

# FROM THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (1988) TO THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN 2002: THE PEACE PROCESS IN ANGOLA<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Located on the West coast of Africa, Angola is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest African country in terms of territorial extension and is extremely rich in natural resources such as oil, natural gas and diamonds. It is bordered by the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the north, by the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia to the east, by Namibia to the south, and by the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

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**Figure 1: Current political map of Angola**

Source: Oliveira 2009, p. 1.

The small amount of neighboring countries on its borders contrasts with a sensitive and strategic part of Angola, the province of *Cabinda*, an exclave located further north, which accounts for most of the country's oil production (Visentini 2012, 206). In observing the country's history, it can be noted that it is strongly marked by political instability, mainly caused by the occurrence of intrastate and state conflicts. However, a watershed moment was April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002, since it was on this date that the Angolan Government and the members of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) finally reached an agreement and signed the Luena Memorandum of Understanding (Visentini 2012, 208). This episode ended a long period of war and struggle, while allowing the celebration of the much awaited peace in the country.

In any event, the peace treaty signed in 2002 cannot be considered a mere incident, since it is not isolated in terms of historical context. Instead, this process dates back to the origin of the formation of Angolan territory. In view of this, it is imperative to understand two central aspects in order to understand the peace process that occurred in Angola after the fall of the Berlin wall: 1) the Angolan historical evolution; and 2) the actions triggered by the international system (IS) in Angola after the fall of the Berlin wall,

with the purpose of restoring peace in the country. Thus, the aim of this article is to understand the way in which Angola reached peace in 2002 and to identify the main events that occurred in the international system that had an impact in this process.

In order to fulfill this task, this article is structured as follows: initially, we make a brief ambience of the subject, highlighting relevant geographic and historical aspects of the African country. In the second section, we define the taxonomy we use, and the limits of this investigation. The third section revisits the process of historical evolution that occurred in Angola between 1576 and 1988, addressing it in three sub-periods. The fourth section examines the peace process between 1988 and 2002, relying on the periods when each of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions was present in the country. In the last section, we verify the main characteristics of the international system that reflected positively and negatively in the process of peace in Angola.

## Methodological Consideration

Conceptually, the methodological proposal of this research is based on the paradigm of complexity, more precisely in the understanding that the international system is a complex system by nature. According to Bousquet and Curtis, a complex system is one that has non-linear relationships, where there is no proportionality between the incidence of entry or exit of the system, that is, the idea that a small influence exercised over a particular component can have large effects in other parts of the same system (Bousquet, Curtis 2011, 46).

In view of this reality, Cairney (2012, 346) proposes that the analysis of a given component should not be done in isolation, since it is understood that all the actors of a complex system interact with each other, establishing relationships, which interfere in greater or lesser degree to the stability of this same system. In our study, it is noted that from the arrival of the Portuguese, Angola joined a broader system, complex by nature, which involved establishing relationships with a variable number of actors: state and non-state. This dynamic of relations has shown itself throughout history to have the capacity to influence countless events and processes in the country (Richardson, Cilliers 2001, 14). The Angolan peace process did not escape this rule and suffered great influence from state and non-state actors of the international system. Due to the large number of agents that established relations

with Angola throughout history, this article delimited the study to investigate only those which most influenced the peace process of the African country:

**Table 1: Parts covered**

State Agents	Non-state Agents
United States of America, former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Russia, Portugal, South Africa and Cuba	United Nations Organization (UN)

**Source:** Created by the authors, 2018.

Considering this list of actors, the analysis was carried out in two phases: 1) initially, the historical evolution of the African country between 1576 and 1988 was revisited and related to the main facts occurring in the international system; and 2) then, we studied the participation of each agent listed in Table 1 in the peace construction process carried out in Angola between 1988 and 2002, highlighting the positive and negative points of this performance. Taking into account the thaw in UN actions after the fall of the Berlin wall and its intense participation in Angola, it became necessary to investigate all the resolutions issued by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) that mentioned the African country between 1988 and 2002.

**Brief History of Angola**

The insertion of Angola in the international context is directly correlated to the Age of Exploration, a historical period that comprises the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, when Portuguese, Spanish and other European peoples launched themselves around the globe to increase their wealth and territories, taking advantage of their age’s technological advancement in nautical equipment and under the protection of the papal bulls (Carvalho 1998, 2). It was in this context that the Portuguese arrived in the kingdoms of *Kongo* and *Ndongo* (a region comprising part of the present territories of Angola, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, an event that radically changed the status quo of the peoples who inhabited this place (Soares 2017, 61). Concerned only with the exploitation of wealth, the Portuguese gradually advanced to the countryside of the African continent and by the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century they had already settled completely in that region.

## From Luanda to the End of the Second World War (1576-1945)

With the advancement of African occupation and the consequent increase of relations with African peoples, Portugal felt the need to broaden its bases in the region. Given its privileged strategic position, the city of São Paulo de Luanda was founded in January 1576, an embryo of Angola's current capital (Academia 1825, 349).

As described earlier, other European states also participated in the Age of Exploration, and friction between European countries over their possessions overseas, such as in Africa, South America and Asia, became very common. Already a part of the international context, Angola was not immune to what was happening on the planet and recorded, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the invasion of the Dutch in its territory and their consequent installation in Luanda in 1641, staying until 1648, when they were expelled by the Portuguese (Hohlfeldt, Carvalho 2012, p.88). Driven by victory and seeking to recover other territories that had been usurped by the Dutch, the Portuguese continued the campaign and completely eradicated the invaders in 1671, an event that confirmed to the international system that the Angolan territory was a colony of Portugal.

Even so, Angola still did not attract the attention of its metropolis and its role was limited to providing slave labor to other Portuguese colonies. The *modus operandi* used by the Portuguese to obtain slave labor in Angola sought to stimulate conflicts and struggles between local groups. Over the years, this practice proved to be ineffective and corrosive, since it stimulated rivalry among the tribes that inhabited the region, a behavior that caused serious problems in the long run, which also influenced the formation of the *ethos* of the Angolan people. The discovery of gold in the regions of Minas Gerais in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century further reinforced the disinterest of the Portuguese in the African colony, as the metropolis' attention and effort were totally directed to the Brazilian colony (Hohlfeldt, Carvalho 2012, p.91).

In the following century, a fact occurred on the planet that had great consequences for Angola. Under the motto of freedom, equality and fraternity, the revolution in France in 1789 was a movement unleashed by various sectors of French society which claimed, among many issues, better living conditions for the less favored classes and criticized the privileges of the local monarchy (Visentini 2016, page 115). The Illuminist ideals propagated during the movement were not confined to French territory and reached various parts of the globe. Siqueira points out that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup>

century, under the strong influence of these ideals, there were outbreaks of tension and instability in Angola, caused by the population's dissatisfaction with Portuguese domain (Siqueira 2012, 40).

Advancing on the timeline, we note that the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a period of strong change. A recount of Angolan history in this century must obligatorily cover the understanding of three central phenomena and how they related to the country: 1) the advancement of the Napoleonic empire; 2) the industrial revolution; and (3) the Berlin conference.

During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, almost all of Europe was under the domain or influence of *Napoléon Bonaparte's* empire, except for a few countries, including Great Britain (Acemoglu, Robinson 2012, 332). With the imminent invasion of Portugal by *Napoléon Bonaparte*, the Portuguese royal court moved from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro in 1808. This transfer took place with the support of Great Britain, who in turn was experiencing the industrial revolution and, in return, demanded an end to the slave trade. To this end, the British carried out a series of actions and treaties in the international system, aimed at the end of this practice. And so, little by little, the English succeeded in their attempt. As Luanda was Africa's largest slave port (Menz, Lopes 2018, 5), the decline of the slave trade, and its consequent extinction, generated strong economic and social impacts in Angola, since it had not been prepared to carry out other activities. In view of this reality, the Angolan economy would only give small signs of recovery in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the beginning of the rubber cycle (Pacheco, Costa, Tavares 2018, 93).

Between 1884 and 1885, the Berlin Conference proposed an end to slavery and laid the foundations for much of today's African borders. Among the most relevant issues discussed at this conference, and that were reflected in Angola, was the ratification of the Treaty of *Simulambuco*. Signed earlier by representatives of the Portuguese government and the kingdom of *N'Goyo*, it was ratified at the Berlin Conference, officially putting the Cabinda region in the Portuguese protectorate (Neuman 2017, p.17). More than a simple conference, this event demonstrated the weakening of Portugal and the strengthening of other countries in the international system, such as Germany. Not surprisingly, under German tutelage, Angolan border boundaries were defined gradually and diplomatically between the years 1885 and 1891 (Pacheco, Costa, Tavares 2018, 84).

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century marked the definitive end of slave labor and the rise of other forms of commerce in the African colony, with an emphasis on rubber. To give an idea, of the total exports made by Angola in

1908, 65% were based on rubber (Pacheco, Costa, Tavares 2018, 93). Thus, the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was dynamic for the Angolan economy. However, one more event of the international system was decisive for the country's trend. The crisis in the New York Stock Exchange in 1929 generated strong impacts in Angola. In order to protect itself from the effects of the Great Depression, Portugal instituted the Colonial Act in 1930, which, among other attributions, defined that all activities conducted in its domains needed to be approved by the Portuguese (Pimenta 2014, p.252). This decree deterred the beginning of a promising economic activity in Angola, since it removed all freedom of action, causing great dissatisfaction among the population and contributing to the emergence of several movements that sought the right of citizenship to the Angolan people (Pestana 2004, 3). More than a casual fact, these manifestoes played a pivotal role in the country's history, as they contributed to the formation of the embryo of the political parties that emerged in Angola in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which would have a leading role in the process of independence and the long civil war from 1975.

Motivated by the 1929 Crash and by the Treaty of Versailles (1919), the Second World War broke out in 1939, a warlike conflict waged in various parts of the globe and that completely changed the political conjuncture. As part of the international system, Angola was not unharmed to what was happening and the changes that took place on the globe were also present in Angolan territory.

## **From the End of the Second World War to Independence (1945-1975)**

The conclusion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War ended an era of European countries' dominance and inaugurated the prominence of two other victorious countries in the global conflict: the United States of America (USA) and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Known as Cold War, this period began shortly after the Second World War and ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall (Hobsbawm 1985, 223). With a rivalry unprecedented in history, and characterized by an ideological backdrop, Americans and Soviets duelled in the most varied areas of power. With many appealing aspects (economic, strategic and political), Angola was one of the places where the Cold War became more pulsating.

In this framework and with the aim of substituting failed League of Nations, the UN emerged in 1945, an institution created under the main



idea of maintaining minimum levels of peace in the international system (Pinheiro da Cunha, Migon, Vaz 2014, 333). With Europe ravaged in the post-war, several of its African colonies pleaded to free themselves from European subjection and claimed their independences. In all except for some, Angola among them, this political plea was reached by most African countries in the turning of the decade 1950 to 1960, with the recognition and validation of the United Nations and with the endorsement of the Cold War (Visentini 2012, 10). Under pressure, Portugal reacted differently and only carried out a review of its constitution in 1951, where it decreed the end of the Portuguese colonial empire, because it understood that the expression “colonial empire” subjugated the people of Angola, so instead the area was defined as an overseas Portuguese province (Castelo 2014, 514).

As occurred in several episodes involving Angola and Portugal throughout history, the revision of the Portuguese Constitution took place with the support of a dominant country in the international system: this time, the USA, which in turn claimed for the installation of industries in Angola, with the purpose of exploring the African riches. Relying on studies dating from 1910 and under U.S. tutelage, Belgian oil company PETROFINA started its activities in the basin of *Kwanza* in 1952, announcing the discovery of commercial oil in 1955 in that basin (Ferreira 2015, 72). Not surprisingly, PETROFINA started its activities in the USA in 1956, one year after the discovery of oil in Angola.

The 1960s can be regarded as a time when the rivalry between Americans and Soviets reached its peak, almost starting a new global war conflict. Involving Americans, Soviets and Cubans, the Missile Crisis of 1962 generated several developments on the planet, also reflecting in Angola (Ávila 2012, 384). Unsatisfied with the condition of being the overseas province of Portugal, Angola witnessed in the 1950s and 1960s the emergence of several political movements that fought for independence, among which three stand out: 1) the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA); 2) The People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA); and 3) the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Silva 2018, 5). However, as the planet experienced the pinnacle of the Cold War, and given the central role played by Angola in this clash, the founding of political groups took on strong ideological influences, an aspect that makes the Angolan case a complex tangle of international and national relations.

Officially founded in 1962, the history of FNLA relates to three other political groups that preceded it: 1) The United People of Northern Angola (UPNA); 2) The Union of Angolan Peoples (UPA); and 3) The Democratic



Party of Angola (PDA). Thus, in July 1954, in the city of *Leopoldville*, then capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the UPNA emerges. Under the leadership of *Holden Roberto*, UPNA was a political movement that pleaded the independence of the former Kingdom of Congo, including the region of *Cabinda* as well. On the occasion of the Accra Conference, held in 1958, and under strong influence of Pan-African ideals promoted in this Conference, *Holden Roberto* felt the need to modify the movement's initial concept in order to make it aligned with the precepts of Pan-Africanism. Thus, UPA was created in 1958, resulting from the evolution of UPNA and under the leadership of *Holden Roberto*, an anti-colonial movement aligned with the principles of Pan-Africanism (Guimarães 1992, 155). The PDA, on the other hand, was created in 1961, as the result from the union of two Angolan associations and defined itself as a political group that fought for the independence of the country. In 1962, the UPA and PDA merged to form the FNLA, a political party led by *Holden Roberto*, which declared itself anti-communist, anticolonial and had close ties with the US, which supported it (Silva 2018, 5).

Motivated by the ideals propagated at the *Bandung Conference*, the MPLA was founded in 1956, from the merger of two political groups: 1) Party of the United Struggle for Africans in Angola (PLUA); and 2) Angolan Communist Party (PCA). The PLUA was founded in 1953 and was characterized by being anticolonial. The PCA was created in 1955, and its guideline was the independence of the country, having strong ties with the Portuguese Communist Party. In this way, under the leadership of *Agostinho Neto*, the PLUA and PCA were joined to create the MPLA in 1956. This movement intended to implement a democratic regime in which all sectors of Angolan society would be represented and, in order to do this, counted with the support of some socialist countries, such as the former USSR and China (Silva 2018, 6).

In 1966, in the Angolan city of *Moxico* and under the leadership of *Jonas Savimbi*, who had been disconnected from the FNLA and from GRAE<sup>4</sup>, UNITA was created. With an anticolonial nature, this political party sought to obtain popular support and mass mobilization to make the country independent. With its bases in Zambia, UNITA initially did not obtain external support in the same level as the other two movements did. Anyways, it is

4 GRAE – On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1962, FNLA self-proclaimed an Angolan government in exile, having as president *Holden Roberto* (Leader of the FNLA), as Vice President *E Kunzika* (PDA leader) and as Minister of Foreign Affairs *Jonas Savimbi*. Initially, GRAE became known as the Government of the Republic of Angola in Exile, but afterwards it altered its name to Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (Guimarães 1992, 200).

worth noting that Maoist China and Zambia itself provided small aid to the movement (Silva 2018, 7).

With this structure, the three groups established themselves during the decades of 1950 and 1960 and became Angola's main anti-colonial movements: on the one hand, the FNLA (supported by the US); on the other hand, the MPLA (supported by the former USSR, China and several socialist countries); and, in a more isolated way, there was UNITA. Acting on a common purpose and relying on different partners, the structure and *modus operandi* of the three movements remained the same until the signing of the Alvor Agreement.

Under the *apartheid* regime and fearful of the political agitation that took place in Angola in the 1950s and 1960s, South Africa made an effort to approach Portugal, as it understood that both were fighting a common cause: Black nationalism in Southern Africa (Barroso 2013, 177). As the setting was unfavorable to both, Portugal resisted initially, but slowly ceded to South Africa's advances, until in 1962 the Portuguese Government declared its intention to reinforce an alliance with Rhodesia and South Africa. In this way, Portuguese and South Africans narrowed their ties throughout the 1960s, and in the 1970s they were already military partners. Under the *slogan* of defending Southern Africa against Black nationalism, this military partnership took the form of military exercises, the planning of a common Defense Plan for Southern Africa and the South African military support against the Angolan anticolonial movements (Barroso 2013, 177).

Still, one more time an event that took place outside of African boundaries was decisive for the change in the region's political configuration. The oil crisis, which occurred in 1973, played a pivotal role in Angola's independence. This crisis had a global reach and strongly impacted the oil-dependent states, among them Portugal. Given this dependence, the European country plunged into an economic crisis, characterized by growing unemployment, a sharp decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and recession. In addition, there was the burden of the Portuguese war effort to maintain its overseas territories, which represented around 40% of the State's expenditures (Coggiola, Martins 2006, 61). These aspects generated great dissatisfaction among the population, which contributed to the Portuguese military leading a political-social movement to overthrow the dictatorial regime of the Second Republic (Estado Novo) and decreeing the Carnation Revolution in 1974 (Varela, Pereira 2016, 12). Such movement led to the immediate legitimization of anticolonial movements, anticipating the independence of Angola.

It was in this atmosphere that on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975, the Alvor Agreement was signed between the Portuguese Government and the three main anticolonial movements: FNLA, MPLA and UNITA. Among other issues, the agreement determined the implementation of a transitional government composed of members of the three political groups, which should last until the day set for Angolan independence: November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1975 (Silva 2016, 174). However, with different ideological trends on the table and countless international actors on the scene, the groups diverged and the provisional government did not acquire the desirable governability. What was seen in Angola during this period was a rearrangement of power, which was materialized by the division of the country in the three groups mentioned: 1) with the financial support of the Americans, the FNLA established itself to the north of the country; 2) with South African and American support, UNITA remained in the South and Southwestern parts of the country; and 3) with the support of former USSR and Cuba, the MPLA was structured in the capital (Silva 2016, 178).

## From Independence to the Tripartite Agreement (1975-1988)

In this environment, the country became independent. With different leaders, the three parties announced independence, from different places, on the same day: November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1975. Under the leadership of *Holden Roberto*, the FNLA proclaimed, in the province of *Bengo*, the independence of the People's Democratic Republic of Angola. *Agostinho Neto*, leader of the MPLA, announced in *Luanda* the independence of the People's Republic of Angola. And *Jonas Savimbi*, leader of UNITA, proclaimed Angola's independence from the province of *Huambo*. On the same day, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1975, Brazil acknowledged the government in Luanda, the first country to publicly announce its political position about the situation. Days later, several overseas countries recognized the MPLA as the representative of Angola's government, a fact that weakened the other two political parties. Weeks after, 23 African countries recognized the MPLA as Angola's legitimate government, followed by the UN in 1976 (Silva 2016, 179).

However, Angola was not free from ancient rivalries and continued to be a bustling stage for Cold War events. After independence, the country experienced a long period of civil war fought by two political parties: UNITA and MPLA. The FNLA lost strength and limited its activities to the political

arena. In this way, the chessboard changed once again and the forces in this period were arranged as follows: on the one hand there was the MPLA, supported by the former USSR and Cuba; and on the other hand, there was UNITA, supported by the U.S. and South Africa (Castellano da Silva 2017, 212).

MPLA's claim to power in Angola and its support for SWAPO's<sup>5</sup> political plea, which intended to liberate Namibia from South African domain, was not well digested in Pretoria and generated a disproportionate reaction from South Africa, materialized by the invasion of its troops in Angolan territory between 1975 and 1976, without, however, achieving the expected success (Dopcke 1998, 138). The United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) official position, issued in Resolution 387 on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1976, condemned South Africa's attacks in Angola and the use of Namibian territory to perpetrate such attacks.

In the beginning of the 1980s, Soviet Communism was already declining, emitting clear signs of economic fragility. Taking advantage of USSR's weakness, *Ronald Reagan* implemented an aggressive foreign policy, which sought to annihilate any aftermath of the Cold War. It was in this context that, from 1981 onwards, American and South African support for UNITA was reinforced. Consequently, Angola saw the increase of UNITA's activities in the country, in the same way that it witnessed new South African military incursions in its territory. Of all the advances, it is worth highlighting *Operation Protea*, the largest military invasion of Angola, which resulted in South African control over most of the *Cunene* province up to 1988 (Dopcke 1998, 141). In view of the signs of former USSR collapse and the participation of Americans in this conflict, Angola resorted to Cuban support, which proved to be instrumental in retaining the advancement of South African and UNITA forces in Angolan territory, maintaining the MPLA in power.

Instability in the region drew the attention of the international community and in trying to achieve peace, the Lusaka Accords were concluded in 1984, with the participation of Angola and South Africa. Such agreements predicted a cease-fire between the two countries during the Angolan Civil War and the South African War on the border. However, given the divergence of the actors involved and the various interests at stake, these agreements didn't last long, and violence was again restored. The following years were characterized by a more effective participation of Moscow in the conflict, expanding its contribution by sending experienced military instruc-

5 South-West Africa People's Organisation – an anticolonial movement that fought for the independence of Namibia from South Africa (Dopcke 1998, 138).

tors and commanders who, among other assignments, had the mission to lead, restructure and prepare Angolan troops for war. It was in this context that the *Operation Congress II* was launched in July 1985, headed by Soviets with the objective of destroying UNITA (Rocha 2013, 62). This dynamics of conflicts lasted until 1988, echoing, in a certain way, what was still little left of the Cold War.

However, an event of the international system was fundamental to change the path of the Civil War in Angola: the rise to power of *Mikhail Gorbachev* in March 1985. With the USSR going through a serious economic crisis, *Gorbachev* implemented two public policies: *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*, which were aimed at recovering the country's economy and at making public policy actions more transparent. In a liberal attitude, the Soviet leader became closer to the U.S., which contributed to the celebration of the Tripartite Agreement, signed between Angola, Cuba and South Africa on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1988, at the UN headquarters in New York. Also known as the New York Accords, such agreements, in short, provided for the following measures: 1) the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola; 2) the withdrawal of South-African troops from Namibia and the subsequent holding of elections in the country; and 3) the supervision of all actions by the UN (Dopcke 1998, 138).

On the basis of the Tripartite Agreement and the document issued by Angola's representative to the UN on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1988, the UNSC issued Resolution 626, on December 1988, establishing the UNAVEM I<sup>6</sup>, a peace operation created in order to oversee the proposals listed in the Tripartite Agreement. It was in this environment that UN operations in Angola began, in a country totally devastated and unstructured because it had been under Portuguese domain for 400 years. The civil war that took place shortly after independence was a hard blow for the Angolan people, who saw the country plunge into a crisis never witnessed before, of an ideological, economic, strategic and political nature.

## The Peace Process in Angola (1988-2002)

In this framework, Angola started a new cycle, with the participation of new actors, especially the UN, that would take 14 years to achieve its goal: the much anticipated peace, conquered in 2002 through the Luena Memorandum of Understanding. As in other occasions, events that took place in the international system were decisive and resonated in Angola, influencing

6 UNAVEM I – *United Nations Angola Verification Mission I*

positively and negatively in this process. A leading figure during this period, the UN made many efforts to solve the Angolan crisis, sometimes successfully, sometimes reaping failures. These efforts were put into practice by the following actions by the UNSC: 1) the issuing of 56 resolutions on the Angolan case; 2) the establishment of four peacekeeping operations (POs); and 3) the installation of a peace office in Angola.

## UNAVEM I (1989-1991)

UNAVEM I aimed at overseeing the withdrawal of 50,000 Cuban military from Angola, condition *sine qua non* for the other half of the Tripartite Agreement to be fulfilled: the withdrawal of the South African forces from Namibia, with the subsequent holding of general elections in that country. To this end, UNAVEM I was typical a mission in which observers designated by the UN supervised the departure of Fidel Castro's troops from Angola. Led by Brazilian general Péricles Ferreira Campos, UNAVEM I began its activities on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1989, and its works symbolically ended on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 1991, with the boarding of the chief of the last Cuban contingent in a plane to Havana: the general *Samuel Rodiles* (Krška 2007, 82).

The fall of the Berlin wall, which occurred on November 1989, represented the final blow for the communist regime and for the former USSR, which quickly collapsed. This had an impact in Angola, anticipating the withdrawal of Cuban troops before the predicted time (Penna Filho 2004, 37). On the other hand, the strengthening of the US position in the international system didn't change what had been agreed between Angolans, Cubans and South Africans. UNAVEM I's success in Angola owes much to also successful UNTAG<sup>7</sup> in Namibia. The key aspect guiding this chessboard lies in the role played by the Americans. Under the backdrop of globalization, it was strictly strategic for Americans to support any and all liberation movements, in order to consolidate itself as the only global superpower. In this way, even with the history of its support to South Africans in recent decades, the US changed sides and supported the Namibian claim, a fact that made all the difference in the UNAVEM I.

With regard to the role of the UN in Angola, only two resolutions have been issued by the UNSC: 1) Resolution 626, which created UNAVEM I; and 2) Resolution 628 from January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1989, which issued support for UNAVEM I activities. With the exception of two attacks by UNITA against

7 UNTAG – *United Nations Transition Assistance Group*

Cuban troops in 1990, which led to the death of ten Cuban soldiers and the suspension, for one month, of the activities for the withdrawal of Fidel Castro's forces in the country (Krška 2007, 82), UNAVEM I was carried out in a climate of relative stability and achieved the expected success. One should not minimize the role played by the Brazilian general in this mission, who, even after the episode involving UNITA and the Cuban troops, knew how to skillfully conduct these issues and take this peace operation to a good end.

Taking advantage of UNAVEM I's success and the favorable climate for advancing the peace process in Angola, the Bicesse Accords<sup>8</sup> were signed in May 1991. Mediated by the Portuguese, Americans and Soviets, such accords were signed by members of the MPLA and UNITA and predicted, among other things, the following actions: the cease-fire of both parties, the liberation of prisoners of war and political prisoners, the prohibition of external military assistance to the groups and the formation of new Armed Forces with members of both parties (Krška 2007, 83). It was in this atmosphere that the UNSC issued Resolution 696, in May 1991, establishing UNAVEM II<sup>9</sup>, a peace operation that had as its objective the accomplishment of the actions listed in the Bicesse Accords.

## UNAVEM II (1991-1995)

With an initial mandate of 17 months, the focus of the actions of UNAVEM II was the implementation of the Bicesse Accords. In order to do so, its actions started on June 1991. Due to several factors, it was prolonged and came to an end only on February 1995, when it was replaced by UNAVEM III. Without a clear and well-defined mandate, UNAVEM II did not achieve the expected success and UN's unpreparedness to interpret, plan and conduct missions in Angola was observed (Krška 2007, 84). Not coincidentally, UN failure was not limited to UNAVEM II, but other peacekeeping operations also had dissatisfactory results in that same period, recording episodes such as the Rwanda Genocide in 1994 and the massacre of the civilians on *Srebrenica*, in 1995 (Rodrigues, Migon 2017, 90). Regardless of the location of the operations, the problem was broader and the United Nations was responsible for it. Only a part of a larger system, what happened in Angola was just another example of what was happening in other UN peacekeeping operations during that same period.

8 Bicesse: Metropolitan Region of Lisbon.

9 UNAVEM II – *United Nations Angola Verification Mission II*



Initially composed of military observers, UNAVEM II increased its staff over time, and by October the mission already counted with 350 military observers, police monitors, military doctors, local and international civilian officials, a fixed-wing aircraft and twelve helicopters. Even with all this apparatus, the UN did not make the structural and conceptual changes necessary to meet the broadening of UNAVEM II's scope of action (Kenkel 2013, 129). The issuance of 17 resolutions by the UNSC in this period, sometimes adjusting to the local context, sometimes modifying the mission's mandate, sometimes extending it, sometimes showing concern over the events that took place in Angola, demonstrated UN's inefficiency at its highest level and reflected directly in field activities.

The result of this lack of preparation was a sequence of events that demonstrated the fragility of the institution at all levels. A remarkable event were the elections that happened on October 1992. Even though the MPLA was endorsed and legitimized by the United Nations, UNITA refused to recognize their victory in the polls. Alleging fraud in the elections, 11 former UNITA General Officers resigned from the new Angolan Armed Forces, which led to a new escalation of the crisis. Despite the countless diplomatic efforts made in the international system in 1992 and 1993 to assist in the resolution of the crisis, such as the arrival of the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, *Marrack Goulding*, in Angola, on November 1992, to mediate the conflict; and the holding of a meeting, under the tutelage of the UN, between members of UNITA and the Angolan Government on January 1993, in Ethiopia; as well as the holding of a meeting promoted by the Ivorian government on April 1993, in the Ivory Coast itself; none of these managed to put an end to the Angolan crisis (Krška 2007, 91).

On the side of state actors, Russia went through strong instability in the political and economic fields, registering its peak with the constitutional crisis of 1993, when the Russian Parliament opened an *impeachment* process against then president *Boris Yeltsin*, who in return dissolved the parliament and, additionally, bombed its premises (MonRillo 2012, 106). In this situation, Russia did not have the strength to interfere in the external arena, particularly in Angola. South Africans, in turn, were experiencing the end of the *apartheid regime* and were betting on *Nelson Mandela*, the ideal person to lead a process of reconciliation and restructuring of the national identity, aspects that were guiding South African politics at that time. The Portuguese, in turn, without their former strength and with enormous economic and social challenges, were going through a new phase in the European Union. Under the auspices of the *Maastricht Treaty*, Portugal was not economically prepared to adhere to the monetary union process imposed by that Treaty in 1992, a fact that

consumed the Government's attention and refrained it from getting involved in any overseas matters (Sousa 2000, 196). Americans, on the other hand, were internally worn out due to their participation in the Somalian conflict, in the Battle of Mogadishu, in 1993, which generated some military casualties, and major political losses, causing heavy criticism by the American media. With this unfortunate experience, the U.S. stepped aside from the African continent and left to the UN the task of resolving the Angolan Civil War.

Even with the disengagement of these countries, the international system resumed efforts in 1994 and numerous talks between the Angolan government and UNITA were held that year. That was how, on November 1994, the Lusaka Protocol was signed between the Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary-General of UNITA in Zambia. This Protocol sought to resume the measures agreed upon in the Bicesse Accords and which had been left aside (Purity et al 2007, 5). As a consequence, the UNSC issued Resolution 976 on February 1995, establishing UNAVEM III<sup>10</sup>, a peace operation aimed at implementing the actions of the Bicesse Accords and of the Lusaka Protocol.

## UNAVEM III (1995-1997)

In order to avoid the mistakes made in UNAVEM II and seeking to achieve the goals of the Bicesse Accords and the Lusaka Protocol, the UN established the largest peace operation registered until then: UNAVEM III, initially composed of 7,000 military personnel, local and international civilian officials, volunteers, military observers and police observers. It had an initial mandate of two years and began its activities on February 1995. Similarly to its predecessor, UNAVEM III had its mandate extended and its works ended only on June 1997.

Given the complexity of the international post-Cold War scene and pressed by its failures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Somalia and Angola, the UN, through its Secretary-General, *Boutros Boutros-Ghali*, prepared a document called "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace" in 1995, which emphasized the responsibility of the institution in resolving Third World conflicts and highlighted the three most important principles of peace operations: impartiality; consent of the parties; and the non-use of force, except for self-defense (Matijascic 2010, 187). However, this document did not provide elements of success for UNAVEM III. In a way similar to what

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10 UNAVEM III – *United Nations Angola Verification Mission III*

had occurred during UNAVEM II, the issuance of 10 UNSC Resolutions concerning UNAVEM III's mandate had little impact over actions in the field and once again demonstrated the inability of the institution in dealing with the Angolan crisis.

Part of a broader context, the Angolan Civil War continued to be an international conflict, but the actors of its chessboard had changed. The ideological conflict of the past gave way to globalization, which, among many aspects, enabled the emergence of several fragile states in the international system, greater mobility of people and the emergence of the *internet*, eliminating several borders. Faced with this and without the support of the USA, UNITA changed its strategy and took advantage of the gaps generated by globalization, remaining financially operational via the illegal sale of diamonds, carried out through a complex international network that involved African and Eastern European countries, as well as political leaders and other actors (Tiburcio 2009, 68). Despite its good intentions, UNAVEM III was not prepared to face this new conjuncture.

Focused on Angola, this peacekeeping operation was marked by slow advances and by the UN's inability to resolve Angolan instability. Among the advances obtained, the beginning of the incorporation of UNITA troops into the Angolan Armed Forces stands out. On the other hand, the lack of flexibility and the inability of the blue helmets in disarming the Angolan population was decisive to refrain UNAVEM III from achieving the expected success (Tiburcio 2009, 57). Little by little, UN troops understood the new international architecture that had been established and how the crisis of Angola was inserted in it.

In view of the relatively short period between UNAVEM II and UNAVEM III, the main state actors did not perform any sudden movements on the strategic board. Generally speaking, the globalization process was key in this period and each country continued to face its internal challenges. Under the leadership of *Boris Yeltsin*, Russia was still unstable, above all, because of the controversial privatization process that was underway, which was not able to solve the country's economic crisis. Under the leadership of *Nelson Mandela*, South Africa was still reorganizing itself internally and consolidating the political transition process through the approval of a new constitution in 1996. Portugal, on the other hand, had enormous difficulty in adjusting to the goals set by the European Union and did not demonstrate the necessary strength to intervene in the Angolan case. The Americans remained distant, limiting themselves to a meeting in U.S. territory on December 1995, involving the Angolan president and *Bill Clinton*, who expressed concern about

the unstable environment in Angola, mainly because it harmed the interests of North American companies installed in the African country, notably the oil company TEXACO, which had been targeted by UNITA attacks in 1995 (Cross 2015, 3).

Thus, the UN was acting in isolation and did not have the strength to solve the Angolan crisis. The unimpressive results reached by the United Nations, associated with the high cost to maintain UNAVEM III, with more than 7,000 military personnel deployed in Angola, provided considerable corrosion to UN's image in the international system. The rise of *Kofi Annan* to the position of Secretary General of the United Nations on January 1997 generated immediate repercussions in Angola, causing the reduction of the staff and a change in the *modus operandi* of blue helmets. The UNSC issued Resolution 1118 on June 1997, establishing MONUA<sup>11</sup>, a peace operation with the purpose of creating a stable environment, in order to assist in the national reconstruction.

## MONUA (1997-1999)

MONUA was implemented amid a climate of transformation and mistrust of the UN by the Angolan population, given the failures of the previous two operations. With an initial mandate of 7 months, MONUA began its activities on July 1997 and ended them only on February 1999. As on previous occasions, the United Nations had to extend the mandate of the mission, given its inability to achieve the objectives set by Resolution 1118 of the UNSC. In general terms, the purpose of MONUA was to implement a mission of military observers in Angola and gradually reduce the number of officers in the country (Tiburcio 2009, 62). During this period, the UN had a clear understanding of the national and international network involved in the Angolan crisis and considered that the solution to peace was in the hands of the Angolan government and of UNITA, that is, it wasn't in charge of the UN itself to lead this process (MacQueen 1998, 422).

Anyways, two events proved to be decisive for the MONUA trajectory in Angola. The first was the case of flight 806, which was shot down on December 26, 1998, while flying over the territory of UNITA, transporting United Nations staff. Seven days later, on January 02, 1999, another plane with 23 members of MONUA was again attacked when it flew over territory

<sup>11</sup> MONUA – *Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies à l'Angola* (United Nations Observer Mission in Angola).

controlled by UNITA. Militarily weakened, the UN couldn't do anything and was limited to condemning such attacks, with Resolutions 1219 and 1221, issued by the UNSC. Such facts accelerated the withdrawal of UN troops from Angola (Tiburcio 2009, 63). These facts evidenced a paradoxical stance by the UN regarding MONUA: on the one hand, it moved away from the field, reducing the number of blue helmets and limiting itself to observing local conflict; on the other hand, the UNSC issued 17 resolutions over a period of little over 18 months, a fact that was cause of concern for the UN in Angola, but proved to be totally ineffective, given the incidents that occurred.

In the international arena, there was little change on the pieces of the strategic chessboard. Driven by the Asian crisis of 1997, Russia experienced severe economic instability in 1998, when it declared a moratorium and had to renegotiate its foreign debt, revealing internal fragility and limiting its foreign actions. South Africans, in turn, were walking a step further in their process of internal reorganization, which would only end in 1999, final year of MONUA, meaning that they were not able to assist in the process of Angolan peace during this operation. Very sensitive to foreign markets, Portugal felt immediately the effects of the Asian and Russian crises, becoming again incapable of assisting Angola. Based on unsuccessful experiences in Somalia and under the neoliberal stance of Democrat *Bill Clinton*, the US continued distant from the African continent.

It was in this international conjuncture that the UN closed MONUA on February 1999, through Resolution 1229 of the UNSC. This peacekeeping mission ended a cycle of peacekeeping operations in Angolan territory, which involved an investment of approximately USD 1 billion by the United Nations in little over ten years. Even with this amount of investment, the UN was unable to solve the crisis, having achieved success only in UNAVEM I. The subsequent operations saw a series of errors committed by the UN at all levels: political, strategic and tactical. It can be pointed out that the UN was not prepared to face UNITA which, in a timely and intelligent manner, cleverly established itself taking advantage of the new international architecture instituted after globalization, maintaining its activities through the illegal trade of diamonds enabled by a complex international network of states and non-state actors. Successive failures in Angola, along with huge expenditure of resources by the UN in the African country, have made the international system pressure the institution to rethink its *modus operandi* for peacekeeping operations. Demoralized by the incidents involving planes during the MONUA, the United Nations had no other option than to withdraw from Angola, a process which was accelerated with the arrival of *Kofi Annan* to the UN's highest position.

## UNOA (1999-2002)

After the end of MONUA and still feeling minimally responsible for the maintenance of international peace, the UN decided to install an office in *Luanda* in order to closely monitor the instability in Angola and to assist, as far as possible, the resolution of the crisis in the country. Thus, on 15 October, 1999, Resolution 1268, of the UNSC established UNOA<sup>12</sup>. With thirty members, this office maintained relations with political, military and civilian authorities, and had the objective of seeking effective means to restore peace, to provide humanitarian assistance to the population affected by the crisis, to promote human rights to the Angolan people, among other actions. With a six-month initial mandate, UNOA had its mandate extended several times and finally ended on August 2002, in Angolan territory. Without the necessary force to influence the ongoing events, UNOA only played an important role in assisting the Angolan population, especially with those most affected by the war (Tiburcio 2009, 64).

Without UN interference, what was seen in Angola during the period when UNOA was operating in the country was a “War for Peace”, that is, a clash by an increasingly strengthened Angolan government, and by an increasingly weakened UNITA. UN paralysis in Angolan territory was not reflected in the main state actors involved in the Angolan conflict. During this period, the international system witnessed several important movements of change on the strategic chessboard, which reflected in Angola. Traumatized by the 1990s, Russia wanted to regain its status as *global player* and to that end the Russian population elected, on May 2000, *Vladimir Putin* as President. A nationalist, *Putin* had a leading role in reinserting Russia as an important *player* on the strategic chessboard of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Kulike 2014, 2). With great difficulty in adapting to the monetary requirements of the European Union, Portugal already gave the first signs in 2000 of the economic crisis that would hatch in 2008 in what is known as PIIGS (Blikstad, Oliveira 2015, 10) and so Portugal continued weak on the external plan. South Africans, in turn, were already reorganized, and under the leadership of *Thabo Mbeki* initiated a process that aimed at the stability of the region, strongly supporting the Angolan Government in resolving its crisis (Akanji 2016, 115). Americans were experiencing a change of direction in politics, with the rise of Republican *George W. Bush* replacing the Democrat *Bill Clinton* on the White House, an aspect that made a big difference in the course of the actions in Angola.

<sup>12</sup> UNOA – *United Nations Office in Angola*

However, an event that occurred in 2001 was central to the outcome of the Angolan episode: the bombings that occurred on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, on American soil (Souza, Nasser, Moraes, 2014, 7). Such attacks drew the attention of the international community to the danger that certain groups represented to states and, immediately, the European Union, Russia and several countries showed solidarity and support for the USA. The U.S. government's response to the attacks occurred unilaterally through a declaration issued by President *George W. Bush*, entitled War on Terror. And that was how the U.S. charged against *Al Qaeda*<sup>13</sup>, the group that took responsibility for the attacks.

Focused on dismantling *Al Qaeda*, Americans found that the group was highly internationalized and relied on a clandestine network, which profited from illegal sales of armaments, trafficking of drugs, diamonds and other products. That is, the same international network that supported *Al Qaeda*, also nourished UNITA. As previously described, such a network consisted of states, political figures and certain non-state actors. Thus, the USA embarked on a heavy combat of illegal arms trade, drug trafficking and of certain states, identified as providers of support for these groups. Based on these arguments, and without UN approval, American military operations began in Afghanistan in 2001 and Plan Colombia started in 2002.

The results of these actions could be perceived in the short, medium and long terms throughout the planet, and due to a highly interconnected world, their effects were also felt in Angola. As UNITA depended on the illegal trade of diamonds to keep its activities, and given the American fight against this network, the Angolan group quickly weakened logistically and militarily. The outcome of this was favorably for the Angolan government, which emerged victorious after the elimination of *Jonas Savimbi* on February 22, 2002, due to a confrontation between government troops and UNITA forces in the province of *Moxico*. No wonder, 45 days later, on April 04, 2002, the Angolan government and the remnants of UNITA signed the Luena Memorandum of Understanding, putting an end to a long period of instability in the country (Visentini 2012, 208). Without interfering in the Angolan peace process, UNOA maintained its activities in Angolan territory until August 2002, when it was replaced by UNMA<sup>14</sup> through Resolution 1433 of the UNSC from August 15, 2002.

13 International network, which like the international crime supermafias, has tentacles all over the world, receiving funding from drug traffic in Central Asia (opium production and trafficking) and money laundering (Loureiro dos Santos, 2002, 99).

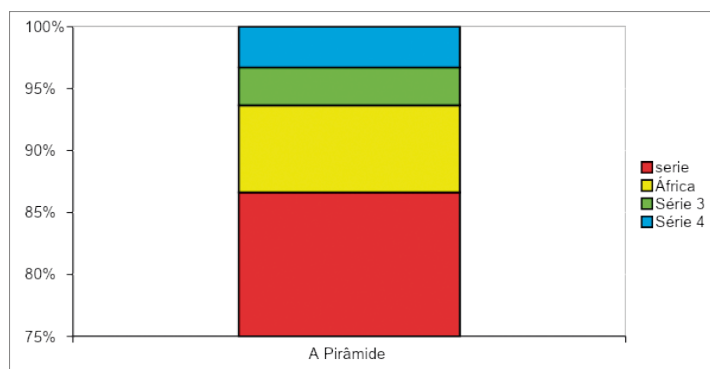
14 English Acronym, *United Mission in Angola*.



## Conclusions

The final phase of this research begins by reaffirming the purpose of this article: to understand the peace process in Angola, correlating it with the main facts that occurred in the international system that could have influenced this process. To this end, we adopted the understanding that the international system as a complex system that has non-linear relations in its structure. Thus, the first finding in this study is that the construction of peace in Angola is a complex process that has not begun with the UN. The participation of the United Nations from 1988 is only part of an iceberg which has its bases in 1576, with the founding of the city of São Paulo de Luanda and has its tip in 2002, with the signature of the Luena Memorandum:

**Chart 1: The Angolan Peace Process**



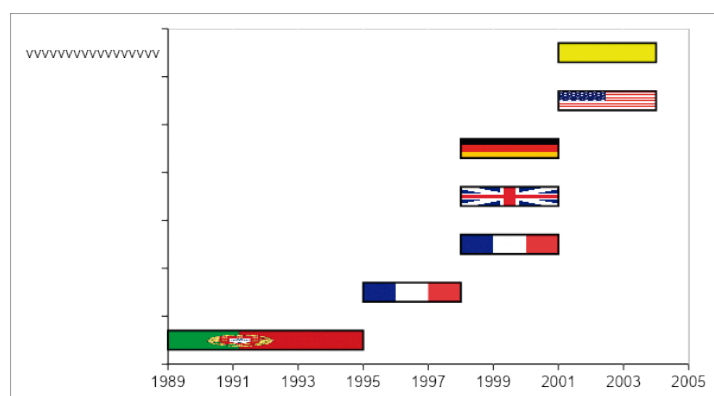
**Source:** Created by the authors, 2018.

In general, Chart 1 shows us that the peace process in Angola can be divided into four major periods: 1) the first one is 369 years long and begins with the founding of the city of São Paulo in Luanda in 1576 and ends with the end of the Second World War; 2) the second is 30 years long and begins right after the Second World War, in 1945, ending with the proclamation of Angolan independence, in 1975; 3) the third and shortest of all and covers the period from Angolan independence to The New York Accords, signed in 1988; and 4) the fourth covers the period between 1988 and 2002, a time when the UN was present in the African country.

Due to the complexity of the Angolan peace process, its constituent parts need to be analyzed individually, considering the difference in form,

context, extent and composition with which each one of them influenced the construction of Angolan peace throughout history. In this sense, it is noted that the first period is strongly marked the link between Portugal and Angola, when the African country was under the condition of an African colony of the Portuguese Empire for almost 400 years, an aspect that profoundly marked the *ethos* of Angolan society and which gave special and particular contours to the process of independence experienced in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even under this influence, Angola wasn't immune to what occurred on the planet and some of the events that occurred on the international system could also be perceived in the African country:

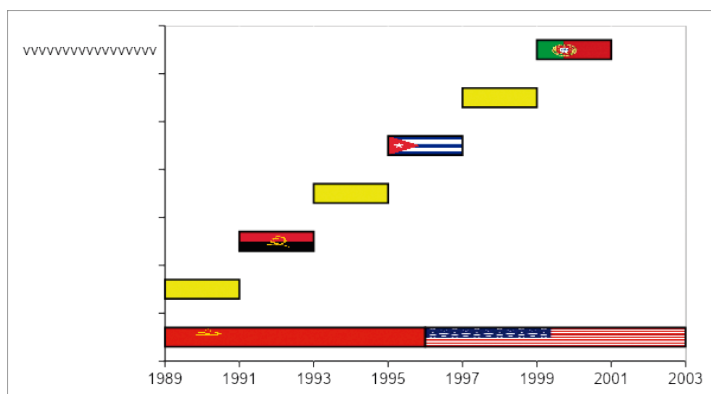
**Chart 2: The 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of the Angolan Peace Process**



**Source:** Created by the authors, 2018.

In short, Chart 2 shows us the evolution of the first phase of the peace process during the period between 1976 and 1945, based on the analysis of certain facts that occurred in the international system and how they reflected in Angola. In this view, the great influence of European countries in the Angola can be noted.

Moving to the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Angolan peace process, it began after the end of the Second World War and ended with the independence of Angola in 1975. As in the first phase, this one was not separated of the international system, having received strong influences from the international context:

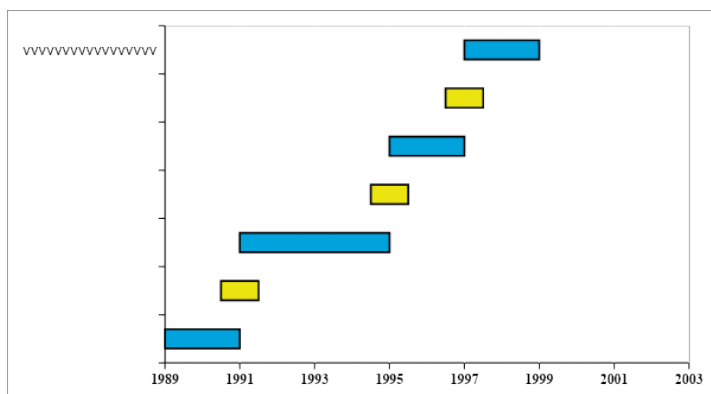
**Chart 3: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the Angolan Peace Process**

Source: Created by the authors, 2018.

Chart 3 reveals that throughout this period, the Angolan peace process was under the influence of the Cold War, as a place where bipolar confrontation gained special contours. Important facts, such as the creation of the UN in 1945, which legitimated the independence of all African countries at that time, including that of Angola, as well as the Bandung Conference held in 1954, which sparked African nationalism alongside Angolan political movements, should not be discarded. The Missile Crisis involving Cuba reveals the peak of the bipolar confrontation, an episode that reflected directly in Angola, especially in the formation of Angolan political groups, leading figures in the process of independence. In the following decade, the oil crisis in 1973 triggered a cascade movement, setting off the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in 1974 and the Angolan independence in 1975.

With regard to the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Angolan peace process, it was noted that it began with the proclamation of the country's independence and ended with the establishment of the Tripartite Agreement, signed between Angola, Cuba and South Africa on December 22, 1988, at the UN headquarters in New York. As in the previous phase, the peace process in this period was strongly influenced by the international conjuncture:



**Chart 5: The 4<sup>th</sup> Phase of the Angolan Peace Process**

Source: Own Elaboration, 2018.

The last phase of the Angolan peace process reveals the leading role of the UN in trying to achieve stability in Angola. As previously verified, such leading role was not sufficiently capable of ending the crisis in the country. Making all sorts of mistakes, the UN succeeded only in UNAVEM I. Subsequent peacekeeping operations demonstrated the fragility of the United Nations in this sort of mission. However, the central episode in the resolution of the Angolan crisis, as verified by this study, were the attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 in the USA, which triggered a series of actions and events in the international system, that would lead to the weakening of UNITA. Weakened, UNITA did not have the capacity to confront the Angolan Government's troops in the same level and quickly lost territory until it collapsed militarily with the death of its leader, *Jonas Savimbi*, during a battle in the province of *Moxico* against Angolan Armed Forces. Only with this outcome was it possible to establish the Luena Memorandum of Understanding between the Angolan Government and UNITA on April 04, 2002, and celebrate the much awaited peace in the country.

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**Abstract**

This is a bibliographical and documentary research that supports the reflection on the long peace process in Angola. From the historical reflection and the systematized analysis of sources, it is sought to understand the role of the international actors in the process under examination. Although in an incipient way, it was tried to study the subject in the light of the paradigm of complexity, assuming, at least, the plurality of actors and perspectives. The peace missions proposed by the United Nations for the region were further elaborated, which were synthesized in their own items, which is believed to bring additional contribution, especially as an introduction to the study of the subject.

**Keywords**

Africa; Angola; Peace Missions; Defense Studies.

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