January 1968.³⁴

In many ways, 1968 represented a watershed moment in Yugoslav-MPLA relations. Three factors encouraged Yugoslavia to abandon its cautious approach toward the MPLA. First, Nasser’s humiliating defeat in June 1967 had demonstrated the inadequacy of the Soviet support and underlined the importance of solidarity among non-aligned countries and movements. Second, the escalation of the war in Vietnam and the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 made Yugoslavia fear for its own security. Superpowers’ interventions further emphasized the need for strengthening political and military networks between non-aligned governments and revolutionary movements that would

32 Beleska o razgovoru Nijaza Dizdarevica sa Agostinom Netom, predsednikom MPLA (Angola) za vreme proslave 50-godisnjice Oktobra u Moskvi, 5 November 1967, AJ, CKSKJ, Fond 507, IX, 3/1–20.

33 Narodni pokret oslobodjenja Angole Socijalistickom savezu radnog naroda Jugoslavije, no date 1967, AJ, CKSKJ, IX, 3/1–21.

34 Informacija o nacionalno-olslobodilackom pokretima portugalskih kolonija i odnosima SFRJ sa njima, 31 October 1967, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I–5–b/3–1. Neto’s visit was widely publicized in Yugoslav media and Belgrade radio and television broadcast a “long interview” with the leader of the Angolan revolution. See Informacija o poseti delegacije Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angola (MPLA) Jugoslaviji od 18. do 25. Januara 1968, 2 February 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–553.

serve to discourage imperialist interventions. Finally, during his visit to Yugoslavia in early 1968 Neto informed his interlocutors that the MPLA would intensify its armed struggle.³⁵ Moreover, the MPLA remained stubbornly dedicated to non-aligned. These factors elevated the movement's prestige among the "progressive forces" in the world.

In the aftermaths of the Six Day War and the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam, Yugoslavia launched a diplomatic campaign in Africa and Asia with the goal of reviving the moribund NAM. Yugoslav diplomats and policymakers canvassed the continents in an effort to assemble old allies. In addition, in order to enhance its revolutionary credentials, Yugoslavia finally began sending guns to the MPLA and FRELIMO. During Neto's visit to Belgrade, in January 1968, the Yugoslavs mulled over the idea of supplying the MPLA with some weapons and providing assistance in moving MPLA troops and ordnance from Brazzaville to Dar es Salaam.³⁶ Neto commended Yugoslavia's generosity and again emphasized the inspirational power that the Yugoslav revolutionary experience had on the Angolan struggle. According to Neto, Yugoslavia was closer to the MPLA than some African states and by learning from the Yugoslav war and the post-war experiences the MPLA hoped to "avoid the mistakes made by other African countries."³⁷

The Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 further improved the quality of Yugoslav-Angolan contacts. Although the Yugoslavs did not make any firm promises to Neto during his January visit, after the invasion, Belgrade accelerated efforts to send aid to the MPLA. In September 1968, Belgrade dispatched the first shipment of arms (consisting mostly of Yugoslav-made bolt-action rifles and WWII-era machine guns) to the Angolan revolutionaries. Neto visited Belgrade in October 1968 – his fourth visit since 1966 – and was given an audience with President Tito, something Neto had insisted on for years. In his conversations with Neto, Tito rebuked the Soviet actions and warned Neto

35 Apparently, the Yugoslavs took MPLA propaganda at face value. Yugoslav documents suggest that Belgrade believed in Neto's claims that the MPLA controlled large swaths of Angola and that its leadership would continue to struggle from within the country (Zabeleska o razgovoru druga Josipa Djerdje sa Dr. Agustinom Netoom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole, 18 January 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553). However, these statements largely inflated MPLA's successes. John Marcum noted how "at times of declining fortunes and increased frustration", the MPLA resorted to "military claims so exaggerated as to defy credence." Moreover, Neto's pledge to move to Angola was "only partially realized" (Cf. Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, pp. 181–183).

36 Predlog za dodeljivanje pomoci Narodnom pokretu za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 24 January 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

37 Zabeleska o razgovoru druga Josipa Djerdje sa Dr. Agustinom Netoom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 18 January 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

that the Soviet doctrine of limited sovereignty was dangerous for small and medium countries and that non-aligned should give “deliberate resistance” to such a doctrine.³⁸ Although Neto did not explicitly condemn the Kremlin, he promised that the MPLA would “fight until the end against all foreign influences.”³⁹ Yet, he admitted that, besides Yugoslavia, only the USSR was assisting the MPLA.⁴⁰ Although Neto remained circumspect, other Angolan officials in private discussion with their Yugoslav interlocutors denounced the Soviet intervention and considered it a “huge blow to the progressive forces in the world.” They, however, had to remain silent because of Soviet aid.⁴¹

The leaders of the three liberation movements, the MPLA, FRELIMO, and the PAIGC, were scheduled to visit Yugoslavia in June 1969. However, Amílcar Cabral of the PAIGC cancelled his visit because, as he explained, the situation in Guinea-Bissau warranted his presence there. Belgrade found his explanation disingenuous and firmly believed that the events in Czechoslovakia had something to do with his decision “because of certain considerations toward socialist countries and toward certain communist parties.”⁴²

The Yugoslav liaison with liberation movements, Dimitrije Babic, spoke with De Matos, an Angolan student-cum-Neto’s confidant, who said that Neto’s visit to Yugoslavia was “the most important event for the movement this year.” However, De Matos admitted that the Soviets strongly opposed Neto’s trip to Belgrade and that Neto had “some very difficult talks with them. After his [Neto’s] visit, the Russians stopped all their aid.”⁴³ In addition, Neto’s trip revealed tensions within the NAM. Since Algeria vied with Yugoslavia for the leadership of the Movement, Yugoslavia’s influence over the MPLA went directly against Algeria’s ambitions. De Matos confided that not only did Moscow give them a hard time because of

38 Zabeleska o razgovoru Predsednika Republike sa dr. Agostinjom Netom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 29 October 1968, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-2.

39 Informacija o dosadasnjim razgovorima dr Agostinja Netoa, predsednika Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), no date 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

40 Zabeleska o razgovoru Predsednika Republike sa dr. Agostinjom Netom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 29 October 1968, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-2.

41 Informacija o poseti predsednika Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) dr Agostinja Neta Jugoslaviji, no date 1968, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

42 Informacija o poseti delegacija Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) i Fronta za oslobodjenje Mozambika (FRELIMO), June 1969, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553. Cabral collaborated with the Czechoslovakian secret service, and while Yugoslav sources do not suggest that the Yugoslavs were aware of this, Belgrade suspected that he was under the influence of “certain communist parties”. Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa*, p. 105.

43 Zabeleska o razgovoru Babic Dimitrija sa angolskim studentom u Jugoslaviji De Matosom, 20 July 1969, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

connections with Belgrade, but Algeria also criticized Neto for his closeness with Yugoslavia.⁴⁴ It is, however, unclear if De Matos tried to extract more favours from the Yugoslavs by overstating the chasm between the MPLA and the USSR. According to Telepneva, Moscow and the MPLA became closer after the Khartoum Conference in January 1969. At the conference, Neto even asked the Soviets for theoretical works on guerrilla warfare and the politics of race.⁴⁵ Moreover, in June 1970 the Soviets assisted to organize in Rome the International Conference of Support to the Peoples of the Portuguese Colonies that provided Neto with an audience with Pope Paul VI. "And MPLA-Soviet relations appeared solid", Marcum wrote.⁴⁶

Yet, Neto's visit to Belgrade in June 1969 was fruitful for the MPLA. In October, the Yugoslavs sent additional military aid. Moreover, Belgrade agreed to train Angolan doctors and nurses. During Neto's visit the Yugoslav Government agreed to open and finance an information centre in Belgrade that would serve as an informal embassy and a propaganda hub for the MPLA. The Yugoslavs also found the visit beneficial because it reaffirmed Yugoslavia's position in Africa that was being challenged by the Soviets and other non-aligned countries. The movements' satisfaction with Yugoslavia's support, Belgrade believed, would "contribute to easier suppression of the attempts to discredit our policies in the 'third world'."⁴⁷

Yugoslavia's Angolan policy was critical for the country's success in mobilizing African and Asian countries for the Third Summit of the NAM in Lusaka in September 1970 because it elevated the country's revolutionary credentials in Africa. Moreover, Yugoslav aid did not have ideological strings attached, making Belgrade a desirable partner to many movements. In the winter of 1970, Tito embarked on a month-long trip to Africa to lobby for the summit, and, during his journey, he met with a group of liberation movements' leaders, including Neto. Tito met them again during the summit and confirmed Yugoslavia's willingness to continue with military, material, and political support.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Telepneva, "Our Sacred Duty", p. 183.

⁴⁶ Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. 229.

⁴⁷ Informacija o poseti delegacija Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) i Fronta za oslobodjenje Mozambika (FRELIMO), June 1969, AJ, KPR, Fond 142, I-553.

⁴⁸ Informacija o razgovoru predsednika Tita sa predstavnicima nacionalnooslobodilackih pokreta u Lusaki, 11 September 1970, AJ, KPR Fond 837, Treca konferencija nesvrstanih zemalja Lusaka, 8-10 IX, 1970, I-4-a/9.

A Yugoslav confidential report stated, with a lot of pride, that 1970 was the most “fruitful year” for the Yugoslav-MPLA relationship.⁴⁹ In 1970, the Yugoslavs sent additional quantities of light weapons and ammunition that included 3,000 rifles, 230 machine guns, 200 bazookas, and 1.5 million pieces of ammunition. This ordnance was largely obsolete for Yugoslavia’s defence needs, but it gave the MPLA an advantage over its competitors.⁵⁰ Moreover, Belgrade increased the amount of money allocated to the MPLA, and, in the fall of 1970, the movement opened the Information Center in Belgrade. Finally, Yugoslavia continued to provide medical treatments for the functionaries and fighters of the MPLA, and, for the first time, training for its military cadres.

The military training was particularly important for the Angolans, who believed that the Yugoslavs, with their unique guerrilla experience in the Second World War and the doctrine of total defence (introduced after 1968), were suitable partners in the area of military education. Tito was not shy about sharing his guerrilla experiences with Neto. In 1970, Henrique (Iko) Teles Carreira went on a three-week-long visit to Yugoslavia to learn about Yugoslav partisan experiences that “could be useful to them and applied to their situation.”⁵¹ Carreira explained their difficulties that included thin supply lines, a lack of communication equipment, and poorly trained cadres that could not properly use already scarce weapons, particularly mortars and rocket launchers.⁵² The Angolans were primarily interested in training soldiers for special operations behind

49 Informacija o pomoci SFR Jugoslavije Narodnom pokretu za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), March 5, 1971, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-3. Records of the Yugoslav Secretariat of Defence show that the value of Yugoslavia’s increased five times from 1969 to 1970 (from YUN 1,186.371 to YUN 6,047.089), and in 1971 dropped in half (to YUN 2,995.273). See Nesvrstanost i pitanja odbrane, Prilog br. 13, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, IV konferencija nesvrstanih Alzir, 1973, I-4-a.

50 The Angolans praised the quality of these weapons, particularly a Yugoslav copy of the German K98 Mauser rifle. Other weapons like bazookas and recoilless guns the Angolans did not know how to use properly, while some old German guns were prone to misfire and jamming that Yugoslavs suspected was the result of poor maintenance. However, the structure of Yugoslav aid made the MPLA entirely dependent on Yugoslavia for parts and ammunition. The Angolans noted that only Yugoslavia had ammunition in 7.9 mm caliber and suggested that it would be better if Belgrade sent them US-made weapons that were delivered as military aid to Yugoslavia in the 1950s. See Poseta vojnog rukovodioca NOP Angole Henrika Kareire – izveštaj, 16 October 1970, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553; Informacija o pomoci SFR Jugoslavije Narodnom pokretu za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA), 5 March 1971, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-3.

51 Informacija o poseti Henrika Kareire, vojnog rukovodioca Narodno oslobodilackog pokreta Angole (MPLA), 1 July 1970, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

52 Henrique Kareira, vojni rukovodilac NOP Angole posetio gen. majora Dz. Sarca – zabeleska, 30 October 1970, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-553.

enemy lines, and urban guerrilla fighting. In order to satisfy these Angolan requests, the SSRNJ sent a suggestion to the Secretariat of Defence to devise accelerated programmes – five to six months long – for training the MPLA members in guerrilla warfare. Although the records of the Secretariat of Defence are not available to researchers,⁵³ documents from other organizations such as the SSRNJ show that a relatively small number of the MPLA officers received military training in Yugoslavia.

In August 1971, six Angolans arrived for a four-month-long training in the Yugoslav Army Infantry School in Sarajevo. The case of these six Angolan officers illustrates some of the logistical problems that occurred during military training in Yugoslavia and suggests that the Yugoslavs could not muster enough resources to conduct these programmes on a permanent basis. Although the general impression about the training was good, the Yugoslavs complained that the Angolans were “too demanding.” Allegedly, they requested different meals than those provided, extra allowances for everyday expenses, but also, they were “too sensitive” about the treatment that they received from the Yugoslav comrades that, according to the Angolans, had racist overtones.⁵⁴ Moreover, the report suggested that language was the largest obstacle in successfully completing the courses.⁵⁵ These logistical and financial difficulties led to decrease in the number of trainees, and in 1972 only one member of the MPLA attended training in one of Yugoslavia’s military schools.⁵⁶

Similar issues occurred when the Yugoslav Secretariat of Defence considered sending an instructor to Angola who would travel under the disguise of an “army journalist”. The purpose of this visit was to assess the situation in the country, but also to teach the Angolans about guerrilla warfare and train them how to use different types of weapons. However, the Yugoslav army could not find anyone fluent in Portuguese. An officer who spoke French volunteered for the assignment, but for unclear reasons (most likely a lack of funds), this project

53 J.S. Carvalho, *As Relações Jugoslavo-Portuguesas 1941–1974*, Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2012, p. 226.

54 Izvestaj o zavrsetku skolovanja kursa – pripadnika NOP Angole, December 1971, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–468.

55 Generally, Yugoslav military educational institutions conducted classes in Serbo-Croatian, which none of the MPLA trainees spoke. This significantly raised the costs of the programmes and required longer stay in Yugoslavia to learn the language, circumstances that both sides found inconvenient. Language courses costs were between US\$ 210 and US\$ 260 per student per month and required an additional six months of training. (Drzavni sekretarijat za narodnu odbranu Saveznoj konferenciji SSRNJ, 3 June 1971, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–468).

56 Saradnja SSRNJ sa oslobodilackim pokretima i pomoc Jugoslavije, 23 May 1973, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I–4–a/15.

never materialized. A journalist at *Borba*, the official organ of the SSRNJ, visited Angola in July 1972. He dispatched a report from the “woods of Angola” and his meeting with Daniel Chipenda, who was described as Neto’s “right hand”.⁵⁷ This report glorified the combat readiness of the MPLA (“they were fast like leopards”) and its alleged military successes.⁵⁸

In August 1972, the SSRNJ sent a five-member delegation to visit the liberated territories in Angola. The primary task was to gain first-hand experience about the situation in Angola and to appraise the effectiveness of Yugoslav aid. A month-long trip was the “culmination of friendly relations and the high level of trust between the SSRNJ and the MPLA.”⁵⁹ Moreover, the Yugoslavs took pride in the fact that their delegation was the first one from the socialist world to visit Angola. The delegation included representatives from different organizations such as the youth alliance, trade unions, and the Yugoslav People’s Army. Yugoslav sources, unfortunately, provide few details about this trip. The Yugoslavs believed that it further advanced the relationship between Yugoslavia and the MPLA and that the delegation had visited about “200 km of liberated territories and was assured of the successes of the liberation movement [...] and the difficulties that the movement faced.”⁶⁰ Yugoslav optimism vis-à-vis the MPLA combat successes was likely influenced by MPLA propaganda. In reality, because of the Portuguese military pressure and internal discords, the MPLA “declined as a military force from 1972 on.”⁶¹

Although the trip was a political success, in 1972 Yugoslavia’s aid to the MPLA dwindled from the 1970/71 levels. Belgrade continued with its political support, which was demonstrated at the Ministerial Conference of the NAM in Georgetown and in bilateral contacts.⁶² However, because of the economic crisis

57 Dj. Bogojevic, “Medju ustanicima Angole: nas reporter u sumama Angole”, *Borba*, 2 July 1972, p. 11.

58 Ibid.

59 Delegacija SSRNJ u poseti oslobodjenoj teritoriji Angole, 21 July 1972, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–468.

60 Saradnja SSRNJ sa oslobodilackim pokretima i pomoc Jugoslavije, 23 May 1973, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I–4–a/15

61 Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. 214.

62 The Yugoslavs served as an intermediary between the MPLA and the West German Social Democratic Party (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, SPD) and, in Neto’s name, asked for financial aid from the SPD. Belgrade believed that the MPLA’s connections with European social-democrats would “soften the combative edge” of the movement (Informacija o oslobodilackim pokretima Afrike, 5 October 1971, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I–452); “Under the impulse of Sweden, European social democratic parties show an increasing interest in L[iberation]M[ovements] and intervene with significant humanitarian, cultural and financial

at home, the Yugoslav organizations were unable to allocate money for their partners in Africa. This budgetary constraint affected Yugoslavia's ability to accept new students, and to provide financial, material, and military assistance that the country promised to the MPLA. "The situation is absurd: [our] country promises that it will give all possible aid to l[iberation]m[ovements] [...] but then fails to provide a means to do so", a Yugoslav report complained.⁶³ This situation caused dire political consequences for Yugoslavia's position in Africa and other countries took advantage of that to increase their influence. "In this period that coincides with unresolved issues of the Fund's financing, begins massive delivery of Soviet and Chinese aid", a memo noted, warning about Yugoslavia's diminishing influence in Africa.⁶⁴ These financial issues were resolved only in the summer of 1973 when Yugoslavia needed to enhance its position in the Global South before the Fourth Summit of the NAM in Algeria.

In 1973, Yugoslavia managed to send 300 semi-automatic rifles and a significant amount of ammunition and rockets to Angola. However, Iko Carreira who visited Belgrade in the fall of 1973 urged the Yugoslav government to provide additional aid. According to Carreira, the Soviets were reluctant to help them because of Neto's alleged attempts of rapprochement with China. Moreover, the Soviets did not want to internationalize the Angolan struggle, and the Angolans believed that Moscow's reluctance was the result of détente with the US.⁶⁵ Carreira noted that the movement's position was precarious because the US increased its presence in the region, now that the war in Vietnam was over. "The USA invests a lot in oil, and they want to make Angola a second Kuwait", Carreira said.⁶⁶ Moreover, the

aid", a report stated (Zabeleska o nekim pitanjima saradnje i pomoci anticolonijalnim, nacionalno-oslobodilackim i drugim pokretima u svetu, 12 September 1972, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, A-226).

⁶³ Informacija o oslobodilackim pokretima Afrike, 5 October 1971, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, I-452.

⁶⁴ Zabeleska o nekim pitanjima saradnje i pomoci anticolonijalnim, nacionalno-oslobodilackim i drugim pokretima u svetu, 12 September 1972, AJ, SSRNJ, Fond 142, A-226.

⁶⁵ O stanju u oslobodilackom pokretu Angole i uslovima u kojima deluje, 20 November 1973, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-5-b/3-1; Neto believed that the US and the USSR made a secret deal at Angola's expense (Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. 229).

⁶⁶ O stanju u oslobodilackom pokretu Angole i uslovima u kojima deluje, 20 November 1973, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-5-b/3-1; Neto during his meeting with Tito in February 1973, expressed his fear that with the end of the war in Vietnam, the US would shift its attention toward Africa (Zabeleska o razgovoru Predsednika Republike sa Agostinom Netom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole na Brionima, 20 February 1973, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-3-a/3-4).

MPLA suspected that the president of Zaire, Mobutu, was on the CIA payroll and, by association, Mobutu's friend Roberto.⁶⁷

This hazardous international position was coupled with the internal crisis of the movement that made Yugoslav aid essential for the movement's survival. The 1974 Carnation Revolution in Portugal that toppled the Estado Novo opened the last chapter of the Portuguese domination over Angola but also exacerbated the divisions between the MPLA, the FNLA, and the UNITA over the future of an independent Angola. Furthermore, the MPLA was bitterly divided by internal struggles that debilitated its already limited combat capabilities. Neighbouring countries seized the opportunity to promote their own interests, providing support to different parties within Angola. Furthermore, the Soviets, wary of the MPLA's internal tussles, pulled their support from Neto and sent money to his challenger Chipenda.⁶⁸

Yugoslavia, however, showed its dedication to Neto by supporting the MPLA even when other countries suspended their aid in 1974 due to the so-called "Eastern Revolt" led by a faction within the movement.⁶⁹ During Neto's visit to Yugoslavia in March 1974, the Yugoslavs assured him that they "clearly understood the situation in his country and in his movement", advised "decisiveness in action", and promised political and military aid.⁷⁰ Another delegation that represented the MPLA at the Tenth Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in May 1974 received Tito's personal promise that Yugoslavia would "act in the direction that they [the MPLA] want us to act", which affirmed Yugoslavia's willingness to continue with its political and military support.⁷¹ The member of the delegation visited one of the largest steel mills in Yugoslavia. In an impromptu emotional speech, a member of the delegation thanked the workers of the mill for making the steel for the guns. "There are Western countries and there are So-

67 The Yugoslavs commended the 1972 agreement between the MPLA and the FLNA but remained suspicious about its effectiveness. During his meeting with Tito in February 1973, Neto said that the agreement had "softened" Mobutu's attitude toward the MPLA.

68 Telepneva, "Our Sacred Duty", p. 203.

69 Interview with Paulo Jorge, MPLA Secretary of Information, Luanda, 15 April 1996, in: T. Sellström (ed.), *Liberation in Southern Africa – Regional and Swedish Voices. Interviews from Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the Frontline and Sweden*, Upsala: Nordiska Afrikaninstitutet, 1999, p. 17.

70 Beleska o razgovoru potpredsednika Predsedništva SFRJ Mitje Ribicica sa Agostinom Netom, predsednikom Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole, 5 February 1974, AJ, CKSKJ, IX, 3/1–26a.

71 Zabeleska o prijemu delegacije Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) kod Predsednika Saveza komunista Jugoslavije, 30 May 1974, AJ, CKSKJ, IX, 3/1–27.

cialist countries, but Yugoslavia has a special place in our hearts”, he told to the gathered workers.⁷²

International isolation of the MPLA and internal disputes resulted in the movement’s decreasing military capacities and the ascendance of the FLNA as the militarily strongest of the three movements. The Yugoslavs understood the urgency and in April 1975, Belgrade sent uniforms, weapons, and ammunition in quantities sufficient to equip 1,000 soldiers. Moreover, Yugoslavia delivered trucks, all-terrain vehicles, a mobile ambulance bus, 200 tons of food, and US \$ 60,000 in cash.⁷³ A majority of this aid was sent by the ship *Postojna* to the port of Pointe-Noire. Although at this time the MPLA received some aid from Algeria and the USSR, as Pierro Gleijeses wrote, their aid was of “lesser importance”. An Angolan official said that, “Until August 1975, the country that helped the MPLA the most was Yugoslavia.”⁷⁴ The delegation of the MPLA (Carreira, Loy, and de Andrade) that visited Yugoslavia in September 1975 said that Yugoslav aid in the critical months of 1975 served as an example to “some other friends [Cuba and the USSR] of the MPLA who, after that, became more engaged.”⁷⁵ However, on Carreira’s repeated request for additional aid, the Yugoslavs said that after the large shipment in April, there was no money left for additional arms transfers in 1975.

The USSR and Cuba quickly filled this vacuum and their greater engagement spelled the end of Yugoslavia’s influence in Angola. Although the Soviets were reluctant to intervene directly in the Angolan civil war in the late summer of 1975, they encouraged their allies such as Bulgaria, Poland, and the GDR to send money and military aid.⁷⁶ According to Gleijeses, in July 1975 the Cuban re-

72 As in previous years, Yugoslavia widely popularized the Angolan struggle through the media and cultural events. In 1974, one local chapter of the SSRNJ reported how a Yugoslav citizen contacted them with a request to join the MPLA as a volunteer. The SSRNJ did not know if that individual was “too idealistic, a provocateur, or simply insane.” A local official lectured him about the nature of Yugoslavia’s aid to the MPLA before sending him home (Pismo Saveza socijalističke omladine Jugoslavije Drzavnom sekretarijatu spoljnih poslova, 4 February 1976, DA MSP, PA 1976 Angola, f. 224, d. 4, sign. 45951).

73 One report estimated that the value of this shipment was around US\$ 1,700,000. Beleska o realizaciji pomoci oslobodilackim pokretima MPLA Angole i FRELIMO Mozambika, March 24, 1975, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I-5-b/3-1, Informacija o pomoci Narodnom pokretu za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) u 1975. godini, 26 July 1975, DA MSP, PA 1975, Angola, f. 226, d. 7, sign. 440855.

74 Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 349. A model of the *Postojna* is displayed in the Museum of the Armed Forces in Fortaleza de São Miguel, Luanda.

75 Boravak delegacije MPLA u Jugoslaviji od 4. do 12. septembra, 1975. godine, 10 October 1975, DA MSP, PA 1975, Angola, f. 226, d. 7, sign. 448206.

76 Telepneva, “Our Sacred Duty”, pp. 256–257.

sponse to MPLA's requests for aid was "sluggish".⁷⁷ However, in August 1975, Cuba decided to send 480 instructors to the MPLA, significantly more than Neto requested.⁷⁸ When in October 1975 South Africa invaded Southern Angola, Havana's aid in personnel and Soviet in armaments proved essential for the survival of the MPLA. "It is true that the Russian weapons saved the People's Republic [of Angola]", a representative of the MPLA told a Yugoslav diplomat in Algeria.⁷⁹

Although in February 1976 the Yugoslavs helped with the transport of four T-34 tanks and six MIG airplanes from Guinea-Bissau, Yugoslav influence in Angola quickly waned.⁸⁰ The Yugoslav embassy in Luanda noted that the Angolans were wary of the Soviet and Cuban influence, yet "the life was taking its toll – the Soviets are here, they performed and still perform delicate jobs [...] the fact that in state and party leadership there is a lot of Angolans who studied in the USSR, reflects on current thinking about domestic developments."⁸¹ Furthermore, the Cuban presence in Angola threatened Yugoslavia's position in the NAM. Although Yugoslavia initially supported Cuban engagement in the war against South Africa, Cuba's presence in Angola threatened Yugoslavia's revolutionary credentials and established a dangerous precedent in international affairs.⁸² "If you wish to export revolution than counterrevolution can be exported too [...] the Americans will find their own Cuba", said Yugoslavian Foreign Secretary Milos Minic to Guyana's foreign minister. "We have to resist Sovietization of the Non-aligned Movement", Minic concluded.⁸³

Although many Angolan officials, including Neto's wife Maria Eugenia da Silva, tried to reassure the Yugoslavs how their country had a "special place in

⁷⁷ Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 254.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 256.

⁷⁹ Telegram from Algeria to Belgrade, br. 142, 27 December 1975, DA MSP, PA 1976 Angola, f. 224, d. 1, sign. 4581.

⁸⁰ In March 1976, Belgrade delivered 100 trucks and 40 all-terrain vehicles, but the trucks were the wrong models, and the all-terrain vehicles were defective. This caused Angolan dissatisfaction and jeopardized future business deals.

⁸¹ Ambasada Luanda, iz razgovora sa Borisom Sergejevicem, ambasadorom SSSR-a, 17 April 1976, DA MSP, PA 1976 Angola, f. 224, d. 11, sign. 423423.

⁸² "Our relations with Yugoslavia have traditionally been bad [...], [but] they [the Yugoslavs] took a correct stand on the problem with Angola, supporting and helping Cuba's position", Castro told Todor Zhivkov. J. Baev and K. Kanchev, *Minutes of the Meeting between Todor Zhivkov and Fidel Castro in Sofia*, K. Bratanova (trans.), 11 March 1976, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Record 60, f. 194, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/112241> (accessed 15 December 2018).

⁸³ Zabeleska o razgovoru izmedju sekretara Minica i ministra spoljnih poslova Gvajane F. Willisona, 10 May 1977, DA MSP, Strogo poverljivo (Str. pov.) 1977, f. 5, d. 218, sign. 218.

our hearts”, by the mid-1976, Belgrade had lost the position in Angola that it was carefully building since 1961.⁸⁴ A correspondent of the Yugoslav news agency TANJUG, D. Blagojevic, reported from Luanda in June 1976 that “hardly anyone talks about Yugoslavia anymore”, and that, except Lopo do Nascimento and Neto, nobody talks about non-aligned either.⁸⁵ The March 1976 meeting with Fidel Castro provided Tito with an opportunity to raise Yugoslav concerns about Cuban actions in Angola. Tito approved of Cuba’s actions in the south of the country, yet he cautioned that Cuba should not cross the border with Namibia. “We should avoid by all means to turn Angola into a revolutionary centre that will export revolution to Africa”, Tito urged his Cuban interlocutor.⁸⁶ Tito emphasized that the priority was to consolidate the Neto regime and that any further military actions would devalue current accomplishments. “You should not enter Namibia [...] or America will intervene”, Tito warned Castro.⁸⁷

“In 1975, Angola exploded upon American consciousness”, Marcum wrote.⁸⁸ The US had been putting pressure on Belgrade over its role in Angola since December 1975. Henry Kissinger instructed the U.S. Embassy in Belgrade to express his indignation over Yugoslavia’s “collusion in fuelling Soviet intervention in Angolan civil strife by permitting Soviet overflights of Yugoslav air space.”⁸⁹ U.S. Ambassador Laurence Silberman repeatedly raised the issue with Yugoslav officials. At the lunch with Yugoslav Assistant Secretary Milicevic, Silberman characterized Yugoslavia’s policy toward Angola as duplicitous and “inconsistent with non-aligned principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other countries.”⁹⁰ Silberman also delivered Kissinger’s note to Secretary Minic’s aide, Mirko Ostojic. The meeting was, according to Ostojic’s account, contentious. Al-

⁸⁴ Maria da Silva visited Belgrade in April 1976. She tried to downplay Cuban and Soviet influence in Angola and said that the Angolans “will never forget that the Yugoslavs, in the most difficult moments, stayed our friends” (Zabeleska o razgovoru Babic Dimitrija, specijalnog saradnika u Predsednistvu CK SKJ sa Marijom Eudjenojom Neto, suprugom Predsednika Narodne Republike Angole dr Agostinja Neta, 7 April 1976, AJ, CKSKJ, IX, 3/1–31).

⁸⁵ Izvestaj iz Luande dopisnika Tanjuga D. Blagojevica, 2 June 1976, AJ, KPR, Fond 837, I–5–b/3–3.

⁸⁶ Zabeleska o razgovoru predsednika Republike Josipa Broza Tita sa prvim sekretarom KP Kube Fidelom Kastrom, 4 March 1976, AJ, KPR, fond 837, I–3–a/63–9.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Marcum, *The Angolan Revolution*, p. xiii.

⁸⁹ Memorandum, Henry Kissinger to Laurence Silberman, 21 December 1975, National Security Adviser (NSA) Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 22, from SECSTATE–NODIS folder 1, Gerald Ford Library.

⁹⁰ Memorandum of Conversation, Laurence Silberman to Henry Kissinger, 23 December 1975, NSA Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 22, to SECSTATE–NODIS folder 2, Gerald Ford Library.

legedly, Silberman appeared very nervous and delivered the note in a “very loud voice”.⁹¹ The Yugoslavs condemned Silberman’s attitude, but also the content of Kissinger’s letter that stated how the US “does not see how it is in interest of a nation itself vulnerable to Soviet power [...] to acquiesce in a Soviet attempt to assert domination over Angola.”⁹² Kissinger also threatened to pull economic and military support from Yugoslavia. Belgrade’s response was “geared toward avoidance of slippage in friendly GOY-US bilaterals.”⁹³ Piero Gleijeses noted that Kissinger saw Havana’s role in the same way: “it made more sense, and was more satisfying, to conclude that Castro was just a Soviet proxy, acting on Brezhnev’s orders.”⁹⁴ More insightful U.S. diplomats, however, realized that Soviet and Cuban actions in Angola went directly against Yugoslavia’s long-term interests in the country. U.S. Embassy counsellor Brandon Sweitzer wrote that Yugoslav objectives in Southern Africa were divergent from those of the USSR and that despite many parallel policies vis-à-vis Angola, greater Moscow’s involvement made the chasm between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia even wider.⁹⁵ In September 1976, during confidential talks with Averell Harriman, one of Tito’s closest aides Edvard Kardelj complained about Soviet influence over Neto. Kardelj even suggested to Harriman that the United States should lead an initiative with Neto who, according to Kardelj, “‘wanted to return’ to the non-aligned”.⁹⁶

A combination of overwhelming Soviet and Cuban presence in the country, US pressure on Belgrade, and Yugoslavia’s inability to muster additional means to assist Angola, led to a decrease in Yugoslavia’s influence in Southern Africa. The case of Yugoslavia’s involvement in Angola demonstrated the limitations of

91 Iz zabeleske o razgovoru PSS Mirka Ostojica sa ambasadorom SAD L.H. Silberman-om, 24 December 1975, AJ, KPR, fond 837, I-5-b/104-20, SAD; Silberman’s account of the meeting is, however, different. Silberman wrote that Ostojic “clearly implied that Yugoslav recognition and support of the MPLA was based on notion of *realpolitik* – they had been and were the strongest political force in Angola.” “He made no response at all [...] nor did he respond to my discussion of the implications for US-Yugoslav relations”, Silberman concluded (Memorandum, Laurence Silberman to Henry Kissinger, 24 December 1975, NSA Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 22, to SECSTATE-NODIS folder 2, Gerald Ford Library).

92 Memo, Henry Kissinger to Laurence Silberman, 21 December 1975, NSA Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 22, from SECSTATE-NODIS folder 1, Gerald Ford Library.

93 Memo, Laurence Silberman to Henry Kissinger, 31 December 1975, NSA Country Files for Europe and Canada, Box 22, to SECSTATE-NODIS folder 2, Gerald Ford Library.

94 Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, p. 306.

95 Memo, Brandon Sweitzer to State Department, 5 March 1976, <http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1976BELGRA1460b.html> (accessed 15 December 2018).

96 Letter, Averell Harriman to Henry Kissinger, 29 September 1976, The Papers of W. Averell Harriman, Box 597, folder 2, Library of Congress.

Yugoslavia's solidarity with the MPLA. Yugoslavia was unable to prevent the Angolan "Sovietization", and also its model of non-aligned was tested by Castro's revolutionary approach. The last meeting between Tito and Neto in March 1977 failed to elevate Yugoslav-Angolan relations to the pre-1975 level.

"We Shall Win": Yugoslavia's Aid to FRELIMO, 1964–1975

As with the MPLA, the first contacts between Yugoslavia and revolutionaries from Mozambique were established in 1961. One of the future founders of FRELIMO, Marcelino dos Santos, then a member of the National Democratic Union of Mozambique, attended the first summit of the NAM in Belgrade. Although the Union requested financial aid, Yugoslavia rejected this request because it did not have enough information about the movement's "real positions".⁹⁷ In the early 1960s, contacts between Yugoslavia and FRELIMO were rare, though Yugoslav officials did meet once with FRELIMO's leaders Eduardo Mondlane and Dos Santos during the 1963 conference of the OAU in Addis Ababa. However, in 1964, FRELIMO began armed operations against the Portuguese, and in the same year, Yugoslavia sent its first financial aid of US\$ 2,000 to the movement. A year later, Belgrade sent the same amount again.⁹⁸ Moreover, as a gesture of goodwill, the Yugoslav government provided the movement with four scholarships for vocational training in Yugoslavia.

Belgrade considered FRELIMO to be one of the best-organized African Liberation Movements. In 1965 Yugoslav diplomatic representatives in Zambia and Tanzania praised Mondlane's appearance during the sessions of the UN Committee of Twenty-four: Mondlane and FRELIMO "appeared mature, self-assured [...] which further implies that they are connected to their base [...] their actions lately would contribute to their further affirmation", a report stated.⁹⁹ Yet, despite

⁹⁷ Pitanje pomoci oslobodilackim pokretima Afrike, 11 October 1961, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I–468.

⁹⁸ Pregled dostavljene pomoci inostranim partijama i pokretima upucenih preko ambasade SFRJ u Dar es Salamu u periodu od 1962–1965, 6 September 1966, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I–468.

⁹⁹ The report noted that there were "certain reservations" toward Mondlane because he was married to an American who had served in the Peace Corps. "Yet, people from the movement emphasized that Mondlane is honest and works actively and is useful for the movement" (Nesto o oslobodilackim pokretima – Zapazanja za vreme zasedanja Komiteta 24 u Africi, 5 September 1965, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I–452).

this praise, FRELIMO remained on the margins of Yugoslav policy toward Portuguese Africa, though.

The Yugoslavs appreciated FRELIMO's orientation toward non-aligned and the movement's interests to learn about Yugoslav experiences in World War II. Dos Santos visited Belgrade in 1966 to attend the Sixth Congress of the SSRNJ during a meeting with Yugoslav vice president Aleksandar Rankovic, Dos Santos confirmed that Yugoslavia's struggle served as a role model for Mozambique's path to independence.¹⁰⁰ This sense of camaraderie provided Belgrade with a unique opportunity to send a movie crew to Cabo Delgado province to film FRELIMO's struggle. In October 1967, *Filmske novosti* filmed a 20-minute long feature entitled *We Shall Win* (*Venceremos*), which popularized FRELIMO's fight. *We Shall Win* was dubbed into English, French, and Portuguese, and a special premiere was organized for Mondlane when he visited Belgrade in January 1968. "It is not an accident that the first permission [to shot the movie] was given to a Yugoslav reporter, because a film made by Yugoslavs is more convincing than if that job was done by a camera-man of some other nationality", Mondlane said.¹⁰¹

During his visit to Belgrade, Mondlane provided his Yugoslav hosts with a lengthy wish list of military materiel and other forms of aid. Similarly to the MPLA, FRELIMO benefited from Belgrade's efforts to revamp the NAM. Yugoslavia increased its financial aid to US\$ 10,000 but did not commit itself to send the ordinance requested by Mondlane. However, the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia forced Yugoslavia to abandon its reticence and in September 1968, Yugoslavia sent its first shipments of weapons to FRELIMO and the MPLA. The shipment consisted of bolt-action rifles, machine guns, mortars, and other "largely antiquated" guns.¹⁰² Additional arms for both movements arrived in Dar es Salaam in 1969.

Between 1969 and 1974, the relationship between Yugoslavia and FRELIMO suffered a series of setbacks. The first came in February 1969 when Eduardo

100 Zableska o razgovoru potpredsednika Republike Aleksandra Rankovica s predstavnicima narodnooslobodilackih pokreta koji prisustvuju VI kongresu SSRNJ, 9 June 1966, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I–452.

101 Cited in R. Vucetic, "Uspostavljanje jugoslovenske filmske saradnje sa Afrikom", *Godisnjak za drustvenu istoriju* 24 (2017) 2, pp. 57–81, at 75; see N.R., "Istorija u filmskim depoima", *Politika*, 5 September 2011, <http://www.politika.rs/sr/clanak/190228> (accessed 18 October 2018).

102 FRELIMO received a smaller portion of the shipment. See Pomoc nacionalno-oslobodilackim pokretima i drugim partijama i organizacijama u toku 1968. godine, 14 April 1969, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I–468.

Mondlane was assassinated.¹⁰³ Although Uria Simango temporarily took his place, Mondlane's departure marked the beginning of struggles for primacy in the leadership of FRELIMO. Simango together with Neto visited Belgrade in June 1969. The only available record of the meetings they had with various Yugoslav political and army officials does not suggest that Simango discussed FRELIMO's internal issues with his Yugoslav interlocutors. Belgrade, however, noted that the visit by Simango and Neto would strengthen their domestic and internal positions, without further elaborating the situation in FRELIMO.¹⁰⁴ Despite this optimistic estimate, Simango was ousted in the fall of 1969 and a "leftist faction Santos-Samora" took power.¹⁰⁵ This internal turmoil caused "certain stagnation" in the relationship between FRELIMO and Yugoslavia that slightly recovered after Samora Machel's visit to Belgrade in 1971.¹⁰⁶

However, the second setback in the relationship ensued between 1972 and mid-1974. In this period, due to Belgrade's chronic money shortages and internal political turmoil caused by the so-called Croatian Spring, Yugoslavia's military aid became "symbolic."¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Yugoslavia's focus on the MPLA "brought certain concerns and suspicions in FRELIMO's leadership", a report stated.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, Yugoslav recognition of the new Portuguese government after the coup of 1974 received FRELIMO's "unequivocal condemnation."¹⁰⁹ Although in 1973 Belgrade sent some money to FRELIMO and managed to send symbolic quantities of weapons such as ten rocket launchers and ten machine guns, relations with the movement did not significantly improve.¹¹⁰ Moreover, the Yugoslavs were wary of Chinese influence in Mozambique that, as Belgrade believed, inevitably steered the movement toward "left radicalism."

103 "Leader of Mozambique Liberation Movement Killed by Assassin's Bomb at Cottage in Dar es Salaam", *New York Times*, 4 February 1969, p. 11.

104 Informacija o poseti delegacija Narodnog pokreta za oslobodjenje Angole (MPLA) i Fronta za oslobodjenje Mozambika (FRELIMO), June 1969, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I-553.

105 Telepneva, "Our Sacred Duty", p. 177.

106 Nesvrstanost i pitanja odbrane – Nesvrstani i oslobodilacki pokreti, stavovi KNZ, podaci o OP, pomoc Jugoslavije, predlozi, June 1973, AJ, KPR Fond 837, I-4-a/15.

107 Carvalho, *As Relações Jugoslavo-Portuguesas*, pp. 239–240.

108 Nesvrstanost i pitanja odbrane – Nesvrstani i oslobodilacki pokreti, stavovi KNZ, podaci o OP, pomoc Jugoslavije, predlozi, June 1973, AJ, KPR Fond 837, I-4-a/15.

109 Zabeleska o nekim pitanjima saradnje i pomoci antikolonijalnim, nacionalno-oslobodilackim i drugim pokretima u svetu, 24 October 1974, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, A-227.

110 In comparison, at the same time, the MPLA received 300 7.62 mm semi-automatic guns, 500,000 pieces of ammunition, and close to 2,000 rockets for the bazooka (Pomoc oslobodilackim pokretima Angole, Mozambika i Gvineje Bisao, no date 1973, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, I-468).

Yet, the negotiations between Lisbon and FRELIMO in Dar es Salaam and Lusaka in 1974 and the certain prospects of Mozambique's independence forced Yugoslavia to try to reconcile its relations with FRELIMO. Belgrade believed that Mozambique's path to independence in June 1975 was all but assured, thus necessitating further military and political assistance. The SSRNJ allocated US\$ 50,000 for *Filmske novosti* to send another crew to Mozambique to film Samora Machel's tour around the country and independence festivities.¹¹¹ Moreover, FRELIMO's delegation led by Nelson Zimba arrived in Belgrade with a request for Yugoslav military assistance. This time Yugoslavia heeded FRELIMO's pleas and sent weapons, uniforms, and other articles enough to equip a unit of 1,000 soldiers.¹¹² Moreover, Yugoslavia sent 100 tons of food and allocated US\$ 60,000 in financial assistance for the movement. Despite previous misunderstandings and Belgrade's uneasiness with Machel's and dos Santos' "left radicalism", Yugoslavia considered the country's independence as a positive development for the progressive forces. "With a large population, economic potentials, its geo-strategic position and revolutionary traditions – [Mozambique] will significantly influence the direction of neighbouring African countries", a Yugoslav report stated.¹¹³ Yet, after Mozambique's declaration of independence on 25 June 1975, Yugoslavia's relations with Maputo staled and in the 1980s, Belgrade complained that after Mozambique's independence "we could not establish military and economic cooperation."¹¹⁴

Conclusion

Yugoslavia's relations with the MPLA and FRELIMO from 1961 until 1976 show the ambitions and the limits of Yugoslav military internationalism, and the country's global policies in general. Yugoslavia's military aid to these movements epitomized the country's desire to play a role in global politics. Although Yugoslavia's "third-worldism" began in the 1950s, with Tito's trips to Ethiopia and

111 Informacija o pomoci upucenoj oslobodilackim pokretima Afrike, 4 June 1975, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, A-227.

112 Ibid. and Beleska o realizaciji pomoci oslobodilackim pokretima MPLA Angole i FRELIMO Mozambika, 24 March 1975, AJ, KPR Fond 837, I-5-b/3-2.

113 Informacija o pomoci upucenoj oslobodilackim pokretima Afrike, 4 June 1975, AJ, SSRNJ Fond 142, A-227.

114 Informacija o naucnotehnickoj i vojnoekonomskoj saradnji sa OS afričkih zemalja u oblasti vojne tehnike, prilog 3, March 1985, Arhiv Slovenije (AS), Republiški družbeni svet za mednarodne odnose, 1975–1990, box 6.

South East Asia, the 1961 Summit of the NAM in Belgrade signified the beginning of Yugoslavia's steady engagement in Africa and Asia. First contacts with the MPLA, FRELIMO, and other liberation movements in Africa were made that year. As Yugoslavia's military assistance demonstrates, aid was sometimes driven by pragmatic considerations related to the country's security. But sometimes it was motivated by less tangible categories, such as ideology, psychological identification of the main actors with liberation struggles, and prestige in international affairs.

Therefore, Yugoslavia's involvement in Portuguese Africa was motivated by two factors. First, military aid, particularly after 1968, facilitated Yugoslavia's foreign policy and security objectives. Unlike other socialist countries, Yugoslavia did not require ideological compatibility from aid recipients. This ideologically flexible approach also validated Yugoslavia's right to take its own road to socialism that was particularly important in the context of the Brezhnev doctrine and permanent threats to Yugoslavia sovereignty. Military aid to the MPLA, FRELIMO, and others was seen to contribute to Yugoslavia's independence and security. The purpose of Yugoslav military aid was to enhance the defence capabilities of these liberation movements thus minimizing the need for the superpowers' involvement.

Second, beginning with Algeria in the late 1950 and early 1960s, military and political aid to liberation movements was an intrinsic part of Yugoslavia's foreign policy orientation and an expression of Yugoslavia's revolutionary experience. Yugoslavia's "greatest generation" identified their own struggle against foreign occupation and domestic "reactionary forces" during World War II with the anti-colonial struggles. Yugoslav functionaries often invoked their World War II experiences in conversations and policy planning. Yugoslav party, state, and military officials interpreted Yugoslav support of anti-colonialism not as a conscious ("subjective") choice, but rather as the core of Yugoslav revolutionary identity and historical experience.¹¹⁵ And their interlocutors in Portuguese Africa, out of conviction or flattery, identified themselves with the Yugoslav Partisans and expressed their desire to copy Yugoslavian war and post-war experiences.

However, Yugoslavia's military aid to the MPLA and FRELIMO demonstrated Yugoslavia's limited capacity to influence regional and global affairs. Yugoslavia did not have the means to provide sufficient assistance to its partners in Africa. The quantity of Yugoslavia's aid fluctuated from year to year as the constraints of domestic political and economic situation influenced the country's ability to pro-

115 A. Grlickov, "Predgovor", in: I. Ivekovic (ed.), *Afrika i socijalizam. Panorama socijalistickih opredjeljenja i zemljama crne Afrike*, Belgrade: Izdavacki centar "Komunist", 1976, p. x.

vide money and materiel to its partners in Africa. Moreover, Yugoslavia's delicate international position dictated the scope of military assistance. Although Yugoslavia's aim was to limit the influence of superpowers in Angola and Mozambique, by 1976 it was clear that Yugoslavia had failed to do so. Yugoslavia's aid to the MPLA was insufficient to prevent "Sovietization" of the movement. Soviet (and Cuban) influence in Angola and Washington's pressure on Yugoslavia in 1975 showed that Yugoslavia's position in Southern Africa was unsustainable because of external factors. Moreover, the Cuban intervention revealed the impotence of Yugoslavia's "third-worldism" and its inability to support anti-imperialist rhetoric with concrete actions. Yet, Yugoslavia's role in Angola and Mozambique provides an opportunity to observe how liberation movements made and maintained connections with allies abroad. It also shows how small states such as Yugoslavia supported these movements in order to achieve their own foreign policy objectives.

