Russian Foreign Policy Towards Africa: Historical Background and Future Prospects

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ISTANBUL TICARET UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

INTERNATIONEL RELATIONS AND AFRICAN STUDIES

MASTER'S THESIS

SUPERVISOR

ASSIST. PROF. DR. KAMALA VALIYEVA

Istanbul, 2023

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ACCEPTANCE

We, as members of the jury, attest to the following: Russian foreign policy towards Africa: historical background and future prospects.

From AMIRA GOUMIDI, pleaded the case on .../.../2023 and found satisfactory to be awarded a master's degree.

Members of the jury

DECLARATION

I, AMIRA GOUMIDI, hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Russian Foreign Policy towards Africa: Historical Background and Future Prospects” was under the supervision and direction of Assist. Prof. Dr. Kamala Valiyeva. In addition, I prepared it completely myself, and every quote was restricted by the obligations and rules followed in writing the thesis at the Institute of Social Sciences. I confirm that I allow the presence of the paper and electronic copy of my dissertation in the archives of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul Commercial University.

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- Only Istanbul Ticaret University can accept my thesis.

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Signature

AMIRA GOUMIDI

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an in-depth analysis of Russian foreign policy towards Africa by examining the historical background and reflecting on the future prospects for this engagement. The thesis begins by providing an overview of the history of Russian-African relationships, highlighting Russia's support for African liberation movements during the Soviet era. The thesis then discusses the recent resurgence of Russian involvement in Africa and examines the motives and strategies behind it.

The thesis focuses on the major factors and strategies that have contributed to the recent resurgence of Russian involvement in Africa, including political, economic, and social factors. The thesis also analyses the position of Western countries on the growing Russian influence in Africa It highlights the concerns of America, France and China about expanding the Russian state's presence on the continent.

The study assesses the current state of Russian-African relations, and studies diplomatic and economic relations between Russia and African nations and moreover the potential for growth of Russian-African trade and investment. The thesis also discusses challenges to Russian engagement in Africa, including political instability, security threats, and lack of institutional capacity .Finally, this study concludes by examining the future prospects for Russian engagement in Africa and highlighting the opportunities and challenges facing this involvement.

Against this backdrop, the thesis argues that meeting these challenges will require careful planning, cooperation and investment from both Russia and African countries. Furthermore, the thesis contends that Russia's presence in Africa should be viewed as an opportunity to further collaboration on mutually beneficial topics such as climate change and international security.

Keywords*:* *Russia, Africa, Russia's foreign policy, competition for Africa, international system*

ÖZET

Bu yüksek lisans tezi, Rusya'nın Afrika'ya yönelik dış politikasının derinlemesine bir analizini sunmakta ve bu politikanın tarihsel arka planını ve geleceğe yönelik beklentileri incelemektedir. Tez, Rusya-Afrika ilişkilerinin tarihine genel bir bakış sunarak, Rusya'nın Sovyet döneminde Afrika kurtuluş hareketlerine verdiği desteği vurgulayarak başlamaktadır. Tez, Rusya'nın Afrika'ya yönelik ilgisinin yakın zamanda yeniden canlanmasını tartışmakta ve yenilenen Afrika politikasının temelindeki etkenleri ve stratejileri incelemektedir.

Tez, siyasi, ekonomik ve sosyal faktörler de dahil olmak üzere, Rusya'nın Afrika'daki varlığının son zamanlarda yeniden canlanmasına katkıda bulunan faktörleri ve stratejileri incelemektedir. Aynı zamanda Batılı ülkelerin Afrika'da artan Rus etkisine ilişkin tutumlarını ele alınmakta ve bu bağlamda ABD, Fransa ve Çin'in kıtadaki Rusya varlığının genişlemesi konusundaki endişeleri irdelenmektedir.

Çalışma, Rusya-Afrika ilişkilerinin mevcut durumunu değerlendirmekte ve Rusya ile Afrika ülkeleri arasındaki diplomatik ve ekonomik ilişkilerin yanı sıra Rusya-Afrika ticaret ve yatırımının büyüme potansiyelini tahlil etmektedir. Tez ayrıca, siyasi istikrarsızlık, güvenlik tehditleri ve kurumsal kapasite eksikliği dahil olmak üzere Rusya'nın Afrika'daki politikalarına yönelik zorlukları tartışmaktadır. Son olarak çalışma, Rusya'nın Afrika politikasına yönelik gelecekteki beklentileri inceleyerek Rusya'nın karşı karşıya olduğu fırsat ve zorlukları analiz etmektedir.

Bu tahlil temelinde tezde, mevcut zorlukları aşmanın hem Rusya hem de Afrika ülkelerinin işbirliği çabalarını artırmaları sonucu mümkün olacağı tezi ileri sürülmekte ve savunulmaktadır. Ayrıca tez, Rusya'nın Afrika'daki varlığının, iklim değişikliği ve uluslararası güvenlik gibi karşılıklı çıkarları ilgilendiren konularda işbirliğini artırmak için bir fırsat olarak görülmesi gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Rusya, Afrika, Rus, dış politikası, Afrika'da rekabet, uluslararası sistem*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACFTA:	African Continental Free Trade Area
ANC:	African National Congress
AU:	African Union
AUC:	African Union Commission
BRI:	The Belt and Road Initiative
BRIC:	Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
BRICS:	South Africa, Brazil, Russia, India, and China
CAADP:	Agriculture Development Programme
CAR:	Central African Republic
CHVK:	Wagner Group
CPSU:	Community and Public Sector Union
EAEU:	Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU or EEU)
EU:	European Union
FOCAC:	Forum on China–Africa Cooperation
G5:	Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GRU:	The Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
KGB:	Committee for State Security
MPLA:	Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEPAD:	African Union Development Agency
NLC:	India Limited
PARADE:	Pan-African organization
PMC:	Private Military Company
RGRK:	Voice of Russia
RIZ:	Russian Industrial Zone

SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals
TIKA:	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
US:	United States
USSR:	Soviet Union
ZAPU:	Zimbabwe African People’s Union

INTRODUCTION

During the 1990s, the Russian Federation suffered both internally, with the rise of separatist movements, and at the regional level, with the emergence of new states on its borders. Russia faced a number of internal and external difficulties and problems that affected its presence in its spheres of influence, especially in Africa. Former parts of the Soviet Union became members of NATO. This increased Russia's isolation from its regional surroundings. The level of threat from Western countries (NATO) has increased. However, in 2008, Russia intervened in Georgia, and later in 2014, it intervened in Ukraine and announced the annexation of Crimea.

This was a direct declaration of Russia's renaissance as a world power with its place in the global international system. In addition, the gradual return to spheres of influence, especially in Africa, because it is rich in strategic natural resources like oil and gas, and as a market of financial power, that makes the countries of the region a region for investments as well. This is especially true in the realm of arms. There are numerous religious conflicts in the region's countries.

Since the fall of the USSR (Soviet Union), the Russian Federation has attempted to maintain its position in the globe and create formative policies in order to reassert itself as a major international force on the world arena.

Africa is therefore a crucial battleground for contending for global power influence in the future decades, not only because of the region's tremendous potential for short- to medium-term economic growth, but also and especially to secure access to riches. Natural resources discovered there are a requirement for long-term development strategies.

Russia's interest in Africa extends beyond the continent's natural riches. Russia's reserves are substantial. However, the development of Russia’s vast energy resources will be much more expensive than the development of the same resources in Africa. The potential of Africa and its population of over a billion people as a customer of Russian products and services reinforces this.

Furthermore, it is important to remember that Russia aided the African people in their battle for independence, the development of national industries, and the development of human resources. Russia may profit from these relationships, especially as alumni of African Soviet colleges continue to hold prominent positions in the various nations.

Therefore, the Great Powers are constantly seeking presence in this region through several ways (direct presence, investments, building loyal governments) Russia will continue to strive to improve its influence in the area. As a result, this issue deals with the strategy that the Russian Federation has begun to implement in Africa since 2009, and the signs of Russia’s return as a superpower in the international order.

Since the beginning of the year 2000, when Vladimir Putin officially assumed power in Russia, signs of a strong return to Russian interest in the brown continent began, in an effort to reestablish influence on the African continent, which were largely absent after the end. The Cold War with the United States of America and the collapse of the Soviet giant.

Russia has a long and complicated history of engagement with Africa that dates back to the Soviet era. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union attempted to increase its influence in Africa by backing left-wing regimes and independence groups. Russia's role in Africa fell considerably after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but in recent years, Russia has resumed its engagement with African countries, notably in areas such as energy, mining, and infrastructure.

This thesis will present an outline of Russia's foreign policy toward Africa and will investigate the current situation of the relationship between Russia and African countries. Furthermore, we will attempt to investigate Russia's future possibilities in Africa, the problems that Russia may face, and the present potential for further involvement and collaboration between Russia and African nations.

The aim of this study is to provide an in-depth analysis of Russian foreign policy towards Africa, examining the historical background and future prospects of this engagement. The study will be designed as follows to attain this goal.

First, the research will present an account of Russian-African ties throughout history, emphasising Russia's support for African liberation movements throughout the Soviet era .During this period, Russia established strong ties with several African countries, providing military aid, technical assistance, and support for education, healthcare, and infrastructure development. This section will examine the historical roots of Russian engagement in Africa, and provide an understanding of the political, economic, and social factors that drove this engagement.

Second, the study will examine the factors and strategies that have contributed to the recent resurgence of Russian engagement in Africa. This section will analyse the political, economic, and social factors that have led Russia to re-engage with Africa after a period of relative disinterest. It will also examine the various strategies that Russia has employed, including political exploitation, economic opportunity, cultural and educational ties, and security and military assistance through the Wagner Group.

Third, the study will analyse the position of Western countries on the growing Russian influence in Africa. This section will look at the United States' concerns, France, and China regarding Russia is expanding presence in the region. It will also analyse the potential for conflict and competition between Russia and other global powers in Africa and assess the implications of this for Russia’s engagement in the region.

Fourth, the study will assess the present condition of ties between Russia and Africa, examining, diplomatic and economic ties between Russia and African countries this section will examine the possibilities for increased trade and investment between African nations and Russia, as well as the limitations that Russian participation in Africa faces. Including political instability, security threats, and lack of institutional capacity.

Finally, the study will conclude by examining the future prospects of Russian engagement in Africa, highlighting the opportunities and challenges facing this engagement. This section will argue that addressing these challenges will require careful planning, cooperation, and investment from both Russia and African countries. It will also argue that Russia's engagement in Africa should be seen as an opportunity for increased cooperation and collaboration on issues of mutual interest, such as international security.

Overall, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of Russian foreign policy towards Africa, highlighting the historical background, drivers and motivations, and future prospects of Russian engagement in the region. The study shows a commitment to thorough research and analysis and aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complex dynamics of global politics and international relations in the 21st century.

The significance of the subject:

This study belongs to the field of international relations and focuses on one among the most important topics in foreign policy: Russia's African foreign policy. Understanding the determinants that shape this policy is crucial, particularly in light of the continent's rising economic and geopolitical importance. By examining Russia's foreign policy towards Africa, The purpose of this research is to provide light on the motivations behind this policy and the factors that influence it.

Scientific value of the study:

This study seeks to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding Russia's African foreign policy by analysing its historical background and future prospects. By drawing on previous studies, this research aims to identify the key determinants Russia's

African foreign policy, including economic interests, historical ties, and strategic priorities. The study also uses various theories and approaches to analyse the phenomenon, making it an important contribution to the field of international relations.

The historical context of Russia's foreign policy toward Africa is one of its most important components. Russia's involvement in Africa extends back to the Soviet era when it gave military and economic aid to a number of African countries. This past has shaped Russia's foreign policy toward Africa, with Russia attempting to preserve its influence in the continent. Russia's present attitude to Africa is partly motivated by economic goals, such as access to natural resources and new markets for Russian firms. As a result, Russia has been working hard to get access to natural resources in Africa, notably in the energy industry. As a result, Russian energy corporations have expanded significantly in Africa, with Russia investing considerably in oil and gas projects in nations such as Egypt, Algeria, and Mozambique.

Another important aspect of Russia’s current approach to Africa is a focus on building long-term partnerships with African countries based on mutual interests and respect. This approach is grounded in Russia’s desire to establish itself as a strategic partner for African countries and promote a multipolar world order that challenges Western dominance Russia sees Africa as a vital component in the evolving multipolar world order and has been working hard to strengthen its relationship with the continent.

The practical value of this study lies in its potential to inform decision-making and contribute to the development of more effective policies. By examining the historical background and future prospects of Russia’s foreign policy towards Africa, this study aims to provide insights that can help African countries and other stakeholders had better understand Russia’s motivations and objectives. It can also assist in identifying areas of mutual interest and prospects for collaboration between Russia and African nations.

Understanding Russia’s foreign policy towards Africa is crucial, given the continent’s growing economic and strategic importance. By examining the historical background and future prospects of Russia’s foreign policy towards Africa, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the factors that shape this

policy. The study's findings can contribute to the development of policies that are more effective and deeper cooperation between Russia and African countries.

Reasons for choosing the topic:

We chose to focus on Russian foreign policy towards Africa for both subjective and objective reasons. Subjectively, we were motivated by our interest in international relations and the policies of major powers, particularly in regions that are currently undergoing significant transformations and changes. Africa is one such region, with its growing economic and strategic importance making it a critical area of focus for many global powers.

Objectively, the scientific importance of this topic lies in its potential to shed light on Russia's role in the international system and its engagement with African countries. Understanding the historical background and future prospects of Russia's foreign policy towards Africa can provide insights into the motivations behind this policy and the factors that shape it. This understanding can contribute to the development of more effective policies and deeper cooperation between Russia and African countries, and has the potential to enhance regional economic growth and stability.

Moreover, this study can also help address the lack of Arabic references on the topic, providing a valuable addition to the existing literature and contributing to the development of a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of international relations in the region. By examining the historical background and future prospects of Russian foreign policy towards Africa, this study can also help promote cross-cultural understanding and dialogue, highlighting the intersections between different cultures and histories.

Therefore, the reasons for choosing the topic of Russian foreign policy towards Africa are both subjective and objective, reflecting our interest in international relations and the need for a deeper understanding of the region's growing economic and strategic importance. By examining the historical background and future prospects of Russian foreign policy towards Africa, this study can contribute to the development of more effective policies and deeper cooperation between Russia and African countries, while also promoting cross-cultural understanding and dialogue.

Research Question:

The approach of the study is to examine the historical roots of Russian involvement in Africa, analyse recent developments, assess the position of other world powers, and study the current situation and future prospects of Russian-African relations. The study's focus on both the opportunities and challenges of Russian engagement in Africa is important, as it provides a balanced perspective on the issue. In general, based on the foregoing, we will rely on a set of questions.

.1What are the historical roots of Russian involvement in Africa، and how have these relations developed over time?

.2What factors have contributed to Russia's recent return to engagement with Africa، and what strategies has Russia used to deepen its relations with the continent?

.3How have Western countries responded to the growing Russian presence in Africa، and what are the implications of this for Russian participation in the region.

.4What are the current diplomatic and economic relations between Russia and African countries، and what are the prospects for the growth of Russian-African trade and investment?

.5What are the challenges to Russian engagement in Africa، including political instability، security threats، and lack of institutional capacity، and how can they be addressed?

.6What are the possible future paths for Russian involvement in Africa?

Objectives of the study:

Within this context, the report investigates Russia's present diplomatic and economic connections with African nations, as well as the potential for increased Russian-African trade and investment.In doing so, the study pursues several objectives:

The research begins first by highlighting or clarifying the continuity of Russia's historical relations with African countries, dating back to the Soviet era, in shaping its

foreign policy towards the continent in the future. This will be characterized by a focus on cooperation in areas such as energy security, mineral resources, and arms trade.

Secondly, the study attempts at illustrating changing global geopolitical landscape which pushes Russia to take a more assertive stance in its foreign policy towards the continent. This will include increased involvement in areas such as development aid, humanitarian aid, and peacekeeping.

Finally, the study strives to assert that Russia's foreign policy towards Africa will be driven by the desire to counterbalance Western influence on the continent. This will include seeking strategic partnerships with African countries to advance their interests in the region.

Research Methodology:

This study uses a qualitative research design to investigate Russian foreign policy towards Africa, tracing its historical background and examining the motives and strategies behind its recent resurgence of involvement. The primary data sources used in this study include academic journals, books, government reports, and other relevant sources.

The data collection process included a detailed evaluation of the literature of academic journals, books, and government reports related to Russian foreign policy towards Africa. The sources were identified through searches of online databases, such as Google Scholar and JSTOR, as well as through manual searches of library catalogues and relevant websites. The obtained material was analyzed using thematic analysis in order to discover important themes and patterns associated with the Russian intervention in Africa.

In this study, we did not use a sample as no primary data was collected. Instead, we did a thorough examination of relevant academic journals' material, books, government reports, as well as other pertinent sources related to Russian foreign policy towards Africa. The thematic analysis involved identifying and categorizing the data into key themes, which were then analysed to identify patterns and trends.

One of the limitations of this study is that it relies solely on a qualitative research design and secondary data sources. This may restrict the extent and depth of the study and offer an incomplete knowledge of Russia's foreign policy toward Africa.

Theoretical approach of the study:

To comprehend Russia's foreign policy toward Africa, this research took a theoretical approach that included analysing many views. In this research, we relied on two approaches

.*Realistic Perspective:* The realistic perspective focuses on power and self-interest as the driving forces behind states' actions in the international system. In the context of Russia's engagement in Africa, this perspective suggests that Russia's motivations stem from its pursuit of national security, economic interests, and geopolitical influence.

From a realist standpoint, Russia's presence in Africa can be seen as a strategic move to counterbalance Western influence and expand its own sphere of influence. This is particularly relevant in regions where Russia perceives Western powers, such as the United States and European Union, as encroaching on its traditional spheres of influence. By establishing closer ties with African countries, Russia can gain strategic advantages, such as access to resources, military bases, and diplomatic support.

Realism also highlights the importance of power politics and competition among states. Russia's engagement in Africa can be seen as part of its broader strategy to challenge the unipolar world order dominated by the West and assert itself as a major global player. By diversifying its partnerships and expanding its presence in Africa, Russia aims to increase its advantage in international affairs and strengthen its position as a counterweight to Western hegemony.

. *Constructivist Perspective:* The constructivist perspective emphasizes the role of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping states' behavior. In the case of Russia's engagement in Africa, this perspective considers how Russian identity, historical narratives, and cultural factors influence its foreign policy decisions.

From a constructivist standpoint, Russia's connection to Africa can be understood as part of its self-perception as a great power with global reach. Russian leaders and society often emphasize their country's historical role and cultural ties to Africa, which contribute to a sense of national identity and pride. This self-perception as a global power shapes Russia's foreign policy objectives, including its engagement in Africa.

Constructivism also acknowledges the influence of international norms and perceptions on states' actions. Russia's engagement in Africa can be seen as a response to Western norms and perceptions that marginalize or underestimate Russia's global standing. By actively engaging in Africa, Russia seeks to challenge the existing international order and assert its influence as a major player on the global stage.

Moreover, the constructivist perspective recognizes the role of social interactions and networks in shaping states' behavior. Russia's engagement in Africa involves diplomatic efforts, cultural exchanges, and economic cooperation, which contribute to the formation of new norms and relationships. Through these interactions, Russia aims to shape the narrative surrounding its role in Africa and forge alliances with African countries that align with its interests.

Literature Review

Russian foreign policy toward Africa has piqued the interest of many in recent years, as Russia aims to increase its influence and economic relations with African countries.Scholars have analyzed various aspects of Russia’s engagement with Africa, including its historical background, current strategies, and future prospects. This survey of the literature draws on a variety of prior research to give a complete picture of Russia's African foreign policy. The studies selected for this review include reports by think tanks such as the Valdai Discussion Club, as well as academic articles by scholars such as Alexandra Arkhangelskaya, Vladimir Shubin, and H.I. Abdallah. They cover topics such as the continuity and change in Russia’s Africa policy since the Soviet era, Russia's energy diplomacy, weaponry exports, and African mineral resource markets, and the role of anti-imperialism, patronage, and Russia's comeback to Africa is characterized by opportunism. By synthesizing the key findings and insights from these studies, This literature assessment is divided into various sections in order to give a

more comprehensive understanding of Russia's foreign policy toward Africa and its ramifications for African countries and the international system.

Historical Background of Russia's Africa policy

Russia's historical relations with Africa extend back to the Soviet era, when Moscow assisted several African countries with economic and military assistance. "Russia's historical ties to Africa were established during the Soviet era, when the USSR provided economic and military assistance to various African countries," according to the Valdai Discussion Club Report .(Balytnikov, et.la, 2019).

However, with the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia's involvement in Africa dwindled substantially. There has been a revived interest in Africa in recent years, driven by a range of economic and strategic factors. The Valdai Discussion Club Report highlights Russia's focus on building long-term partnerships with African countries based on mutual interests and respect. The report argues, "Russia's focus on Africa is driven by a desire to build long-term partnerships with African countries based on mutual interests and respect. This approach is grounded in Russia's historical ties with Africa, which continue to shape its foreign policy towards the continent". (Balytnikov, et.la, 2019).

Economic Interests of Russia in Africa

Russia's involvement in Africa is motivated by a variety of economic goals, including access to natural resources and new markets for Russian businesses. According to Alexandra Arkhangelskaya and Vladimir Shubin, Russia's Africa strategy is motivated by a desire to diversify economic connections and gain access to new markets, notably in the energy and mineral industries. According to their research, "Russia's focus on Africa is driven by a desire to diversify its economic ties and access new markets, particularly in the energy and mineral sectors". (Arkhangelskaya, A., & Shubin, V, 2015). Similarly, Theo Neethling's research on Russia's new relationship with Africa highlights the importance of energy diplomacy, military exports, and mineral resource markets in influencing Russia's Africa strategy. According to Neethling, "Russia's engagement with Africa is motivated by a variety of economic interests, including access to natural resources and new markets for Russian firms." (Neethling, T, 2017).

Geopolitical Considerations behind Russia's Africa Policy

Russia's engagement with Africa is also shaped by a range of geopolitical considerations. H.I. Abdallah and A. Abdul Salam suggest that Russia is seeking to position itself as a strategic partner for African countries and promote a multipolar world order that challenges Western dominance. According to their research, "Russia is seeking to position itself as a strategic partner for African countries and promote a multipolar world order that challenges Western dominance" (Abdallah, H. I., & Abdul Salam, A, 2017). Russia's engagement with Africa can also be seen as part of a broader effort to expand its global influence and project itself as a major power. The authors of the Valdai Discussion Club Report argue that "Russia's interest in developing relations with Africa is part of its broader foreign policy strategy". (Balytnikov, et.la, 2019).

Russia's Africa Policy: Consistency and Change

Vladimir Shubin's research on the continuity and change in Russia's Africa policy since the Soviet period emphasizes the significance of historical linkages and ideological considerations in determining present Russian foreign policy toward Africa. While Russia's connection with Africa has developed in recent years, there are many similarities to the Soviet era. "Russia's approach to Africa reflects long-standing historical ties and ideological affinities that have endured through times of change," writes Shubin. (Shubin, V, 2017, p. 6) Allard Duursma and Niklas Masuhr say that Russia's return to Africa is motivated by anti-imperialism, patronage, and opportunism, and that it must be understood in the light of a wider historical and global context. They claim, "Russia's return to Africa is motivated by a mix of anti-imperialism, patronage, and opportunism, and must be understood in the context of a broader historical and global context." (Duursma, A., & Masuhr, N, 2018, p. 3) According to Paul Stronski's research on Russia's late return to Africa, Russia's engagement with Africa has been motivated by a combination of economic and political concerns, including the desire to secure access to natural resources and counteract Western influence. According to Stronski, "Russia's return to Africa has been motivated by a combination of economic and political factors, including the need to secure access to natural resources and counterbalance Western influence (Stronski, P, 2019).

Russia’s approach to Africa is characterized by a range of strategies and approaches. The Valdai Discussion Club Report highlights Russia’s focus on building long-term partnerships with African countries based on mutual interests and respect. This approach is grounded in Russia’s historical ties with Africa, which continue to shape its foreign policy towards the continent. According to the report, “Russia is pursuing a pragmatic, multi-vector approach to Africa, seeking to build long-term partnerships with African countries based on mutual interests and respect” (Balytnikov, et.la, 2019). According to Hakan Fidan and Bülent Aras, Russia's return to Africa is motivated by a mix of economic interests, diplomatic aspirations, and a desire to represent itself as a global force. "Russia's engagement with Africa is motivated by a mix of economic interests, diplomatic ambitions, and a desire to project itself as a global power," they write. (Fidan, H., and B. Aras ,2018). As stated by Arnaud Kalika, Russia's engagement with Africa is partly motivated by a desire to offset Chinese economic and political strength. "Russia sees China's growing influence in Africa as a challenge to its own interests," writes Kalika, "and is seeking to counterbalance Chinese economic and political power in the region "(Kalika, A, 2018).

One of the main features of Russia's present approach to Africa is an emphasis on long-term cooperation with African countries based on common interests and respect. According to Mohamed Zakaria Russia’s engagement with Africa is driven by a desire to establish itself as a strategic partner for African countries and promote a multipolar world order that challenges Western dominance. This approach is grounded in Russia’s historical ties with Africa, which continue to shape its foreign policy towards the continent (Zakaria, M, 2022).

Diversifying Economic Ties

In addition to historical ties, Russia's engagement with Africa is also motivated by a variety of economic concerns, including access to natural resources and new markets for Russian companies. According to Abbas Muhammad Salih Abbas, Russia’s approach to Africa reflects a desire to diversify its economic ties and access new markets, particularly in the energy and mineral sectors (Salih Abbas, A.M, 2018).

Al-Kindi further points out that Russia's engagement with Africa is motivated by a combination of economic and political concerns, such as the need to secure access to natural resources and counteract Western influence (Al-Kindi, 2022).

Energy Diplomacy and Arms Exports

One of the key components of Russia's current approach to Africa is a focus on energy diplomacy. As noted by Doroshenko, Russia has been actively seeking to secure access to natural resources in African continent, especially in the energy sector. As a result, Russian energy corporations have expanded significantly in Africa, with Russia investing considerably in oil and gas projects in nations such as Egypt, Algeria, and Mozambique (Doroshenko.M, 2019). Similarly, Arkhangelskaya et al. underline the importance of energy diplomacy in Russia's involvement with the continent in their analysis of Russia's foreign policy towards Africa. They point out that Russia has been working hard to increase its footprint in the African energy industry, with a special emphasis on oil and gas projects.According to Arkhangelskaya et al., this focus on energy diplomacy is driven by a desire to secure access to natural resources and to diversify Russia's energy exports. They argue that Russia's engagement with Africa is part of a larger strategy to position itself as a key participant in the global energy market and minimize its reliance on traditional energy partners like Europe and China (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019).

Another important aspect of Russia's current approach to Africa is a focus on arms exports. According to Abdulaziz Mahdi Al-Rawi, Russia is one of the biggest suppliers of arms to Africa, in regard to arms exports to the continent accounting for a significant portion of Russia's overall arms exports. This has led to concerns about the impact of Russian arms exports on regional security and stability (Al-Rawi, A. A. M, 2008).

Countering Western and Chinese Influence

In his analysis of Russian foreign policy, Mankoff also suggests that Russia's engagement with Africa is part of a broader trend of major powers seeking to secure their interests in the region. Mankoff contends that Russia is attempting to balance Western dominance in Africa, and that China's expanding presence in the region poses a threat to its own interests. As a result, as part of a larger war for global influence,

Russia is attempting to build its own economic and political footing in the area in order to obtain access to natural resources and new markets. According to Mankoff's interpretation, Russia's engagement with Africa is motivated by a desire to position itself as a significant player in the area and to balance the impact of other external parties (Mankoff, J., 2017). Similarly, Mankoff, argue that Russia's engagement with Africa is part of a broader trend of major powers seeking to secure access to natural resources and new markets in the region, as part of a broader struggle for global influence (Blank, S, 2019).

These studies show that Russia's foreign policy toward Africa is complicated and multidimensional, reflecting a variety of economic, political, and strategic goals. While some scholars emphasize Russia's desire to challenge Western hegemony and promote a multipolar world order, others highlight the importance of economic factors and the need to secure access to natural resources. Building on these prior studies, this literature review provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the current manner of Russian foreign policy toward Africa and its implications for African countries and the international system. As Russia continues to re-engage with Africa, its foreign policy toward the continent is likely to continue to evolve, making it reflects the changing geopolitical realities and economic conditions.

CHAPTER 1: HISTORY OF RUSSIA-AFRICA RELATIONS

In this chapter, the history of Russian-African relations will be introduced. This chapter will be divided into three sections. The first section deals with African-Russian relations, said the Cold War, whereas the second theme addresses ties following the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the third item addresses the stage of Russia's withdrawal from Africa.

1.1. Pre-Cold War Period

Russian interests and aspirations in Africa have been many and diverse since Tsarist times. Consider antecedents in the late Soviet period when analyzing Russia's present engagement with the area, since ties and attitudes formed then still dominate some elements of engagement now.

Relations with Africa go back to the Middle Ages, when Orthodox pilgrims and Russian Christians came from Africa (mostly Egyptians and Ethiopians) met in the Holy Land, while Russian and African Muslims met in Islamic holy sites (Shubin, 2013) .Following that, Russian explorers and sailors visited several African nations, including what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Morocco, Somalia, South Africa, and Tanzania. Russia established two consulates in Egypt, in Cairo and Alexandria, near the end of the 18th century (GCRFE, 2013), and the Tsarist authorities of Russia established diplomatic relations with Ethiopia and the Transvaal Republic in present-day South Africa in 1898 (Davidson & Filatova, 1998).During the violent conflicts in both nations, Russian medical detachments were despatched. Furthermore, several Russian commanders served under Negus Menelik, and over 200 Russian volunteers fought alongside Boer in the Anglo-Boer War. In the same year, Russia established a general consulate in Tangiers, Morocco (Du Quenoy, 2011; Archangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

Contacts between the USSR and African governments had been sparse since 1953 because the USSR considered colonial-controlled African nations to be part of the capitalist system and so unsuitable for Soviet infiltration. The shift of power in the Soviet Union from Stalin to Nikita Khrushchev, however, coincided with the formation of African independence movements, igniting Soviet interest in the prospects afforded

by engagement with newly independent governments and anti-colonial movements throughout the continent (Giles, 2013).

Following the 1917 Revolution, Russia severed diplomatic ties with a small number of African countries, only to resume them during World War II. However, it wasn't until the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the continent began to see an accelerated trend toward decolonization, that Moscow's connections with African countries took off in a big way. During this time, the majority of colonies became independent states, with national movements led by well-educated and middle-class youth who were less affected by socialism and communism (Rubinstein, 1975; Mulira, 1976).

Egypt was the Soviet Union's first large arms shipment to an African country in 1955. Within ten years, the Soviets had diplomatic relations with newly independent Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Sudan, Morocco, and Libya. These Soviet allies dubbed the "Casablanca Bloc" after their first summit in Casablanca, Morocco, were invited to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's (CPSU) Twenty-Second Congress in Moscow in 1961 (Giles, 2013).

Official connections were resumed with Ethiopia and South Africa during World War II when both nations became Soviet allies. Close ties evolved with African independence in the late 1950s, when Moscow intensified its backing for anti-colonial groups and newly independent republics (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

There are several instances in African history throughout the second half of the twentieth century when the Soviet Union played a good role, earning the appreciation of many Africans. First, during the 1956 Suez Crisis, the Soviet Union's attitude was critical in preventing a tripartite Israeli-British-French attack on Egypt. The second argument is the Soviet Union's backing for Patrice Lumumba, the Congo's rightful Prime Minister. The third example is the assistance provided to Angola in its battle for independence and against the racial aggression of South Africa and Zaire Mobutu in 1975-1976.

In South Africa, the USSR backed the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), as well as the People's Movement for the Liberation

of Angola (MPLA), the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) (United Nations, 2013).

Despite objections from major Western nations, the Soviet Union launched the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Nations and Peoples at the United Nations General Assembly in 1960. The resolution was supported by 89 countries, with nine voting against it and nine abstaining, including colonial powers such as the United States, France, Portugal, and the United Kingdom (Collins, 1993).

The major focus of Soviet support to Africa was military assistance, which included the establishment and equipping of armed units in several African countries. The Soviet Union also contributed significantly to the military liberation efforts in former Portuguese colonies, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa, which was much welcomed (Giles, 2013).

Despite the lack of military bases in Africa, the USSR strategically called on select African ports and sent surveillance planes from the Kula Peninsula to Havana and Luanda for landing and refueling (Giles, 2013). The Soviet Union's actual relationship with Africa, however, was not restricted to military issues. Several economic ventures were carried out, the vast majority of which were mutually beneficial. In exchange, the Soviet Union got cobalt from Zambia and bauxite from Guinea (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

Higher education, professional education, and military education were among the most important areas of collaboration between the Soviet Union and Africa. Among the graduates were many future African leaders, the majority of whom departed the Soviet Union with favorable perceptions of its scientific and engineering capabilities (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

Soviet leaders, beginning with Nikita Khrushchev, admired black African youth who participated in a large youth festival in Moscow in 1957 (Giles, 2013). In response, the Russian People’s Friendship University was founded in Moscow in 1960 to provide higher education to students from Third World countries (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013). The university became a complementary part of Soviet cultural policies towards non-aligned countries.

The Kremlin pursued a foreign policy towards Africa with four major objectives. Firstly, the Soviets sought a permanent presence on the continent, including access to many ports on the Indian Ocean. Secondly, they aimed to have a voice in African affairs by generally supporting local communist parties. Thirdly, the Soviets provided economic and military aid to the governments of African countries. Finally, they aimed to undermine the influence of Western and NATO countries, but opposed the idea of sending Soviet troops out of fear of escalation with NATO forces. Meanwhile, Fidel Castro sent 300,000 Cuban soldiers to support liberation movements against Western imperialism in Africa, which the Kremlin viewed as a dangerous adventure (Scalapino, 1963; Gleijeses, 2002). The Kremlin eventually entered into a bitter struggle with China to gain influence over local revolutionary movements after 1962.

Stalin viewed the black and white issue as part of the class struggle between capitalists and the proletariat, but Khrushchev saw it as a three-way struggle, including bourgeois nationalist movements that inherited hostility to imperialism and demanded decolonization (Donaldson, 1981; Albertini, & Garvie, 1971). The Soviet Union presented itself as an ally of national movements and a partner in the struggle against Western imperialism (Iandolo, 2020).

The Soviet model of industrialization and nationalization was expected to be attractive to Africans, but it did not have the desired effect on middle-class Africans seeking a national model for transforming the means of production. The reliance on the Soviet model of development failed due to unreliable local African leaders and the Congo crisis (Iandolo, 2020). Therefore, the Kremlin concluded that it was necessary to find ideologically credible leaders who needed Soviet help to build up a strong military force to control their countries (Donaldson, 1981; Albertini, & Garvie, 1971).

During the Cold War, the USSR and its allies invested money, personnel, and material in southern Africa, including financing allied troops and material commitments. The USSR also deployed significant contingents of KGB and military advisers in the region (Shubin, 2008).

The Soviet Union's donations to education and aid for African leaders, as well as its deployment of people and materiel, all contributed to the creation of a generally good, anti-colonial image of Russia in southern Africa.

The USSR's donations to education and aid for African leaders, as well as its deployment of people and materiel, all contributed to the creation of a generally favourable, anti-colonial image of Russia in southern Africa (Gerasimchuk, 2009).

Former KGB and military officers who operated together in Angola and other regions of southern Africa developed a coherent support network, which must be addressed when studying Russian elite politics. This network may help to explain why Russia appears to have disproportionate economic interests in Angola compared to other nations in the area (Renz, 2019).

1.2. Post-Cold War Period

During the 1990s, African relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated significantly. The disintegration of the Soviet Union broke most of Russia's ties with African countries.

In the early 1990s, the dissolution of the Soviet Union had substantial economic and political ramifications for Russia. The government was focused with internal issues and lacked the capacity to connect with Africa. Although Russia inherited from the USSR technical and economic aid agreements with 37 African nations as well as commercial links with 42 countries, technical-economic cooperation was not emphasized, and many cooperative projects were left incomplete. By 1994, trade volume between the Soviet Union and Africa had plummeted from $1.3 billion to $740 million. Russia closed nine embassies and four consulates across the continent in 1992, further deteriorating cultural and scientific connections. Only a handful of Africa's old cultural centers exist today (Fidan & Aras, 2010).

Relations with certain African nations worsened in late 1991, when then-President Boris Yeltsin cut off all foreign funding and demanded quick payment of outstanding debts. However, things began to change gradually as a result of Russia's economic recovery and the Russian leadership's larger, more realistic understanding of the modern world. As a result, in recent years, Russia has attempted to re-engage with Africa (Arkhangelskaya, 2013).

Following the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia's new authorities and pro-Western media portrayed the Soviet Union's supporters, including several African countries, negatively. For example, instead of Nelson Mandela, outgoing South African President Frederik de Klerk was greeted by Boris Yeltsin in June 1992. This anti-African sentiment was mirrored not just in the media but also in official circles. The Russian people's economic difficulties were linked to Soviet aid spending to underdeveloped nations, notably Africa. This fueled an increase in xenophobia and even abstract racism, which was worsened by the government' failure to confront the problem. The strained political relations between Russia and Africa during this period were thus a product of both economic and social factors (Makarychev & Yatsyk, 2014).

Despite never completely withdrawing from Africa, Russia shuttered a number of diplomatic posts, cultural centers, and trade representatives across the continent. No African leader visited Moscow for more than five years after then-outgoing South African President Frederik de Klerk's contentious visit.

Most Soviet-era assistance projects were abandoned, including a multimillion-dollar steel facility in Ajaokuta, Nigeria, which was nearly finished at the time.

These developments also coincided with the implementation of so-called market reforms in 1992-98, which involved the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and which, according to former foreign minister and then-prime minister Yevgeny Primakov, resulted in large losses to the Russian economy that were twice as large as those suffered during the Second World War (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

The economic collapse of Russia in the 1990s does not entirely explain the lack of focus on Africa. There was also a psychological aspect at work, as pro-Western media and politicians in Russia exploited Africa as a scapegoat for the country's woes, stating that Africans were a drain on the Russian economy. In actuality, the USSR and African countries' economic collaboration was mutually beneficial. However, these beliefs about Africa fueled xenophobia and racism, which were both harmful and deadly (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

The rise of Vladimir Putin following Boris Yeltsin is widely credited with the trend toward realism in Russian foreign policy. This transition, however, began prior to

Yeltsin's retirement, with the expulsion of his first foreign minister, Andrey Kozyrev, who was renowned for his pro-Western position, and the appointment of Yevgeny Primakov in 1996 (Arkhangelskaya & Shubin, 2013).

Yevgeny Primakov, Russia's foreign minister since 1996 was a well-known expert on the Third World. He had previously served as the head of the Institutes of Oriental Studies and World Economy and International Relations, as well as the speaker of the Soviet parliament and the director of the Russian External Intelligence Service. During the 1990s, the Soviet economy faced significant challenges, including a technological blockade, the use of food weapons, and an escalation of the arms race by Western countries. Additionally, the Soviet Union allocated many of its resources, including scientific, technological, financial, and human resources, towards military purposes, at the expense of the economy. These factors contributed to the collapse and disintegration of the Soviet Union, which had significant domestic and international repercussions (AlRawi, 2008).

Following the demise of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation faced tremendous domestic and international problems. As a result, under President Boris Yeltsin, Russia sought to adopt a new foreign policy approach based on realistic assessments of the situation. Initially, Russia sought to appease the West, notably the United States, and restore relations in order to address the country's issues (Abu Samhadana, 2012).

The Russian presence in Africa came at a cost, as evidenced by the statement of Alexander Makarenko, Director of the Africa Directorate of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to Makarenko, Russia's connection with Africa is mostly built on aid and debt, with just a minor portion devoted to economic interaction. As a result, Russia's national economy has suffered as a result of the debt and help. According to some observers, Russia's domestic economic problems are a direct outcome of its costly responsibilities and linkages to third-world countries, notably African countries (Traude, 2009).

Yeltsin sought to withdraw from Africa due to the economic problems involved with Russia's involvement there. Moscow shuttered its embassies in nine African nations, including Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Togo, and Somalia, two months following the foreign minister's tour to Africa in February 1992. Consulates in

Mozambique, Angola, Madagascar, and the Congo were also shuttered as a result (Birgerson, Kozhemiakin, Kanet, & Tchimichkian, 1996).

On the commercial side, Russia has suspended a group of trade missions, as well as the activity of 13 Russian cultural centers out of 20 centers (Santander, 2014).
Russia's support for allied regimes in Africa came to a halt under President Yeltsin. The Russian government suspended all forms of aid and support to African countries and demanded that they pay their outstanding debts. Diplomatic, political, and military cooperation between Russia and Africa also ceased, and economic ties suffered as well. In 1992, trade between Russia and Africa amounted to only one billion dollars, and by 1994, this figure had dropped significantly to 740 million dollars (Santande, 2014). Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin expressed concern about the trade imbalance, noting that 83% of the volume of exchanges were directed solely to North African countries (Birgerson, Kozhemiakin, Kanet, & Tchimichkian, 1996).

However, in recent years, some Russian scholars and government officials have become convinced that Moscow's re-engagement with Africa offers both economic and pragmatic foreign policy benefits.

Thus, after decades of neglect, Russia now sees Africa as "an important counterbalance to what the Kremlin perceives as the West's deep-seated antagonism" towards Russia and its present leadership.

Section	**Key Points**
- Russian-African Relations Deteriorated in the 1990s	- The demise of the Soviet Union has resulted in economic and political upheavals in Russia. Priority is not given to technical and economic collaboration with Africa. Embassy, consulate, and cultural facilities are being closed. Aid initiatives are being terminated. Trade volume has decreased. Relationships deteriorated due to psychological causes.
	- The appointment of Yevgeny Primakov as Foreign Minister, as well as his knowledge

- Russian Foreign Policy's Turn to Realism	of the Third World. Adoption of a foreign policy based on facts. Attempt to appease the West and strengthen relations with the US. Re-engaging with Africa has both economic and pragmatic foreign policy benefits. Some Russian academics and government officials consider re-engagement with Africa as beneficial. Russia sees Africa as a critical counterweight to the West's perceived hostility against Russia and its leadership.

Table 1*:* African Relations: Deterioration in the 1990s and Shift to Realism in Foreign Policy

1.3. The Period of The Russian Absence from Africa

Russian absence from Africa was characterised by a lack of political, economic, and military involvement between Russia and African nations from the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 until the early 2000s. This withdrawal was driven by both internal and external factors and had a significant impact on Russia-Africa relations. During this time, Russia's relations with Africa deteriorated dramatically, with a marked decline in economic, political, and diplomatic relations. According to Irina Filatova and Alexander Makaryshev, Russia's decline in Africa was the result of a combination of factors, including a loss of ideological incentive, economic instability, and political confusion. These factors contributed to a significant decrease in Russian assistance to African states, particularly in the field of military aid, which was a major aspect of Soviet foreign policy in Africa (Filatova & Makarychev, 2012).

The internal political and economic instability that followed the demise of the Soviet Union was one of the key causes leading to Russia's absence from Africa. Russia had a severe economic catastrophe in the aftermath of the collapse, with high inflation, limited growth, and widespread poverty (Shubin, 2014). Because the Russian government was forced to emphasize internal matters, it had little ability or interest in interacting with African states. The political instability that followed the Soviet Union's demise also made it difficult for Russia to preserve its existing relationships with African nations, many of which had been forged during the Soviet era (Carmody, 2017).

The shifting global political scene is another element leading to Russia's withdrawal from Africa. With the conclusion of the Cold War, the main international powers' goals and interests shifted, and several nations, including Russia, began to reconsider their relationship with Africa. The United States, for example, has shifted its focus toward the Middle East and Asia, while China has begun to expand its economic and political influence in Africa (Balytnikov et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Russia remained largely detached from Africa, which contributed to its absence from the continent.

Russia's absence from Africa during this period had a significant impact on Russia-Africa relations. Many African countries that had previously relied on Soviet support for military and economic aid found themselves without a reliable partner (Carmody, 2017).

Some African countries turned to other countries, such as China, for economic support and investment, while others continued to depend on Western countries for aid and aid (Shubin, 2014). This is largely due to their growing economic interests in Africa, as well as their desire to forge strategic partnerships with African countries. According to Andrew Monaghan, this increased involvement of other countries was particularly evident in the energy sector, as the demand for African oil and gas resources increased dramatically during this period (Monaghan, 2018). Russia's absence from Africa also contributed to the decline of Russia's influence and reputation on the continent, as many African countries view Russia as a declining power that is no longer relevant to their interests (Carmody, 2017).

Russia's absence from Africa during this period meant that it lost important economic opportunities and diplomatic influence in the region. This was especially visible in commerce, as Russia's trade with Africa decreased drastically in the years after the Soviet Union's demise. According to Alexander Demidov, Russian commerce with Africa fell by 80% between 1990 and 2000, whereas Chinese trade with Africa soared by 700% over the same period (Demidov, 2010).

Despite the challenges posed by Russia's period of absence from Africa, there were also some positive developments during this period. Russia's absence from Africa has allowed for more diversity and competition among global powers, with China and other countries stepping in filling the void left by Russia (Doroshenko, 2019).

This competition has increased investment and economic growth in many African countries and has provided new opportunities for African countries to engage with the global community.

However, despite its reduced involvement with Africa, Russia has continued to maintain relations with a number of African countries. These relationships were based largely on historical connections and shared ideological viewpoints. According to Stephen Blank, Russia continued to maintain close relations with countries such as Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, which historically had strong ties with the Soviet Union (Blank, 2016).

If the period of Russian absence from Africa is driven by a combination of internal and external factors, including political and economic turmoil in Russia, and changing global political priorities. The absence had a significant impact on Russian-African relations contributed to the decline of Russia's influence on the continent and led to an increase in competition between world powers. However, the absence has also allowed for greater diversity and competition among global powers and has led to new opportunities for African countries to engage with the global community. Of that, Russia has continued to maintain relations with a number of African countries based on historical ties and shared ideological views.

CHAPTER 2: MAIN FACTORS AND STRATEGY BEHIND RUSSIA'S RETURN TO AFRICA

Russia has begun to re-establish a tiny presence in Africa as the economy and internal politics have stabilized and the Kremlin's foreign policy perspectives have expanded (Saradzhyan, 2010). Following the volatile early Yeltsin years, then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Y.M. Primakov pushed economic reforms and a multifaceted foreign policy, with a specific emphasis on the former Soviet republics and the Middle East. The Russian economy grew more stable during Putin's steady and committed years following 2000, as increased oil prices contributed to budget surpluses, a rise in GDP, and a fall in external debt. These encouraging trends prompted Russia to reject the post-Soviet unipolar international order. As a result of its expanding economic and political dominance, Russia's stance to Africa, with which it formerly had strong connections, has shifted. Russia recognized Africa's vital and diverse role in the modern system of international politics, and accepted that its importance would grow even more if the continent's deadly wars and carnage could be ended. Many nations were aware of this and were stepping up their efforts in Africa, so Russia needed to act quickly or risk being left behind (Fidan & Aras, 2010).

Since then, manifestations of Russia's rising influence and presence in Africa have expanded substantially. Russia has attempted to rebuild existing partnerships and establish new ones by employing all of its instruments, including political, military, security, economic, diplomatic, and informational weapons. The Kremlin frequently strives to profit on European and American mistakes on the continent, as well as rising African fears about China's disproportionate economic might and ambitions. However, as this summary of Russia's activities and goals demonstrates, the scorecard since 2014 gives revealing evidence of the limits of its strength and the extremely limited scope of its toolset for achieving its global aspirations (Stronski, 2019).

2.1. Factors of Russia's Return to Africa

2.1.1. Factors of Politics

Geopolitical reasons are one of the driving forces behind Russia's political comeback to Africa. Russia sees Africa as a key battleground for geopolitical confrontation with the West, and has worked to increase its influence in the continent as part of wider

attempts to challenge Western hegemony (Mankoff, J. 2009). This was prompted in part by Russia's escalating tensions with the US and its allies, which has pushed Russia to seek new African allies and partners. Russia-Africa relations began to strengthen in the late 1990s, with reciprocal visits by prominent leaders. According to the Russian Federation Council's International connections, Committee, Russia is restoring its connections with Africa by following in the footsteps of the Soviet Union, which had a strong presence on the continent during the Cold War period. In their addresses, top Russian leaders such as President Yeltsin and Prime Ministers V.I. Chernomyrdin and Y.M. Primakov stressed the importance of Africa in Russia's foreign policy. Former Foreign Minister I.A. Ivanov particularly referred to Africa as his "long-term and reliable ally that has played an important role in world affairs" during the "African Days" program, which took place in Moscow on May 24, 1999. He emphasized in his speech that Russia did not leave Africa (Fidan & Aras, 2010).

Russia’s relations with the outside world began a new transformation in 2000, the year Putin took over. Putin’s rule in Russia’s foreign policy was characterized by a realistic vision of international relations, mainly related to the nature of the international political movement and the sovereign interests of Russia. Russia at that moment constituted an important political situation that attracted the attention of politicians and observers around the world. Many titles have been given to this topic, the most notable of which being "The Awakening of the Roaring Bear," which refers to Russia's return to the ranks of significant nations affecting world decision-making. With Russia’s transition under President Putin from the mid-2000s to the years of Dr. Nasser Zaidan’s iron fist in 2014, President Putin worked to restore Russia’s international standing and preserve its national security. At the beginning of his term, Putin announced what was known as the “Putin principle,” which includes the call for a multipolar world that is not subject to a single superpower, and where Russia plays a major role (Al-Rawi, 2008).

The current political stage, as well as the overall geopolitical scenario, need the establishment of strong and comprehensive connections with loyal and friendly nations open to collaboration with Russia, i.e., countries that are not fully reliant on the global political environment.

To steer Russia's foreign policy not just to the East, but also to the South, and particularly to Africa. African governments continue to see Russia as their most

probable friend in defending their interests on the international stage, as well as a natural counterweight to the hegemonic ambitions of one or more world powers.In addition, Russia views Africa as a potential source of support in international organizations, such as the United Nations, as it has sought to build a coalition of like-minded states to challenge Western hegemony (Mankoff, J. 2009)

Africans also agree with Russia on matters such as state sovereignty, peace, and security, which are especially important at the moment. In his piece ""Russia's Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective,"" Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov writes: "The modern globalized world is characterized by unprecedented interdependence of states." One cannot ignore the dynamic dynamics going place in the Asian area. "At a time when international relations are in turmoil, Russia, as often, stands at the crossroads of important trends that will determine the direction of global development in the future," he added.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov argues in his paper "Russia's Foreign Policy in Historical Perspective": "The modern globalized world is characterized by unprecedented interdependence of states." It is impossible to ignore the dynamic dynamics going place in the Asia-Pacific area. As well as the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. He also stated that "at a time when world relations are in upheaval, Russia is, as it has frequently been, at the crossroads of significant trends that will define the future path of global growth" (Lavrov, 2016).

In this situation, Russia should pay closer attention to Africa. Russian-African relations have a significant and rising potential to assist Russia in achieving its top national priorities. Russia should enhance international collaboration with African nations that share similar views on the new world order and other critical international problems, which would reinforce Russia's position as an independent and prominent center of world affairs.

Given these African leaders' serious policies on dialogue in foreign policy and foreign economic relations, it is critical to expedite and enhance Russia's involvement with Africa through practical measures. Moscow's structural policy must be supplemented by fundamental shifts in the overall approach to Russian-African ties.

The old African elite schooled in the Soviet Union is losing way to new officials educated in the US, the EU, or China. As a result, we must prioritize the African path in foreign policy, which will benefit both Russians and Africans (Arkhangelskaya, Voivodsk, Kashin, Maslov, & Shubin, 2019).

2.1.2. Economic Elements

A variety of causes, including economic prospects, have prompted Russia's political comeback to Africa. African markets offer appealing conditions, including favorable pricing, for Russian industrial goods, equipment, and defense products, as well as innovative, research-technical, educational, health, and other services that can help Russia implement its re-industrialization and modernization policies (Arkhangelskaya, Voivodsk, Kashin, Maslov, & Shubin, 2019). The most important economic factors behind the Russian political return to Africa can be identified.

One of the key economic motivations for Russia's political comeback to Africa is energy resources and technology. Africa is an area rich in natural resources such as oil, gas, and coal, all of which are essential energy sources for Russian industry (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018). In addition, many African countries have an underdeveloped energy infrastructure, which provides opportunities for Russian companies to invest in energy production and distribution.

Russia has sought to position itself as a partner in developing nuclear energy projects to ensure energy security in Africa (Arkhangelskaya, Voivodsk, Kashin, Maslov, & Shubin, 2019). After Fukushima, Russia has a lot of expertise in establishing nuclear power facilities and contemporary nuclear technologies with increased safety (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019) Russia is a significant energy power with strong holdings in several sectors, including oil, gas, coal, and nuclear energy technologies. Russia's comprehensive energy policy of transitioning away from fossil fuels and toward new energy generation initiatives might have a significant economic impact.

Russia and Africa may coordinate a new kind of cooperation based on long-term goals now that oil is no longer the primary source of energy and the world is increasingly looking to renewable energy sources.

Russia is a seasoned participant in the global energy market, with a track record of managing power facilities such as hydroelectric, nuclear, and thermal power plants, as well as energy export and transmission. Russia's experience in conducting energy projects and establishing power networks across broad territory (particularly in Africa) gives them a considerable competitive edge. Furthermore, and most importantly, in the context of today's fourth industrial revolution, global digitization, and cybersecurity, which could be a venue for joint development and testing of innovative Russian technologies in various fields, possibly with partners from other countries (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019).

Russia’s political return to Africa was also driven by the desire to gain access to new sources of agricultural products. Russia maintains trade relations with Africa, particularly in the agricultural sector. Because Africa is an attractive source of other agricultural products (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018). Russia, as one of the world's major producers of wheat, exports the commodity to Africa while purchasing fruits, coffee, cocoa, and other African items. Russia's overall trade volume with Africa was approximately $20 billion in 2018, with Egypt being Russia's top trading partner on the continent, accounting for $7.7 billion of the total trade volume. Notably, Russia is constructing Egypt's Russian Industrial Zone (RIZ), which is projected to attract $7 billion in investment. However, Russia's commerce with Africa in 2018 paled in contrast to India's ($63 billion) and China's ($204.2 billion) trade with Africa (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

Furthermore, many African countries have underdeveloped agricultural infrastructure, which provides opportunities for Russian companies to invest in the development of agricultural production. This can assist African governments in providing dependable and inexpensive electricity to industry and the people, as well as access to modern power production technologies, all of which are required for long-term economic success.

Another important economic factor driving Russia’s political return to Africa is mining and minerals. Africa is home to a wide range of minerals, including diamonds, gold, copper and platinum, which makes it an attractive destination for Russian mining companies. In addition, many African countries have an underdeveloped mining infrastructure, which provides opportunities for Russian companies to invest in

developing mining operations (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2019). Close trade and economic cooperation with Africa might provide Russia with comparatively low-cost raw minerals, which are limited in Russia but abundant in Africa (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019)

Although the Russian Federation contains natural resources, it lacks manganese, chromium, mercury, titanium, and bauxite, which are required in the mining and industrial industries.It also confronts the depletion of some mineral deposits, including copper, nickel, tin, and zinc, not to mention the requirement for coltan, all of which are mined in Africa (Giles, 2013; Santander, 2014).

We see Russian businesses such as Gazprom, Rosneft, Lukoil, ALROSA, ROSAL, Rosatom, and Renova aggressively engaged in Africa's resource sector owing to the continent's pressing need for knowledge in the field of oil, gas, and minerals.gas, mineral extraction and nuclear energy that it possesses. Some of these companies, including Alrosa, Lukoil and Rosatom, operate in Angola, Egypt and Nigeria, while others such as Rosneft, Rusal and Renova operate in Egypt, Guinea and South Africa, respectively. Other Russian firms with interests in Africa's resources include Rostec, Rusal Boksit, Russkiy Aluminsky, and Norilsk Nickel (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

Infrastructure development is another important economic factor driving Russia’s political return to Africa. Africa has significant infrastructure needs, including the development of transport, energy and communication infrastructure (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018). Russia has sought to position itself as a partner in infrastructure development in Africa, with a focus on building long-term partnerships for the development of transport and energy infrastructure. Russia has a competitive advantage in implementing energy programs and building power networks in vast areas, which Africa especially needs now (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019). Diversification of power generation has recently received major consideration in Africa in order to overcome the energy shortfall. The current that has left millions of Africans in the dark, as well as the increasing need for energy in the near future. In this context, Russia has signed agreements to provide nuclear technology to a number of African nations in order to boost power output and eliminate epileptic electricity supply on the continent. Zambia, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Nigeria are among the nations that have nuclear power reactors built by Russia (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

A variety of elements are driving Russia's increasing engagement with Africa, including energy resources and technology, mining and metals, agribusiness, and infrastructural development. Russia aims to establish closer ties with African countries in these sectors, emphasizing the development of long-term partnerships for economic cooperation. African markets are viewed as an important component of Russia's system of cooperation with international and regional economic and financial organizations, providing new opportunities for global economic cooperation and serving as a springboard for the implementation of priority national projects such as the "International Cooperation and Export" project, which aims to sign 320 agreements by the end of 2024 (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

It is difficult to single out individual nations as key countries in Russia's African strategy. Russia is interested in large African economies and markets such as South Africa, Egypt, and Nigeria. Some countries, such as Mauritius, Rwanda, and Ghana, could serve as convenient hubs in terms of financial and trade infrastructure. Other countries, including Angola, Mozambique, and Seychelles, have been traditional partners of Russia since Soviet (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

Africa might become a target market for Russia if its international economic operations are effectively organized (Arkhangelskaya et al, 2019). As Africa continues to develop, economic opportunities for Russian companies are likely to grow, making the region an increasingly important destination for Russian investment.

Factor	**Description**	**Examples**
-Economic Opportunities	African markets provide appealing circumstances for Russian industrial items, equipment, and defense products, including favorable pricing. innovative, research-technical, educational, health, and other services	Russian companies investing in energy production and distribution, agricultural production, and infrastructure development.

	that can promote the implementation of Russian re-industrialization and modernization policies.	
-Energy Resources and Technology	Africa is rich in natural resources such as oil, gas, and coal, all of which are vital energy sources for Russian industry. Russia has attempted to position itself as a partner in the development of nuclear energy projects to assure Africa's energy security.	Gazprom, Rosneft, Lukoil, ALROSA, ROSAL, Rosatom, and Renova are among the Russian firms with operations in Angola, Egypt, Guinea, Nigeria, and South Africa.
-Mining and Minerals	Africa is home to a wide range of minerals, including diamonds, gold, copper, and platinum, which makes it an attractive destination for Russian mining companies.	Russian companies such as ALROSA, Lukoil, Rosatom, Rusal, and Renova investing in developing mining operations in Africa.
-Agriculture	Africa is an attractive source of agricultural products, and Russia maintains trade relations with Africa, particularly in the agricultural sector.	Russia exporting wheat to Africa and importing fruits, coffee, cocoa, and other products from the continent. Russia building the Russian Industrial Zone (RIZ) in Egypt to attract investments.
-Infrastructure Development	Africa has significant infrastructure needs, including the development of transport, energy, and communication infrastructure. Russia has sought to position itself as a	Russia is establishing long-term cooperation with Africa to construct transportation and energy infrastructure. Russia is sending nuclear technology to a number of African

	partner in infrastructure development in Africa.	countries in order to improve their power output.

Table 2: Factors Driving Russian Engagement with Africa.

2.1.3. Additional factors

Russia's return to Africa signified a significant shift in its foreign policy goals, owing to a number of circumstances. Following that, we will discuss some of the non-political and economic elements driving Russia's return to Africa.

Social, educational, and cultural elements

Cultural links are one of the causes driving Russia's return to Africa. Russia has long-standing cultural and historical ties with many African countries, which have helped foster a sense of shared identity and shared values. These cultural ties have played a role in renewed Russian interest in Africa, as many African countries still view Russia as a reliable partner (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018).

With the world increasingly divided and Russia facing hostility from the US-led West, the Kremlin seeks to accelerate the transition to a multipolar world order and find allies against the Western-centric one. To achieve this, Russia’s culture-oriented strategy is an important tool, just as it was during the Cold War. Student and worker exchange programs are critical for disseminating pro-Russian attitudes, feelings, and ideas across the African continent, notably in Anglophone and Portuguese-speaking nations like Angola, Mozambique, Ghana, South Africa, and Nigeria (Balytnikov, et al., 2019)

In addition, the African human factor has a huge influence on the global economy in a variety of ways. Europe, Russia, North America, and portions of Asia, including China, are facing or will face enormous challenges as a result of an aging society and a falling working-age population. Africa's labor force, on the other hand, is quickly expanding and is predicted to account for 60% of global labor force growth over the next 20-30 years. Furthermore, Africa's growing middle class is a significant driver of demand for a wide range of industrial goods. According to UN forecasts, the African middle class would number more than one billion people by 2025 (Balytnikov et al., 2019).

Africa will play a major role in defining the world's demographic and socioeconomic environment, as well as the size and structure of the global consumer market, in the next decades. Africa has the most young people that are willing to work with other countries. This is a fantastic opportunity to unite young people from Russia, Eurasia, and Africa together. Furthermore, this provides a once-in-a-lifetime chance to forge a new type of peaceful social and economic collaboration among civic communities (Balytnikov et al., 2019).

Education is a top priority in Russia's African involvement since it shapes the youth population and its potential as a strategic stock for any government. As a result, Russia intends to promote its youth policy on a global scale, especially through relationships with international youth groups. This is because international youth collaboration is seen as an essential component of the global landscape.

Stability in the economy and politics. Cooperation between Russian and African youth is critical for deepening friendship and partnership throughout the world, since Africa has long held leadership roles in the worldwide youth movement.

In recent years, the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs have collaborated to increase quotas and scholarships for African students, and the number of African students studying in Russian universities increased by 130% between 2010 and 2018. The Ministry of Education has developed an action plan to increase the number of students Africans by 12% annually, aiming to overtake the results of the Soviet era (Balytnikov, et al., 2019) one of the key components of Russia’s current approach to Africa is a focus on energy diplomacy. As Doroshenko pointed out, Russia has been working hard to obtain access to natural resources in Africa, notably in the energy industry. As a result, Russian energy corporations have expanded significantly in Africa, with Russia investing considerably in oil and gas projects in nations such as Egypt, Algeria, and Mozambique (Doroshenko, M, 2019). Likewise, Arkhangelskaya et al. Arkhangelskaya et al. underline the relevance of energy diplomacy in Russia's involvement with the continent in their examination of Russia's foreign policy toward Africa. They point out that Russia has been working hard to increase its footprint in the African energy industry, with a special emphasis on oil and gas projects. This emphasis on energy diplomacy, according to Arkhangelskaya et al., is motivated by a desire to ensure access to natural resources and diversify Russia's energy exports. They argue

that Russia's engagement with Africa is part of a larger strategy to position itself as a key participant in the global energy market and minimize its reliance on traditional energy partners like Europe and China. (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019, p. 3).

Soft power:

The other important factor behind Russia's return to Africa is soft power. Russia has sought to use soft power as a way to build closer relations with African countries, by promoting their language, culture, and values. In addition, Russia has sought to use soft power to counterbalance the influence of the United States and the European Union in the region (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018).

The Kremlin plainly uses Russian higher education institutes structured after the Soviet period to portray Russia's soft power. Soft power is the capacity to achieve desired goals by persuasion and appeal rather than force or coercion (Leal Filho et al., 2022).

Russia has gone further in its use of soft power tools in Africa by creating local institutions that spread and consolidate Russian cultural influence in West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. These institutions are designed to ensure the sustainability of the spread of Russian culture and to create an elite and grassroots base for the Russian presence on the continent.Despite the ongoing war in Ukraine, Russian public diplomacy and some official interests are still focused on expanding their cultural influence in Africa. This led to the establishment in August 2022 of the African Organization of Russophony in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic. This organization oversees a network of ties and relationships that promote the spread of the Russian language and culture and links African cultural and university institutions with their Russian counterparts. Notably, the organization is led by a Cameroonian businessman named Emile Brave Simpe, who has links to official political circles in the Central African Republic and neighboring African countries. Simpe is based in Bangui and has business interests in various sectors, including cryptocurrency.

The pan-African organization known as PARADE was established in late 2021 and is headquartered in Dakar, Senegal, and is led by Samba Mbanda Diaw. It has a global reach, with branches in 24 countries around the world and 16 African branches, most

of which are in West Africa, the Sahel, the Sahara, and the Gulf of Guinea, along with a branch in Russia and another in Germany. The organization includes intellectuals, students, and businessmen, including Ivorian businessman Daoud Sylla, who has been heading the Ivorian branch since September 2022.

PARADE maintains official cooperation with the Russian embassies in the African countries in which it is located, and its members meet with Russian ambassadors and senior diplomatic staff. The Kremlin has recognized the organization as the only pro-Russian African organization. According to Samba Diaw, it is a global anti-imperialist and pro-Russian alliance, and Africa must make a geopolitical and geostrategic transformation to influence the new world order that is inevitably taking shape. This shift involves shifting Africa's international alliances from the West towards Russia and its allies.PARADE supports Russia's position on the Ukraine war, as well as the African governments that arose as a consequence of military coups in Mali and Burkina Faso. It also backs their stance against France's military presence in the region.

In its efforts to diversify its tools to expand its influence in Africa, Russian diplomacy has turned to the religious establishment as a way to bring African people closer to Russia, in both Islam and Orthodox Christianity, which is the official Russian church. After 70 years of Soviet repression, the relationship between church and state was restored; religion became part of the official ideology and returned to public and private life in Russian society. There is some kind of agreement between President Putin and Patriarch Kirill, and the Russian Church is attracting the Orthodox clergy in Africa, especially after the division caused by the Russian-Ukrainian war.

In response to the Church of Alexandria's recognition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in 2021, the Russian Church announced the establishment of a patriarchal exarchate in Africa, and the allegiance of the Orthodox cathedral in Bimbo, near the capital, Bangui, was transferred to the Moscow diocese. The Russian Church established churches in the Central African Republic and sent priests to Bangui for religious events. An agreement has been signed between Moscow and Bangui for the construction of an Orthodox church, which will be recognized as a Russian Orthodox religious institution.

This expansion of influence through the religious establishment can be seen as a response by the Russian Church to the state's efforts to expand its influence in Africa, and both tracks, ecclesiastical and diplomatic, operate in parallel and in harmony. Russian church work is also part of the institutions working to spread Russian culture on the continent (Al-Subaitly, 2023).

Competition:

International relations are also one of the factors behind Russia's return to Africa. Russia considers Africa an important region to strengthen its international relations, particularly in building closer ties with other countries and international organizations In addition, Russia seeks to use its involvement with Africa to enhance its position in the international community (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018).

Russia's comeback to Africa is clearly not taking place in a geopolitical or economic vacuum. Many countries, notably Western countries (primarily the United States and France), Arab countries in the Persian Gulf, India, and Turkey, are implementing large-scale projects in Africa. China has emerged as a significant foreign influence in Africa. In other words, Russia has substantial external rivals, many of whom outspend Russia in terms of investment, aid, and technology.

Russia's African strategy should reflect this, focusing particularly on the economic and political sectors where Russia has a comparative edge (including pricing). To be successful, Russia's new Africa involvement policy must add political, economic, and cultural value to existing African projects.At the same time, Russia's African policy is not a zero-sum game. Many initiatives may be executed in this interconnected world through international cooperation and the integration of resources, technology, and social capital. This mostly affects Russia's BRICS partners. The climate of political trust among the BRICS countries, as well as the experience of harmonization between the EAEU and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), will aid in the discovery of mutually acceptable ways to transform competition into cooperation and rapprochement, benefiting both African and Arab countries (Balytnikov et al., 2019).

Political cooperation:

Political cooperation is another factor behind Russia's return to Africa. Russia has sought to build closer political relations with African countries, including through the creation of political alliances and cooperation agreements. In addition, Russia has sought to use its political engagement with Africa to enhance its influence in regional and international forums (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018).

Humanitarian aid:

Humanitarian aid is also one of the factors behind Russia's return to Africa. Russia has sought to provide humanitarian assistance to African countries, particularly in response to natural disasters, conflicts, and health crises. In addition, Russia has sought to use its humanitarian engagement with Africa to strengthen its position in the international community and build closer relations with African countries (Biryukova & Zhiltsova, 2018).

Technological cooperation:

Despite not having a strong technical foundation, Africa's growing population and development potential make it an important consumer of new technologies, particularly in areas such as scientific technologies, information technology, and communications infrastructure. African governments are keen to invest in these areas. Russia, which is focusing on modernisation and integration in the Fourth Industrial Revolution period, has the potential to become an important partner for Africa. This is due to the fact that Russian products and services are typically less expensive than those in the West, and African nations trust Russian products more than Chinese ones, which are perceived as less dependable (Balytnikov et al., 2019).

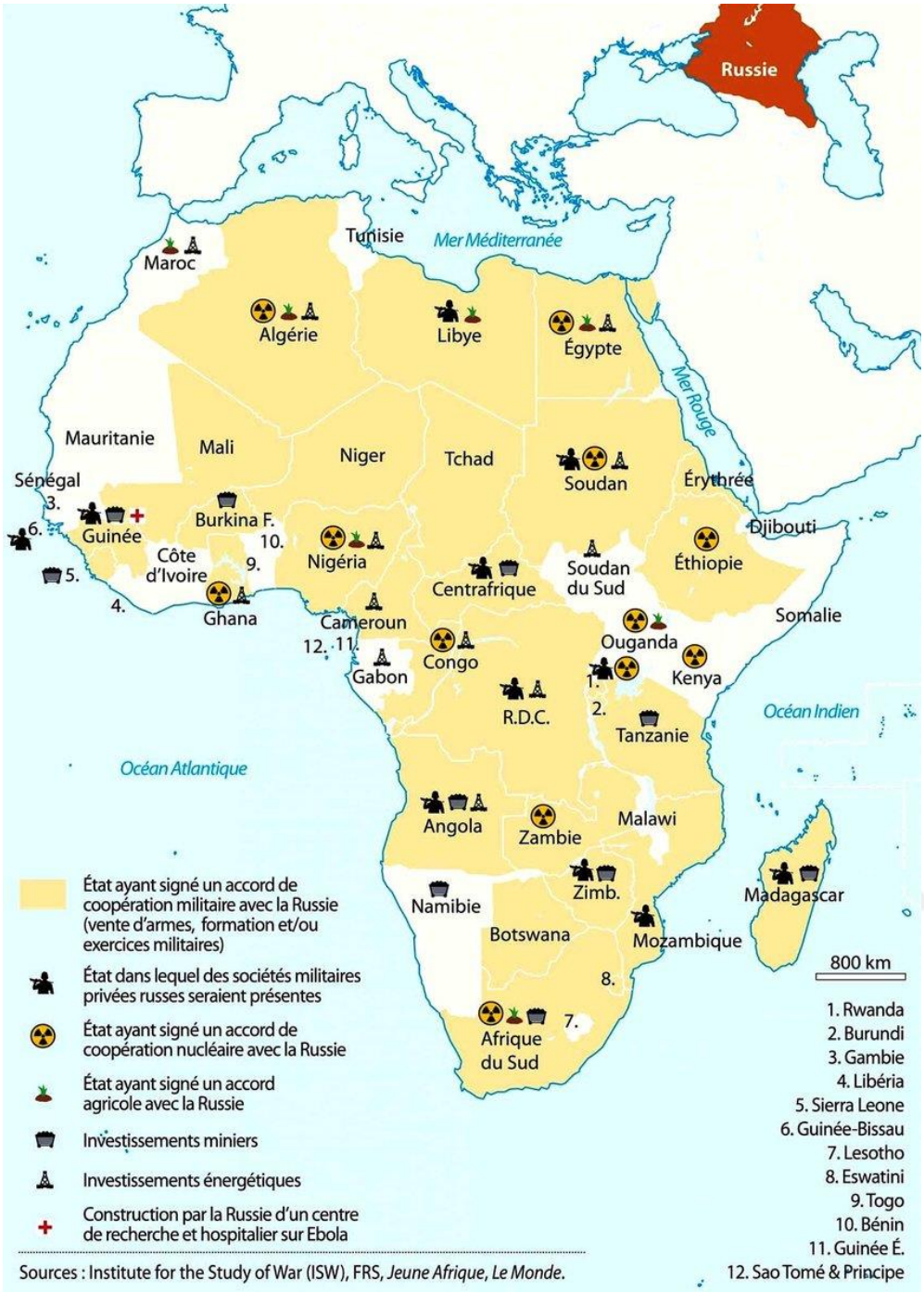
Space technology is one area where Moscow has effectively collaborated with African states. At a cost of $13 million, Nigeria launched its first Earth observation satellite, NigeriaSat-1, into orbit from Russia's Plesetsk Cosmodrome in 2003. Even though it was supposed to last five years, it continues to function after that time. During Jonathan's presidency, two new satellites, NigeriaSat-2 and NigeriaSat-X, were launched from Russia in 2011 and replaced NigeriaSat-1. NigeriaSat-3 and NigeriaSAR-1 are being developed to replace two Earth observation satellites. In addition, Angola is scheduled to launch the communication satellite AngoSat-2 in

March 2022. The satellite is being developed by Reshetnev Information Satellite Systems and will replace AngoSat-1, which lost contact in December 2017 (Martinez, 2008).

Africa has enormous potential as a major consumer of emerging technologies, notably in science-intensive sectors, information technology, and communication infrastructure. Russia, which charted the path for modernization and expansion in these regions during the fourth industrial revolution, has the potential to become one of Africa's most important partners because its goods and services are generally less expensive than those of the West are, and African countries regard it as Russia's Russia. items that are more reputable and trustworthy than Chinese items (Arkhangelskaya et al, 2019).

The impact of the African human factor on the global economy:

Africa's vast natural resources and growing middle class have made it an attractive destination for foreign investment, including from Russia. Many African countries have an underdeveloped energy and mining infrastructure, which provides opportunities for Russian companies to invest in these sectors. Furthermore, Africa's fast rising middle class drives demand for a wide range of produced goods. According to UN estimates, the African middle class will number more than one billion people by 2025. Within a few decades, Africa will have a significant impact on the worldwide demographic and socioeconomic picture, as well as the size and structure of the global consumer market (Arkhangelskaya et al., 2019).



Map 1: Russian presence in Africa, 2019

2.2. Strategies of Russia's Return to Africa

2.2.1. Political Exploitation in Africa

This is the most fluid and mysterious type of inter-national connection. Inter-state interactions, such as bilateral and multilateral treaties and accords, or personal relationships between the heads of these states, are frequently used (Suedfeld, 1992).

In truth, political interactions have a greater spectrum of conceivable connections. For example, these relationships might be declarative in character, “when governments express their broad or particular policy support for each other” (Bienen, 1982). Close political links may be accompanied by limited economic engagement or few military linkages in such and similar circumstances (Lychowfki,1958). On the other hand, tight economic links may or may not include a state’s political power over another, despite the fact that many argue that politics follows economics (Beckley, 2010).

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union considered Africa, Asia, and Latin America as potential socialist reserves, holding the key to ultimate triumph over the forces of the "imperialist West." The zero-sum game of East-West competition, on the other hand, led the US to work hard to obstruct Soviet objectives. The result was predictable: the two superpowers used Third World nations' territory as "battlefields" for proxy fights against one other, frequently enlisting locals in protracted and horrific clashes that served little purpose (Melvyn, 2007; Laidi, 1990). An African proverb helps to symbolically depict this scenario: "When elephants fight, the grass suffers," which suggests that the weak suffer the most when the powerful clash. Many modern political analysts are mystified by the nature of the Soviet Union's political ties to the African continent in the 1970s (Patman, 1990). Identifying Moscow's foreign policy objectives in the Horn of Africa, for example, has been challenging due to years of harsh and ongoing conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia (Radoslav, 2016; Andargachew, 1993).

The Horn of Africa is the African continent's farthest eastern extension, and it is roughly defined in this article as "the countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda." The Somali Peninsula is part of the Horn of Africa region, which includes Somalia and Eastern Ethiopia.The original files from numerous archives in the Horn of Africa show that during the Cold War, Soviet foreign policy in the Third World was inconsistent in establishing a sequential narrative of Soviet reactions to important events in the region. This might be the consequence of internal political processes rather than a "grand plan"(Mohamed, 2009).

The Soviet Union's Horn of Africa policy was defined by a consistent code of behavior that blended aggression with caution. On the ground, this suppleness in foreign policy manifested itself in a series of cautious responses to local developments in an area of

ideological, political, and geostrategic significance for both superpowers. Thus, Moscow intervened by invitation rather than imposition in Somalia in the early 1960s and Ethiopia in the late 1970s (Mohamed, 2009).

There are two key distinctions between the Soviet Union's and Russia's African policy. First, during the Cold War, the Soviet Union acted directly in African nations with significant Western interests, whilst Russia concentrated on areas that the West disregarded until 2022. However, the recent Russian action in Mali, which contributed to the French departure, implies that behavior may be changing. Second, Russia's present strategy is less state-centered than that of the Soviet Union. Instead, Yevgeny Prigozhin, a St. Petersburg businessman, leads Russia's actions in Africa through a network of firms, notably the Wagner Group, a private military corporation. These organizations are not constitutionally recognized as part of the Russian state, but they are intimately associated with the Kremlin (Duursma & Masuhr, 2022).

As a result, Moscow is attempting to reclaim the "confidence" and influence it once held in Africa during the Soviet Union's heyday. Long-term alliances with nations (particularly impoverished ones) need financial commitment, but Russia's present approach is to attain its objectives on the cheap. In light of this, the Kremlin is eager to retain its presence in the minds of present and future African leaders through sustained bilateral diplomatic relations aimed at building the political way for meaningful economic involvement.One strategy Russia is employing to reestablish political credibility in Africa is to resurrect the old belief that Russia is not conquering the continent. Politicians and intellectuals have never shied away from claiming that Russia was never a colonial state in Africa, that it never formally departed the continent. Throughout this process, the Kremlin has used "ideology-free diplomacy" to resist the US objective of global hegemony, which is founded on Western-style democracy values (Walt, 2018).

The current state of Russian-African relations is usually seen as positive. Russia has diplomatic relations with every African country, most recently with South Sudan upon its independence in 2011. Russia maintains forty embassies in Africa, while 35 African countries have embassies in Moscow. The African Union, the Southern African Regional Economic Communities, the Economic Community of West African States,

the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and the East African Community all have Russian presence (Sputnik, 2021).

Putin's recent trips to Egypt, Algeria, South Africa, Morocco, and Libya have emphasized Moscow's growing interest in Africa. The visit to South Africa (Cape Town) in September 2006 was significant since it was the first visit to Sub-Saharan Africa by a Russian head of state. President Medvedev visited Nigeria, Angola, Namibia, and Egypt in April 2009. A vacation to Russia affected the choices of these countries.During his African visit, Medvedev was forthright about Russia's stance toward Africa, stating that "in the [19] 1990s, we did not pay much attention to distant continents, such as Africa and Latin America, but today we are simply forced to do so."(Kolesnichenko, 2009).

In addition, in response to a journalist's question, Medvedev said, "Frankly, it's nearly too late." We should have started working with our African partners sooner, especially because many of our ties with them are still intact and founded on decades of goodwill." (Makarenko, 2005).

Makarenko, a former director of the African Company at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is among those who believe that once the Soviet Union disintegrated, Russia's policy toward Africa made critical strategic mistakes. "What we lost was not worth retaining," he said.

The seeming rise of the "rising giants" or BRIC countries has transformed the power dynamics on the African continent. South Africa's entry to the group in 2010 expedited this trend. The BRICS group trades for around 30% (more than $200 billion) and invests for approximately 50-60 billion dollars with Africa. (Vasilyev & Korendyasov, 2013).

The addition of Russia in the BRICS group boosted their growth. The African carrier of its foreign policy, notably since the acquisition of South Africa. "This is a big development for the nations in the BRICS group because it adds a new continent to the club," says Arkady Dvorkovich, Russia's Sherpa President in the BRICS (and now Deputy Prime Minister). Leaders from four continents presently comprise the BRICS organization: Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America are all represented (Meyer & Pronina, 2011).

On a geopolitical level, Russian-African connections may be critical in reversing the historically disastrous tendency of one nation or a small number of countries governing the rest of the world, as well as keeping Russia from being isolated. Russia is committed to safeguarding African peace and security, and it collaborates with African countries and the African Union in this regard. Russia participates in the bulk of UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. In 2011, Russia participated in peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Western Sahara, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sudan, as well as training 180 police officers from 18 African countries. Russia also contributes to the African Union Peace Fund. On December 21, 2012, Vladimir Utkin, Russian ambassador to Ethiopia and Russian envoy to the African Union, signed an agreement with Ramtan Lamamra, African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, to transfer $2 million to the fund. (Bellamy & Williams, 2011).

Concerns about present or underlying dangers dominate ties between nations and regions in today's environment of insecurity and instability. Perhaps some Russian officials were referring about "transnational concerns" such as "refugee flows, terrorism, the illegal weapons trade, and drug smuggling," which "emerge from the African continent to other nations, including Russia." (Fidan, H., & Aras, 2010).

In truth, there have been situations where Africans travelled to Russia as drug carriers or were involved in drug trafficking. In the 1990s, a limited number of Africans, predominantly Arabs, were also involved in terrorist actions in Chechnya. A far greater number of Africans sought to use Russian territory as a transit point for illegal immigration to Western European countries. However, it appears that these threats have been exaggerated at the moment, and there is no immediate serious threat to Russian security emanating from Africa.

Definitions	**Soviet and Russian Engagement with Africa**	**Russia's Strategic Interests in Africa**
-Defines political interactions and provides a quote on the subject	Compares the African policy of the Soviet Union with Russia.	Discusses the importance of African ties for Russia's strategic interests and preventing isolation

-Discusses the different types of political links and their possible connections (declarative, economic, military)	Describes Russia's current approach and the role of Yevgeny Prigozhin and private military companies	Describes Russia's involvement in African peace and security, including United Nations peacekeeping deployments and support for the African Union Peace Fund
- Describes the setting of the Cold War and the struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States in Third World countries.	Discusses Russia's goal of regaining influence in Africa through bilateral diplomatic contacts and indirect confrontation with Western-style democracy.	Highlights concerns about transnational issues such as refugee flows, terrorism, illegal weapons trade, and drug smuggling

Table 3: Russian Political Engagement in Africa

2.2.2 Economic Opportunity

Academics have long been fascinated by the Soviet Union's foreign economic strategy in the Third World. As early as the mid-1960s, the Soviet Union supported governments in newly independent republics such as Ghana, Mali, and Guinea.The major political incentive for the USSR's assistance to these administrations was economic benefit. (Klinghoffer, 1969).

In Ghana, for example, the NLC (the military junta that overthrew Nkrumah's administration in 1966) accused Nkrumah of lending the Ghanaian economy to the Soviet Union and its satellites in Eastern Europe and China. Indeed, prior to the military taking power in Ghana, some opposition figures claimed that Nkrumah had imported shoddy goods from backward economies such as Eastern Europe and China, and that he had forced Ghana to sell up to 40% of its cocoa beans to the Soviet Union in exchange for hardware manufacturers with so little market in Ghana.

The Soviet Union's thrifty aid to Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as its growth as a supplier of commodities such as bauxite (from Guinea) and copper (from Zambia), testified to this economic strategy toward newly independent African countries. Establish

commercial ties with "capitalist-oriented" nations such as Nigeria, and use arms sales to produce hard currency (Kester, 2011; Atsushi, 2007).

These developments were declared in the 1980s as a result of the Soviet economy's uncertain state. Growing budget deficits, slowing growth rates, and obligations to Western creditors all provide compelling reasons for further restructuring of foreign economic links. These problems are worsened by a growing recognition of the onerous nature of many Third-World obligations.

According to a list of foreign debts published in the Soviet press in March 1990, developing countries owed a total of 42 billion rubles in debt owing to arms sales and delayed economic aid and trade credits - an amount equal to the Soviet Union's entire foreign debt at the time. Apart from India, the largest indebted countries are the socialist countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, Angola, Ethiopia, and Mozambique (Buszynski, 2014).

Despite the commercialization of relations that began in the late 1960s, there is little doubt that the majority of the debt was the result of Soviet mismanagement and disregard for Soviet economic interests. In an interview in August 1990, Deputy Minister of Foreign Economic Relations V.N. Bermistro, for example, remarked that, for political reasons, foreign aid and weaponry supplies were sometimes supplied to socialist-leaning regimes without consideration for their solvency or the need to repay them. The inability to repay places a substantial strain on the country as a whole Economy. According to one account, the Soviet Union received only approximately 30 to 40 percent of the money for weaponry sales.

These factors appear to be particularly relevant in Angola and Ethiopia. In the case of the former, the Soviet Union paid financial help until 1990. It pays the salaries of professionals working in the country and usually covers these expenses through loans, despite the fact that the partnership agreement includes provisions for local project financing (Barka & Mlambo, 2011).

The root of the debt, however, is significant purchases of weapons and ammunition. Despite the fact that it was paid for by oil sales until the mid-1980s, Angola accumulated massive arrears in the second half of the decade, totalling nearly 2 million

rubles by early 1989 (Chufrin,1992). However, because of Moscow's political interest in backing the MPLA regime's military efforts at the time, compensation payments were mostly ignored. Debt talks in 1989 resulted in the rescheduling of Angola's debt for 15 years. In Ethiopia, the situation is even worse. The Mengistu government was unable to pay Soviet military aid or give much less economic assistance due to the country's dire economic situation, resulting in huge debt in early 1989 (Davidson, Filatova, 2017; Heldman, 1981).

Several African countries will be unable to repay all of their loans by the end of the decade due to weak economic conditions. As a result, the Soviets decided to write off between 30 and 50 percent of the loans. Among the nations that benefitted were Ethiopia, Angola, Guinea, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Uganda (Radu & Klinghoffer, 1991).

As a result, when Shevardnadze toured Africa, he held bilateral negotiations with authorities and officials regarding how defaulting partners may seek to repay the USSR's remaining debt (Albright, 1992; Breslauer, 1992). Among the alternatives advised were commercial promissory notes and the transfer of raw materials as a charge structure in type (Guan-Fu, 1983). This research does not cover all of the nuances of the Soviet monetary family members in Africa.

Russia has grown more confident in its worldwide strategic aims after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the consequent ramifications of the viral war. As a result, the urge to explore financial chances abroad will not be overlooked. Moscow's financial aims in Africa, like the case for strategic integration with Africa, are founded on the premise that both Russia and Africa "need each other" to ensure "the security and power of the 60 percent of the world's ordinary assets, which are in Russia and Africa." (Lavrov, 2011).

The African continent, as a fast developing territory, continues to be a valuable financial bonus for Russia, acting as a source of natural assets, a target for advantageous speculative projects, and a "virgin market" for equipment items and specialist products. (Lavrov, 2011). Russia’s trade with Africa, about $20 billion, is mostly centered on arms and food exports, with Russian parastatals such as Rosneft and Lukoil competing for contracts in the metals, gems, and oil sectors (Siegel, 2021). Russia's participation

in these businesses adds professional expertise and finance, but the terms of these agreements are mostly hidden, making it impossible to estimate their real worth or the duties they may impose on African countries. Russia is known to manage the assets of roughly two dozen African countries.

Russia is the continent's largest arms exporter, accounting for about half of the total arms market (Florent et al., 2020 & Nmeková, T; Melnikovová, L; & Piskunova, N, 2021). Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Sudan, Senegal, and Zambia are among the top African purchasers of Russian armaments. These weapons are noted for their low cost, durability, and ease of upkeep, and African countries are rapidly purchasing more modern equipment from Russia, including as combat planes, helicopters, tanks, and air patrol systems (Sukhankin, 2020). Russia is commonly suspected of selling weaponry to Africa as part of "arms for assets" transactions, in which military equipment is exchanged for access to natural resources or other strategic benefits.

Russia is also looking at developing nuclear energy in Africa. Rosatom granted a $25 billion loan in 2020 to start building of Egypt's biggest nuclear power station, which is anticipated to cost $60 billion. However, due to the high cost and restricted nuclear energy market in Africa, Russian enterprises in the region may find this industry less viable. Russia, on the other hand, is said to be in negotiations with seventeen African nations and to have inked preliminary nuclear deals with Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, and Zambia (Sukhankin, 2020).

As a result, one of Russia's long-term foreign goals is to build profitable trading and speculative linkages with the main Middle and Near Eastern, as well as African, countries.Some of the monetary demands unknown to Moscow are now being processed in Africa (albeit some are already completed) are:

1. Exploration, development, and mining of natural gas, oil, uranium, and bauxite resources. Angola, Nigeria, Sudan, South Africa, and Namibia are the most common.

2. Power-hydroelectric power facilities on the Congo River (in Angola, Zambia, Namibia, and Equatorial Guinea) and atomic power plants (in South Africa and Nigeria) are being built.

3. The development of a floating thermal power plant, as well as South Africa's participation in the worldwide initiative to establish an atomic boosting site in Russia.

4. Railway line expansion (in Angola, Guinea, and Nigeria);

5. Russian exchange communities planning to advance and keep up with Russian design elements (in Nigeria and South Africa). (Russian, December 2008)

Category	**Examples**
Soviet foreign economic policy in the Third World	- Sponsorship of newly independent republics like Ghana, Mali, and Guinea - Economic gains as main political motivation - Frugal aid to Sub-Saharan Africa - Development as a source of commodities like bauxite and copper
Soviet debt in Africa	- Developing nations owed a total of 42 billion rubles in debt - Debt due to arms sales and overdue economic aid and trade credits - Large purchases of weapons and ammunition - Soviet mismanagement and disrespect of Soviet economic interests - Debt discussions in 1989 resulted in debt rescheduling for 15 years - Soviet Union wrote off 30 to 50% of loans
Russia’s current approach to Africa	- Pursuing financial opportunities elsewhere - Viewing Africa as a vital cash bonus for Russia - Serving as a source of natural assets - Target for favorable speculative ventures

	- "Virgin market" for equipment goods and specialty products - Trade with Africa mostly centered on arms and food exports - Involvement in industries brings expert knowledge and financing - Exploring opportunities to develop nuclear energy in Africa
Russian arms sales to Africa	- Russia is Africa's largest arms exporter - Nearly half of the continent's total arms market - Affordable, durable, and easy to maintain weapons - Arms sales used in "arms for assets" deals
Russian involvement in nuclear energy in Africa	- Rosatom has authorized a $25 billion loan to start building Egypt's largest nuclear power plant. - Limited nuclear energy market in Africa - Russia is said to be in negotiations with seventeen African nations, including Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, and Zambia, and to have signed preliminary nuclear deals with them.
Russian monetary demands in Africa	- Discovery, development, and mining of gas, oil, uranium, and bauxite resources - Construction of power plants and thermal power plants - Railway line expansion - Advancement and maintenance of Russian design elements in African exchange communities

Table 4: Russia's Economic and Military Interests in Africa

2.2.2.1 Mineral and Energy Resources

Russia, like China, wants to expand its influence in Africa by reestablishing its sphere of influence on the continent. Unlike the IMF and the World Bank, Russia's approach to trade and investment in Africa does not include any severe prescriptions or conditions. Russia's aim to enhance its influence in Africa involves strategic energy and resource investments, as well as military and soft power methods (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 2019).

Africa’s natural resources are becoming increasingly important to Russia’s economic development, especially since its mineral stocks are expected to be depleted within the next decade. While Russia has huge deposits of untapped natural resources, they are often difficult to access and produce. As a result, Russia's quest for essential minerals such as manganese, zinc, copper, platinum, and nickel in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries makes financial sense. The majority of Russian financial investment in Africa has concentrated on areas where Russian enterprises were most dynamic and effective in the post-Soviet period, notably in the extraction of ferrous and nonferrous metals, gemstones, and energy (Gerasimchuk, 2009; Barka and Mlambo, 2011).

Russia’s involvement in Africa has grown significantly this century, with a notable focus on energy. The oil, gas, and nuclear energy sectors are Russia’s main areas of investment in Africa, and the lack of access to electricity for 620 million Africans represents a potential market for the Russian nuclear energy industry. Several Russian state-owned enterprises, notably Gazprom, Lukoil, and Rostec and Rosatom, are present in Africa, particularly in Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Nigeria, and Uganda. Negotiations with Moscow to construct Egypt's first nuclear power plant have already concluded. These investments are frequently tied to military and diplomatic objectives. Furthermore, Russia is interested in African natural resources, particularly in Zimbabwe, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Namibia, and the Central African Republic. For example, Russia is exploiting one of Zimbabwe's greatest resources of platinum group minerals (Business and Human Rights Resource Center, 2019).

Russia is repairing ties with Angola, where the Russian mining company Alrosa has a diamond mine. Discussions between Russia and Angola have also focused on hydrocarbon extraction, with Namibia being another point of interest. Russia dispatched a team of military trainers and 170 "civilian advisors" to Bangui, Central African Republic, in 2017 to educate the country's army and presidential guard. Soon after, nine shipments of guns arrived in the Central African Republic, and the focus shifted to exploring the country's natural riches through concession deals. The assassination of three Russian journalists in a distant corner of Central African Republic last year, on the other hand, has brought attention to what looks to be a Kremlin-led push for influence and resources in the region (Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, 2019).

Russia is one of the world's top energy exporters, with gas and oil accounting for 66% of its total exports. The number of active depositories of these fundamental monetary assets, on the other hand, is progressively declining, while holdings of difficult-to-access assets are expanding. As a result, in order to achieve its energy program and continue to fund its annual budget, Russia must enhance its oil and gas reserves. Russian-African collaboration is considered to be critical in deciding the trajectory of Russia's bright energy endeavor for the year 2030. As Europe's increasing energy consumption and reliance on Russian oil and gas imports put pressure on the Kremlin to seek alternative energy sources, Africa, with its rich wealth of crude oil reserves and deposits of natural gas and other minerals, is a strong draw for Russian energy companies (Barka & Mlambo, 2011; Oliker, et al., 2009).

Sub-Saharan African countries' energy savings have recently piqued the interest of designers from Russia and elsewhere. Angola is Sub-Saharan Africa's second largest oil producer after Nigeria, and current study indicates that Angola's oil reserves total 72 billion barrels. Discovered Origins (Hemsted, 2003).

African production prices will be particularly appealing to Russian energy corporations. Her desires to remain in Africa tethered her to military responsibilities and possessions. As an example, the budget code for Algeria is $7.5 billion. Algerian oil and gas concessions have been acquired by Gazprom and Lukoil (Barka & Mlambo, 2011).

2.2.2.2 Trade

Russia and Africa appear to have little in common as trading partners when compared to other established nations and many rising economic sectors throughout the world. The absolute trading volume between the two groups peaked in 2008 at $7.3 billion, which is considerable from an African standpoint. It would not, however, be enough to provide Moscow a competitive advantage in luring African governments, since China and the united governments outpaced Russia in terms of exchange volumes. In 2012, for example, the amount of trade between Africa and the United States was $93.2 billion, whereas the volume of trade between China and Africa was $163.9 billion (United States Census Bureau, 2012) .

South Africa has been a steady source of strength for Russia's participation since the Soviet era. However, the yearly reciprocal trade value between Russia and South Africa climbed by just 0.5% in 2010 to $519.1 million, and Russian export exchange declined significantly.

The product volume declined by 74.5%, from $195.2 million in 2009 to $45.8 million in 2010. Although bilateral exchange turnover climbed by 7.9% to $234 million in the first half of 2011, it pales in compared to the ZAR188 billion in two-way esteem exchange between China and South Africa in the same fiscal year. According to publicly accessible statistics, the respective business agreement between Moscow and South Africa is the smallest among the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China).

Moscow declared a willingness to restart tactical engagement and military sales to Africa about 2003. Russia is presently the world's second-largest arms dealer (behind the united governments) and a prominent weaponry provider to African governments. Although China and the United States are key weapons exporters in Africa, they behind Russia, which provided 49% of the continents, imported arms between 2013 and 2017. This is roughly double the amount acquired from the United States (14%) and China (13%) combined (Wezeman, & Wezeman, 2020).

Despite the fact that the 2019 Russia-Africa Summit in Sochi, Russia, was dominated by agreements in thermal power, oil, gas, farming, and precious stones, military

engagement and military equipment were among the main draws for African heads of state (TASS, 2019). Following the conclusion, Nigeria acquired 12 MI-35 Attack Helicopters and inked a training and equipment deal, and various nations bargained for more arrangements to "add to the 21 military arrangements acknowledged over the most recent five years among Russia and Africa." Russia currently has military agreements with South Africa, Burkina Faso, Mali, Sudan, Suriname, and the Republic of the Congo, increasing the total number of Sub-Saharan African agreements to more over 100. Between 2015 and 2019, twelve Sub-Saharan African heads of state visited Russia (six of them in 2018) to launch or deepen bilateral or multilateral economic partnerships (Kremlin.ru,2019).

According to publicly available evidence, Moscow's aggressive ambitions to dominate the African arms trade stretch over the whole continent. Algeria, for example, has acquired 12 Su-34 planes and Terminator II assault vehicles from Russia, and it is said that it plans to purchase twelve Su-57 jets. Between 2013 and 2015, Algeria purchased 42 Mi-28N combat helicopters, 8 Mi-26 vehicle helicopters, and two Project 636 Varshavyanka (Kilo-class) submarines. Algeria and Russia had significant mutual relations throughout the Soviet period, with Algeria spending around 11 billion dollars between 1962 and 1989 on the most modern Soviet deadly weaponry such as tanks, planes, different warships, small guns, and ammunition. However, the fall of the Soviet Union, as well as Algeria's internal conflict throughout the 1990s, weakened Russia-Algeria ties (Nkala, 2016).

Despite its reputation as a worldwide armaments provider, Russia continues to trail the United States of America. Between 2015 and 2019, Russia's worldwide weapons sales declined by 18%, while the United States saw a 23% increase in sales. African countries are at the bottom of the arms market, with many unable to buy Western weaponry and instead turning to Russia and China. Although Russia has not made public its system of weaponry sales to African countries, it sees Africa as an open door that it may investigate (ReliefWeb, 2019).



Map 2: Russia s Activity in Africa (The Kremlin's Inroads After the Africa Summit, ISW)

2.2.2.3 Education

It is believed that between 50,000 and 250,000 Africans were educated in or by the Soviet Union throughout the Soviet period. Many enrolled in Peoples' Friendship University in Moscow, which was founded in commemoration of former Congolese independence leader Patrice Lumumba. Those trained in Soviet Russia went on to impact vital industries in Africa, such as health and manufacturing. After the demise of the Soviet Union, Russian education among Africans fell substantially, but Putin's efforts to influence the minds of Africa's younger generations have been reinvigorated. At least 17,000 African students were enrolled at Russian colleges as of 2019. State-owned enterprises in Africa are also becoming platforms for Kremlin soft-power initiatives; Rosatom, for example, finances science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education programs as well as scholarships for African students to study in Russia (Katsakioris, 2021).

Russia's objective is to increase the number of African students studying in the country to 15,000 by 2025. Russia has established a number of measures to attain this aim, including the "Russia and Africa Scholarships" program, which provides full scholarships to African students studying at institutions (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019). Russia continues to foster educational and cultural contacts with Africa. An estimated 15,000 African students from Nigeria, Angola, Morocco, Namibia, and Tunisia attend Russian colleges. This shows consistent development, which Moscow claims will continue. Given the scarcity of postsecondary education possibilities for many Africans, these scholarships are much appreciated by the winners. They also foster close and long-term connections with these individuals, who frequently advance to prominent positions in government (Waruru, 2019).

Aside from scholarships, Russia has formed educational relationships with African nations and colleges. Russia, for example, has inked agreements to build cooperative research institutes and exchange programs with numerous African nations, including South Africa and Egypt.

Rosatom is also a component of Russia's modest soft power presence in Africa. It supports teaching programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, as well as scientific contests for high school and college students. Rosatom also provides scholarships to African students studying in Russia. These educational possibilities might be especially valuable for talented African students who do not have the financial means to study in Europe or the United States. In July, Deputy Foreign Minister Bogdanov reported that around 15,000 African students are now studying in Russia (Rosatom, 2019).

Another important aspect of Russian education strategy in Africa is the promotion of Russian language and culture. Russia has established Russian language centers in many African countries and has increased its support for African students to study Russian language and culture. Foreign Policy Research Institute, 21 February 2020

In general, Russia’s education strategy in Africa aims to build long-term relations with African countries and create a new generation of African leaders with strong ties to Russia. This policy is considered as an important component of Russia's larger

ambitions to expand its influence in Africa (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019).

2.2.2.4 Security Export and the Wagner Group

Russia's focus on providing security-related services to African countries—arguably, the Kremlin's primary competitive advantage in the contest for African resources and influence with other global powers.

The experts of the Valdai Club wrote the article "Global Threats in 2018: Forecasting Security Challenges for Russia and the World." The document asserts, among other things, a "Russian responsibility, alongside the United States, China, and the European Union, to maintain peace and security throughout the world" (Sushentsov, 2018), effectively legitimizing Moscow's so-called "security export" (eksport bezopasnosti) strategy as a means of becoming a stakeholder in strategically important countries/regions plagued by military-political instability" (terrorism, civil wars, social unrest). (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

Between 2015 and 2019, Russia signed more than 19 agreements with African nations on military-technical cooperation. In addition to the wide range of "goods and services" provided to African clients, Russian authorities frequently invoked memories of Soviet assistance and support provided to African nations during their liberation and anti-colonial struggle; b) the rejection of all forms of racism and discrimination; and c) the religious component as a form of non-materialism (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

Mikhail Bogdanov (the Russian president's special envoy for the Middle East and African countries and a former deputy foreign minister) has been "allocated" responsibility for Russia's "African vector" since at least 2017 (Moscow Times, 2019).

Bogdanov was involved in the preparations for the Russia-Africa Summit and Economic Forum in Sochi.Bogdanov has also made considerable implicit attempts to facilitate Moscow's military-technical cooperation with certain African nations (Moscow Times, 2019).

The Russian "security export" system in Africa is officially based on two basic components: The first is weaponry sales, with rising interest from countries in Sub-Saharan Africa other than Russia's traditional North African clients Egypt and Algeria.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Florent et la, 2019), Russia is now the largest supplier of weapons and munitions to Africa (35%), with Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, and Nigeria serving as key consumers. Furthermore, African countries accounted for 13% of Russia's total export portfolio between 2013 and 2017 (Wezeman, & Wezeman, 2020).

It is also worth looking at the location of Russian arms exports: in terms of heavy weapons and armored equipment, North Africa dominates for players in Sub-Saharan Africa, but the gap between the two is closing. When it comes to Sub-Saharan clients, it should be highlighted that these countries are more willing to buy newer, more modern and more expensive weaponry (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

According to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Russia has supplied arms to 18 Sub-Saharan African countries over the last decade, including Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia. African countries favor Russian-made weaponry because they are less expensive and more dependable than Western armaments. Many African forces have stockpiles from the Soviet era that are compatible with current Russian weaponry, and Russian arms contracts sometimes contain provisions for modernizing or repairing Soviet-vintage equipment. Although information on these projects are scant, sources suggest that Russia and South Africa have collaborated on defense production, with a joint helicopter repair facility in existence since 2013 and plans for a manufacturing center by the Russian defense firm Kalashnikov . (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

The second kind of Russian “security export” is counterterrorism and counter-insurgency training and advising services, which are becoming increasingly popular with both Moscow and customers in North Africa (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Egypt). Concerning North Africa, it is worth noting the increased cooperation between Russian defense ministries and the African countries involved. North African countries (where terrorism has been a major threat for decades) are eager to work with Russia in the aforementioned sector. The same motives are now tempting governments in Sub-Saharan Africa (Stronski, 2019).

This Russian "security export" strategy may be divided into two macro-elements: paramilitary aid to local regimes and informational or "political technology" operations. Russian authorities frequently invoke recollections of Soviet assistance and support provided to African nations during their liberation and anti-colonial struggle, the rejection of all forms of racism and discrimination, and the religious component as a type of non-materialism (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

The paramilitary component involves the deployment of military advisors to provide assistance to certain political regimes by:

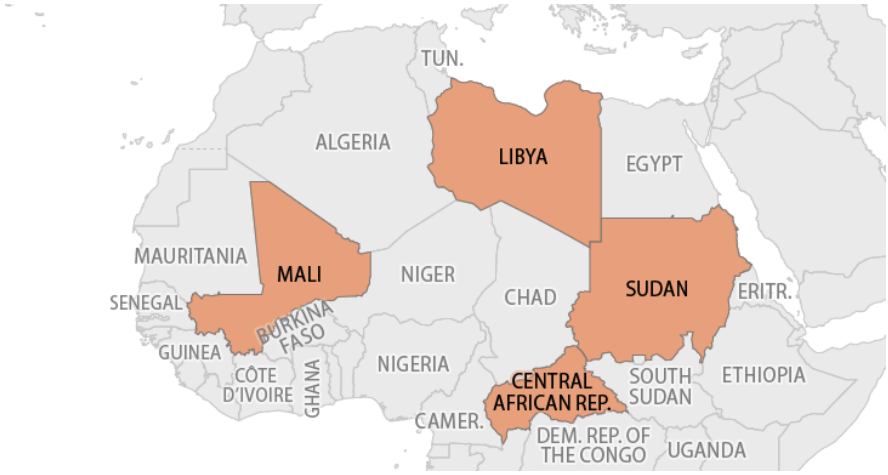
-Local military personnel/militia loyal to governing elites are being trained;

-Participating in the repression of popular revolts/uprisings against the government;

-Critical infrastructure and key raw material extraction locations must be safeguarded.;

-Security services for the local political and financial elite (Borshchevskaya, 2019).

The primary problem with these suggested services, which are routinely (with the exception of the second item) performed by a large number of Russian PMCs, is that Russia does not have legal entities of this type. As a result, Russia sends individuals from its active military as part of UN-authorized "peacekeeping troops"; but, behind this cover, Moscow secretly dispatches soldiers from illegal/mercenary formations to the region (Sukhankin, 2019).



Map 3: Areas of high activity for Russia's Wagner Group in Africa (EveryCRSReport.com, 2023)

Russian PMCs have reportedly been engaged in Africa since at least the late 1990s, when a number of Russian security firms (made up of former military/security personnel) reportedly attempted (without much success) to supply their services to Russian industries in the African market.

While stepping up its efforts in Africa, Russia is taking a two-pronged strategy. Contacts are maintained at the official level by large state-backed firms and official bodies, with the aforementioned Bogdanov acting as a key intermediary. Unofficially, the main role appears to have been entrusted to Yevgeny Prigozhin, a Russian oligarch best known as the financier of the infamous Wagner Group PMC (El-Badawy et la, 2022).Prigozhin got actively interested in "African issues" in late 2017-early 2018. His own jet, in particular, flew to African countries multiple times. Based on Prigozhin's personal travels, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Libya, Madagascar, Angola, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo appear to have gained prominence on the Russian side. It is worth emphasizing that these countries are experiencing socio-political turmoil, are rich in strategically important natural resources, and have been used to establish the zones of influence of players such as France, Belgium, and Portugal (El-Badawy et la, 2022).

In 2018, Prigozhin allegedly travelled around Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and African nations including Egypt, Sudan, Kenya, and Chad. At least two Wagner Group fighters were on his jet, presumably as bodyguards. "The conversations in Khartoum

dealt with the problem of stabilizing the situation in the Central African Republic," according to Russian Foreign Ministry information (Sukhankin 2020).

The Russian strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa is similar to that used in Syria: Moscow strikes a deal with the country's leadership in exchange for privileged access to the target country's natural resources in exchange for covert military support. Under this strategy, a portion of the revenues are allegedly directed to the Russian state budget (through the specific companies/companies). At the same time, the remaining is distributed to those with close links to the government. Following rumors of Russian mercenaries being sent to the Central African Republic and Sudan in October-November 2017, Lobaye Invest and M-Invest (Russian firms affiliated with Prigozhin) obtained licenses to extract gold, diamonds, uranium, and other precious metals in these countries the following year (Liuhto, & Vahtra, 2007).

Hired warriors from the Wagner Group (intentionally linked to Russia's tactical intelligence unit, GRU) have been delivered in Libya, Central African Republic, Sudan, and Mozambique. Following the Syrian model, the Russians supported an overburdened pioneer confronted with a security issue in a topographically important nation with mineral or hydrocarbon riches in each instance.

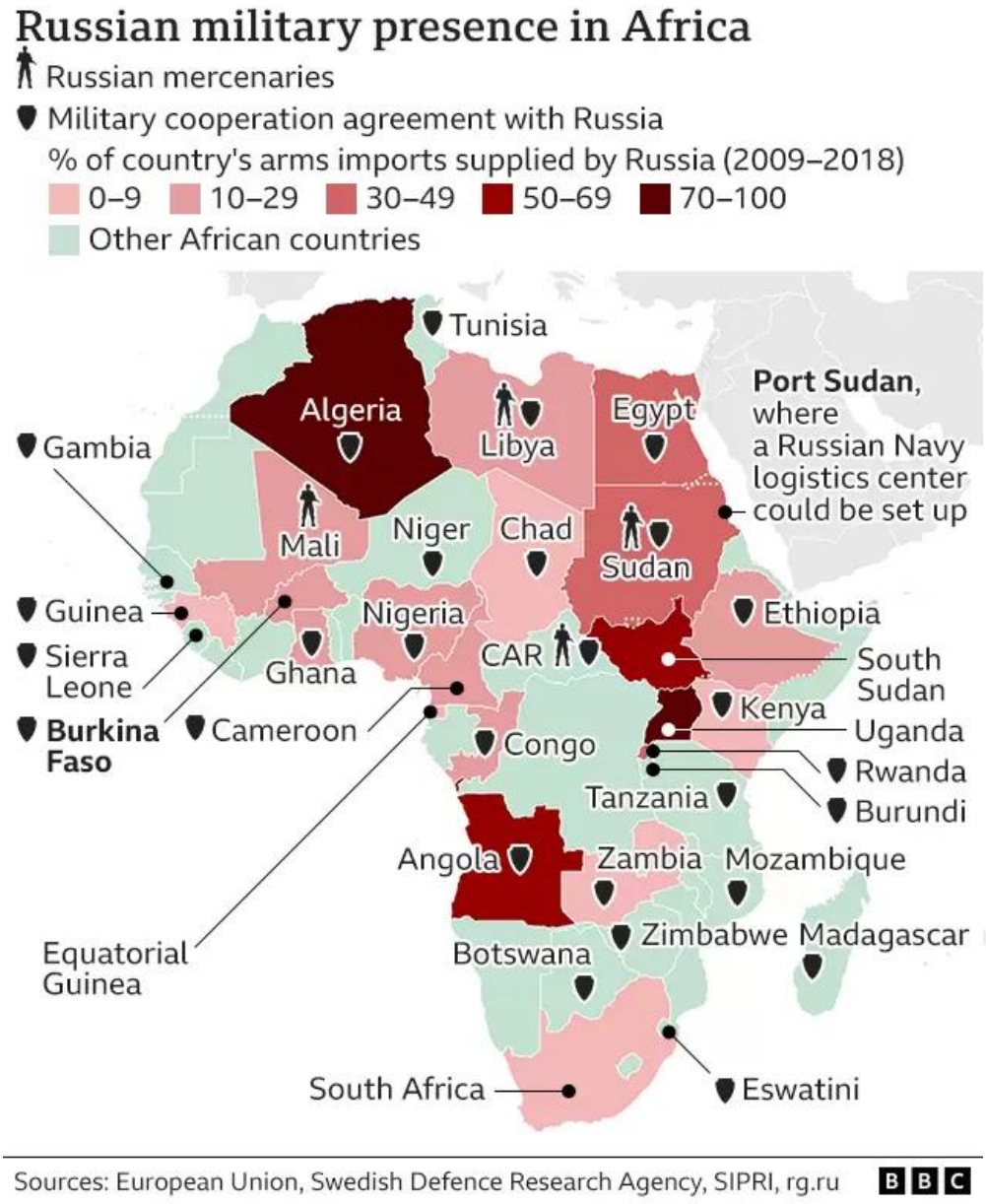
In addition to its Libya mediation, Russia reached an agreement with the CAR's chosen leader, Faustin-Archange Touadéra, in 2018 to assist in combating the Islamist Seleka local army meetings. An estimated 400 Wagner soldiers were dispatched to northern CAR. Wagner was also involved with repelling another.

Following flawed elections in December 2020 that put Touadéra in office with active Russian help, dissidents on Bangui became hostile. Touadéra's policy decisions and CAR's power are jeopardized since he is reliant on the Russians for security (El-Badawy et la, 2022).

Russia was a supporter of Sudan's long-serving tyrant, Omer al-Bashir. This included the establishment of Wagner forces to assist the Sudanese military in reaching gold resources in the country's west. When Bashir was confronted with cross-country discontent in 2019, the Wagner Group allegedly advised him to be harsh on the dissidents. Russia appears to have maintained effect with the tactical pioneers who

eventually brought down Bashir, including maintaining freshly agreed mining connections (El-Badawy et la, 2022).

The Wagner organisation, also known as PMC Wagner, ChVK Wagner, or CHVK Vagner, is Russia's best-known private military (mercenary) organisation that operates in various African nations, despite local governments' denials. Dmitry Utkin, its founder, is a former officer in the General Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Russian Federation's Armed Forces. Some records, however, appear to demonstrate that Wagner's CEO is St. Petersburg billionaire Yevgeny Prigozhin. The Wagner Group is present in at least half of Africa's countries in various ways and forms. It has undoubtedly been detected in Libya, Sudan, Mozambique, and the Central African Republic. The nations that employ or have utilized private military units were recently identified by Jade Andrzejewski and Albane Violleau, co-authors of a paper on private military units, and the Observatoire étudiant des relations internationales (El-Badawy et la, 2022).



Map 4: Russian military presence in Africa

CHAPTER 3: THE POSITION OF WESTERN COUNTRIES ON THE GORWING RUSSIAN INFLUENCE IN AFRICA

3.1 The American Position

Russia's tactical influence in Africa is progressively rising through arms deals, security arrangements, and training programs for fragile governments or authoritarian regimes. As Washington struggles to fulfill its financial and security goals, US officials are anxious about Russia and China's rising influence. Esper's assessment generated controversy in Congress, with both Republicans and Democrats arguing that reducing US hegemony in Africa would only benefit US adversaries.

An exit from land would certainly embolden both Russia and China.Supporting US interests in Africa, the delegates said, is "a check against rivals trying to expand their influence on the mainland".According to US sources, Russia has shown interest in creating a naval coordinated operations center in Eritrea, although it is unclear how far those conversations have advanced. Russian military transport planes arrived last summer in the Cabo Delgado region of northern Mozambique and transferred roughly 160 soldiers working for the Wagner Group, a Russian private military operator for hire, according to US officials.

The Russian military presence in Mozambique continues the tendency of Russia to exercise its influence in the security circle around the world. Despite the increased Russian commitment, US officials believe there is no evidence that Moscow is helping African countries tackle extremist psychological threats.

"China and Russia are doing nothing to help prevent bigoted groups that seek to deny Africans their future other than providing weapons for their own financial gain," the brigadier stated. Last month, Gen. Gregory Hadfield, Africa Command's regional knowledge head, told reporters via phone. 2020 (The New York Times, 2020)

The journey came shortly after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov visited Africa in July 2022, visiting Egypt, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and Uganda. The new strategic plan demonstrated the present administration's grave worry about Russia's stance. The article warns of the Wagner Security Company's military alliance and the damaging Russian roles that work with African governments by

monitoring security and intelligence information, as well as producing instability in international and regional peace and security in the region.

The document also warns that the military partnership between African countries and Moscow aims to achieve the strategic and economic benefit of Russia, and not for the benefit of the people of African countries, and that Moscow uses these relations to create, gain support, and undermine the position of African countries in order to justify its invasion of Ukraine.

The Russian-Ukrainian war demonstrated Russia's rising influence on the African continent, particularly during the UN vote condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine.The resolution was supported by 25 African countries, while the remaining countries either abstained or did not vote on it. This step demonstrates the strength of Russia's approach in its relations with African countries, as Moscow avoids interfering in African countries' internal policies and instead presents itself as a partner in various fields, with guarantees and without threatening any restrictions, which African leaders accepted.

The United States' new document for Africa is viewed as insufficient to meet the challenges of a more competitive world, and the proposed tools presented by the document are not suitable for troubled African countries suffering from ethnic, tribal, and national background conflicts. In addition, the US statute, known as the Anti-Russian Malicious Activities Act in Africa, puts pressure on African governments that collaborate with any Russian body, resulting in sanctions by the US administration. Many African people and governments have expressed anger at this law.

The Ukraine war pushed numerous African countries to open up further to Russia in order to alleviate their fears about food security. This coupled with the fact that 25 African countries did not denounce Russia over the Ukraine crisis in the United Nations General Assembly, is the strongest indication of Russia's rising influence on the continent. On the other hand, the West has begun to lose influence in a number of African nations in favor of Russia and China. Observers agree that African support for Moscow stems from the fact that Russia does not have a colonial history in Africa and backed national liberation movements. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken verified this during a food security forum in Berlin in August 2022, saying that Russia puts

limitations on food shipments and selects the date and destination depending on political considerations. According to the most recent US Department of Agriculture data, traditional markets for Black Sea grains are mostly centered in Indonesia, Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Morocco, hence some feel Russia has already achieved this. None of these nations was among the 93 that voted against Russia at the Human Rights Council in April last year (Khalil, 2022).

US Position on the Matter

The United States has expressed concerns about the growing influence of Russia in Africa, citing the country's military activities, economic engagements, and political interference. In a speech delivered in 2018, the former US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, warned African leaders about the dangers of dealing with Russia, stating, "Russia advances its own interests, often at the expense of others. It is time for African countries to carefully consider the terms of those investments, who benefits from them and whether they contribute to your future prosperity and sovereignty" (Sullivan, 2021)

Military Activities

The United States has raised concerns about the military activities of Russia in Africa, particularly in countries such as Libya and the Central African Republic. According to a report by the European Council on Foreign Relations, Russia has deployed mercenaries and military advisors in these countries, supporting various factions and destabilizing the regions (Sukhankin, 2019). The United States has condemned these actions, calling for an end to the conflict and the withdrawal of foreign troops.

Economic Engagements

Russia has also increased its economic engagements in Africa, signing numerous trade and investment deals with various countries. The United States has expressed concerns about the terms and conditions of these deals, as well as their potential impact on the African economies. In an article published by the Brookings Institution, Witney Schneidman and Judd Devermont argue that "Russia's focus on resource extraction and arms sales is a throwback to the Soviet era and does not reflect the economic priorities of African countries" (Brookings, 2020). The United States has called for greater

transparency and accountability in these deals, ensuring that they benefit the African people.

Political Interference

The United States has also raised concerns about the political interference of Russia in Africa, citing the country's support for authoritarian regimes and opposition to democratic institutions. In an article published by the Council on Foreign Relations, John Campbell argues that "Russia has a history of supporting authoritarian governments in Africa, and the Kremlin sees them as natural allies" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2019). The United States has called for greater respect for human rights and democratic values in Africa, opposing any attempts by Russia to undermine these principles.

Concerns Raised by the United States	**Examples and Evidence of Russian Influence in Africa**	**African Response to Russian Influence**	**US Response to Russian Influence**
-Military activities of Russia in Africa	Arms agreements, security arrangements, and training programs in unstable states or authoritarian leaders Russian private military operator for hire in Mozambique Interest in establishing a naval coordinated operations center in Eritrea	Opening up to Russia to alleviate fears about food security Anger towards the US statute, known as the Anti-Russian Malicious Activities Act in Africa Support for Moscow due to lack of colonial history in Africa and backing of national liberation movements	Warning African leaders about the dangers of dealing with Russia Calling for an end to conflict and withdrawal of foreign troops Calling for greater transparency and accountability in trade and investment deals Opposing any attempts by Russia to undermine human rights and democratic values in Africa

Table 5: Russian Influence in Africa: Concerns, Examples, and US Responses

3.2. Russo-French Rivalry in Africa

France has historically viewed Africa, particularly West Africa and the Sahel, as its traditional area of control and influence. Because of this history, France is increasingly asserting its prestige and position in the international community, as it relies on the voting bloc of the countries of the region. In addition, the region serves as a major market for French exports and an important source of natural resources and wealth, especially as it has become essential to the energy security of many Western countries, particularly in the fields of oil, gas and uranium.

Paris sees the region as a critical defense against Europe's security concerns, particularly given the importance of the Mediterranean coast in battling terrorist groups and illegal migration from Africa to Europe. France's presence in the region allows it to carefully monitor and influence a wide range of regional concerns, including the Libyan conflict, ties with North African nations, interactions in the eastern Mediterranean, and the security situation in the Red Sea to the east. Furthermore, the Sahel and Sahara countries serve as a doorway to the heart of Africa and its western area, making them critical to France's regional policy. (Askar, 2021).

Russia aims to restore its position as a major global power by expanding its influence in Africa, with an increasing focus on the Sahel region. The strategic location of the region as a hub linking five different African regions provides Moscow with an opportunity to establish strong relations with countries in the region, which can enhance their international support in the face of Western, especially American, sanctions (Mbembe, 2023).

This expanding Russian influence in the region has disturbed European authorities, with the European Union's foreign policy coordinator, Josep Borrell, urging Russia not to intervene in Africa, arguing that it is "our place." Furthermore, in an effort to balance its influence with that of European countries, Russia has obstructed the recruitment of European specialists to monitor violations of UN sanctions in Central Africa, Mali, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This step comes after an international group of experts accused Russian forces, including the Wagner Group, and government forces of targeting civilians and engaging in large-scale looting in Central Africa, which Moscow denied (Bassou, 2023).

Russia's strategy of cultivating its economic and political influence in developing markets, particularly Africa, is a source of concern for France. The Sahel and Central African Republic are the battlegrounds of Franco-Russian competition, and both are former French colonies that still arouse France's interest. The Sahel region is weak due to the presence of Salafi-jihadi organizations on the borders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. Civil violence has wracked the Central African Republic. France has led Operation Barkhane in the Sahel region since 2014, with the objective of combating jihadism while protecting the interests of French companies Total and Areva. This military deployment is complemented by a €2 billion development aid package (2013 to 2018) and is supported by the armed forces of the G5 nations (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauretania, and Niger), as well as British, Canadian, and Estonian personnel . Russia has a strong presence in Mali and Burkina Faso through military cooperation and arms sales, and also undermines France's ties with the G5 through propaganda on social media. Moreover, since France's participation in the Central African Republic has waned since the conclusion of the peacekeeping mission Sangaris in 2016, Russia's interest in the country has grown. The CAR's geographical location is critical from the Russian perspective, as it shares borders with the Sahel and Sudan, both of which have traditionally been influenced by Russia. Diamond mines controlled by Russia in the country's north are also noteworthy.

While France and Russia have similar aims in the African region, such as assisting local governments in their fight against terrorism and development cooperation, they differ in their approach. France encourages democracy, electoral consistency, and consensus, while Russia is more interested in power stability and unification. Additionally, France's colonial history and the former Soviet Union's "international assistance" have left a negative impression on the peoples of Mali, Burkina Faso, and the Central African Republic, with some accusing French forces of being ineffective and careless about the safety of locals in the operational area. ssia's growing influence in Africa was of concern to many Western powers, including France. France has historical ties with many African countries and has been actively involved in the continent's development for many years. As such, the increase of Russian influence in Africa has raised questions about France's role on the continent, and its ability to maintain its position as a major player in African affairs. According to a report by the European Parliament, Russia is

actively seeking to increase its influence in Africa by providing military support, economic aid, and political alliances to various African countries (Siegle, 2021).

This raised concern among the Western powers, who fear that Russia is growing presence in Africa will undermine their interests in the region. France, in particular, has expressed concern about Russia's growing influence in Africa (Reuters, 2022). French President Emmanuel Macron, in a speech at the annual Munich Security Conference in 2019, called for greater European cooperation in Africa, stating that "the African continent is prey to a growing presence of forces that promote their own model, and undermine the sovereignty of African states".

While Macron did not specifically mention Russia in his speech, many saw it as an implicit criticism of Russia's actions in Africa. Therefore, the military coups in West African countries are seen as an expression of the failure of French President Emmanuel Macron in the region, with Russia fueling and supporting these coups (Al-Arabi, 2022).

This resulted in the formation of military elites in a number of West African countries that gravitated towards Russia after losing hope in increasing French support in the face of armed organizations. Because of this military elite instilled with nationalism and rejection of French hegemony, its departments are sensitive to the influence of Paris and ceded some of their national sovereignty to the former colonizer (Reuters, 2022).

Some officers in the Sahel armies, in particular, believe that France's strategy to combat terrorism has failed because sending a limited number of French and European forces to fight armed groups is insufficient and does not lead to an effective result on the ground, but rather strengthens French hegemony over their country instead of liberating it from the grip of terrorism. (Reuters, 2022)

The financiers are an example of the failure of French politics. Armed groups controlled 20% of the country in 2012, and with the participation of the French army, these groups currently control 80% of Mali. Despite this strategic partnership in the Takuba military operation with France and its European allies, African countries continue to rely on Russian weapons in the fight against terrorism, and many African officers have been trained to use these weapons in Russian military academies or by

Russian experts, which leads them to yearn to greater cooperation with Moscow (Al-Arabi, 2022).

Russia provides weapons to African forces without the strict restrictions imposed by Western countries, not to mention the huge price disparity between cheap Russian weapons that meet the limited budgets of African countries and exorbitant prices for French weapons, which can often exceed ten times the price of Russian weapons. Russian weapons. This was evident when Russia provided Mali with military helicopters and high-quality weapons, something France had not done in the past nine years, which made Moscow the preferred choice for African soldiers, especially given the country's long history of cooperation with Moscow that dates back to the Soviet Union and years. First independence in the sixties (Irish, J., Pineau, E. & Felix, 2023)

The conflict between the African army, anti-French "national socialist" motives and pragmatic politicians closer to Paris reflects the Russian-French rivalry for influence in Africa. Russia's secret support for African putschists protects them from UN sanctions and provides them with arms and ammunition on favorable terms, not to mention sending Wagner mercenaries to support their fragile regimes, which could fuel West African military ambitions to seize power, as happened recently in Guinea-Bissau. Wagner's mercenaries now play important roles in Russian geopolitics in Africa, ranging from financial influence to political influence (Al-Arabi, 2022).

According to Ismail Buchanan, a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Rwanda, Moscow's geopolitical pursuit in West Africa and Russia's financial support in Ukraine's war exemplify Moscow's success in the region, with the potential for new Russian conflicts with France and other NATO allies in the region. Mali and 34 other nations refrained from voting on a draft resolution criticizing Russia's continued military activity in Ukraine since February 24 at the United Nations General Assembly last May. Buchanan continued, "Africa." (Al-Arabi, 2022).

Macron's journey to Africa coincided with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's five-day tour to the continent's east, which included stops in Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, and the Republic of the Congo. This is the Russian Foreign Minister's first trip to Africa since his country's military operation against Ukraine began. Both trips focus on food security and energy security. It is clear that Lavrov's trip to Africa at this moment

increases France’s fears about losing its influence in its former colonies, as Paris considers Moscow a serious competitor for the most strategic places on the African continent (Al-Arabi, 2022).

Macron does not want this situation In Africa to get out of hand; he is working to adjust the lineup. Especially in light of the failure of Paris’ military efforts to eliminate jihadist movements in the African Sahel countries through Operation Barkhane, which began in 2014, and even had counterproductive results that led to an increase in extremism in the region, according to the International Crisis Group 2021 report. The French security strategy was not effective. In the process of eliminating extremism, extremism began to spread elsewhere, which led to an increase in African popular discontent with the French military presence, and precipitated major political shifts, culminating in the military coup in Mali, France’s largest African partner (Al-Arabi, 2022).

The French president voiced alarm about Russia's position in Africa, echoing Washington's concerns about the rise of Russian and Chinese influence on the continent. Macron stated from the Cameroonian capital, Yaounde, that France will not abandon African security, and pledged to reinvent the African military and security apparatus, which began after Paris announced its withdrawal from Operation Barkhane in Mali, following the coup carried out by the ruling military council in Mali on May 24, 2021. These statements come within the framework of President Macron’s goal to break the deadlock in French-African relations and restore French hegemony over the brown continent after a significant retreat in the face of many other world powers (Tasamba, 2022)

Despite its concerns about Russia’s growing influence in Africa, France has been reluctant to take a confrontational approach to the issue. Instead, it has focused on building stronger partnerships with African countries and advocated for greater European cooperation in Africa. In a joint statement issued in June 2020, French and German leaders called for a “European approach to Africa” focused on “peace and security, sustainable development, and good governance” (Under Macron, 2022).

The rivalry between Russia and France in the Sahel region has led to division and alignment among international powers, including the United States and China. While Washington has expressed support for Paris and Europe in the Sahel as a way to counter

growing Russian influence, such efforts could lead to an increase in military power in the region where every power seeks to dominate. Unless international parties can reach agreements that address conflicts of interest in the Sahel region, the situation is likely to continue to escalate (Bassou, 2023).

There are three possible scenarios that could occur in the Sahel region between Russia and European countries, especially France. The first scenario involves a clash between the two parties as they seek to achieve their strategic interests and enhance There are different scenarios regarding the future of the Russian influence in the Sahel region. The first scenario involves a continued competition between Russia and European countries for influence in the region, which could lead to further destabilization. The second scenario involves a trend towards diplomacy and dialogue between Russia and European countries, as they recognize the need for a coherent African policy on security, migration, climate change, and development. The third scenario involves an escalation of the Russian role in the Sahel region, as Moscow seeks to expand its diplomatic, military, and economic relations with the countries of the region and strengthen its influence, which could lead to a decline in the French and European presence in the region and increasing instability. The third scenario is regarded the most plausible, with Russia gaining territory and perhaps shifting the regional power balance (Lyammouri, 2021).

France's position on Russia's expanding influence in Africa is both concerned and cautious. While it is cognizant of the possible threat presented by Russia's efforts in Africa, it has refrained from taking a confrontational stance. Instead, it focused on building stronger partnerships with African countries, and advocated for greater European cooperation in the region.

Point	Description
-Russia's strategy in Africa	Cultivating economic and political influence
-French presence in Sahel region	Leading Operation Barkhane since 2014 to combat jihadism and protect French interests
-Russia's presence in Mali and Burkina Faso	Strong military cooperation and arms sales; undermines France's ties with G5 through social media propaganda
-French vs. Russian values	France encourages democracy, electoral consistency, and consensus; Russia is more interested in power stability and unification
- African officers trained by Russia	Leads to yearning for greater cooperation with Moscow
- Conflict in Africa	Between African army, anti-French "national socialist" motives, and pragmatic politicians closer to Paris; reflects Russian-French rivalry for influence
-French approach to Russian influence	Reluctant to take confrontational approach; focused on building stronger partnerships with African countries and advocating for greater European cooperation
-Possible scenarios for Sahel region	Clash between parties, trend towards diplomacy and dialogue, or escalation of Russian role in region

Table 6: Summary of Key Points on Russian-French Rivalry for Influence in Africa.

3.3. Russia-China Rivalry in Africa

China has historically been a major player in Africa with close ties to many African countries, investing heavily in the continent's infrastructure and economy. As such, it has been closely watching the growth of Russian influence in Africa, which it sees as a potential threat to its own interests (Xinhua News Agency, 2021).

Russia is increasing its military and economic support to many African countries, including Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan. Russia's largest export to Africa is military equipment, and it has provided military training and other forms of support (Kim, 2021).

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which has been held every three years since the early 2000s, guides China's actions in Africa. Beijing announces fresh help to African countries at each FOCAC meeting. This aid grew from $5 billion in 2006 to $40 billion in 2015. Chinese President Xi Jinping announced a fresh $60 billion finance proposal in September 2018 during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation summit in Beijing. China has long been Africa's primary commercial partner and investor (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021).

China is concerned that Russian influence could undermine its interests in Africa. However, China has generally taken a pragmatic approach to the situation, recognizing that Russia is a major global power with a legitimate interest in pursuing its own interests in Africa. China has sought to maintain good relations with both Russia and African countries, while also protecting its own interests (Panda, 2019).

Russia is also concerned about China's increasing activity in Central Asia, which it views as an encroachment on its traditional sphere of influence. Russia views the Chinese military's establishment of a base in Djibouti as a way for China to expand its global military presence. On the other hand, some Chinese officials are concerned about Russia's actions in Africa, which could undermine China's Belt and Road Initiative. In November 2019, academics at the University of Hong Kong unfavorably compared Russia's military-focused approach in Africa to China's economic penetration strategy. They concluded that there is no tangible coordination between the strategies of Russia and China in Africa, because they are completely different (Wang & Luo, 2019).

China is also strengthening its economic and military relationships with African countries in order to preserve its dominance on the continent. China has continued to spend extensively in African infrastructure projects while building commercial ties with African nations. China is also expanding its military footprint in Africa, creating the first military base outside of China, dubbed a "logistics park," in Djibouti in 2017 (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021).

A major area of concern for China is Moscow's attempt to capitalize on the legacy of its Soviet history by sending weapons and military advisors to places where Western players and China are not providing adequate assistance, which includes providing weapons, military training, and other support. China has long been a significant supplier of armaments to African countries, and it is anxious about future Russian competition (South China Morning Post, 2019).

Russia, for example, just inked a military cooperation pact with the Central African Republic, which has been ravaged by civil violence for decades. Russian military advisers will work in the Central African Republic's capital, Bangui, where the official government is located, and there are reports that representatives of the Russian private military company Wagner are working in the Central African Republic as the President of the Republic's personal security component (Kim, 2021).

Another area of concern for China is Russia's growing economic relations with various African countries. Russia is investing in infrastructure projects, including railways and power facilities, as well as establishing business partnerships with African companies. This would create competition for Chinese companies, which have invested heavily in similar projects across Africa (The Diplomat, 2021).

China is also concerned that Russia may gain from the Sahel region's instability, which has intensified since Mali's coup in August 2020. This undermines China's strategy for maintaining the regional status quo. The presence of Russian private military corporations in Africa may aggravate relations with China, particularly in areas where the Wagner Group is executing policies that Beijing dislikes. The Wagner Group's operations, according to David Shinn, former US ambassador to Ethiopia, would most certainly "stop China," as he asserted in his evidence before the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission in May 2020 (Shinn & Eisenman, 2020).

Despite a large disparity in their economic power, Russia and China are competing for trade deals in Africa in a targeted manner. This trend reflects the competition among Western countries such as the United States, Britain, France and Germany, to get involved in the African market, but it may lead to some minor frictions. China has generally taken a pragmatic approach to the growth of Russian influence in Africa. It understands that Russia is a major world power, and that it has a legitimate interest in

pursuing its own interests in Africa. As such, China has sought to maintain good relations with both Russia and African countries, while at the same time protecting its interests (The Diplomat, 2021).

At the same time, China has also sought to deepen its military ties with African countries, in order to maintain its position as a major arms supplier to the continent. This included the provision of military training, as well as the sale of weapons and other military equipment. China seeks to limit the expansion of Russian military dominance in the area by keeping its position as the primary military partner of African countries (South China Morning Post, 2019) .

The collaboration between China and Russia in Africa is most visible when Moscow and Beijing take similar stances during UN votes on issues concerning the organization's activities in various African nations. This mainly refers to peacekeeping missions on the African continent in troubled areas such as the Central African Republic and South Sudan. However, comparing Russia's and China's participation in Africa is problematic. Beijing is one of the continent's most significant investors and commercial partners, and it is more active in resolving local concerns and ensuring stability (Kolesnikov & Volkov, 2020).

In general, China’s position on the growth of Russian influence in Africa is characterized by a pragmatic approach that seeks to protect its own interests, while also maintaining positive relations with both Russia and African countries. While there are concerns about the potential for Russian influence to undermine Chinese interests in Africa, China has taken steps to mitigate these concerns and maintain its position as a major player on the African continent (The Diplomat, 2021).

Point	**Description**
-China’s historical ties to Africa	Close ties and heavy investment in infrastructure and economy
-China’s concerns about Russian influence	Potential threat to its own interests
-Russia’s military and economic support to African countries	Increasing support to Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan; largest export is military equipment

China’s activities in Africa	Guided by Forum on China-Africa Cooperation; increased aid from $5 billion in 2006 to $60 billion in 2018; major trading partner and investor
-Chinese approach to Russian influence	Pragmatic approach; seeks to maintain good relations with both Russia and African countries while protecting its own interests
-Russia’s concerns about China in Central Asia	Views as encroachment on traditional sphere of influence; concerned about Chinese military base in Djibouti
-China’s economic and military ties with African countries	Continues to invest heavily in African infrastructure; increasing military presence in Africa
-Russian competition with China in arms and economic relations	Russia investing in infrastructure and establishing business partnerships; may create competition for Chinese companies
-Russia’s growing economic and military relations with African countries	Investment in infrastructure projects; Wagner Group’s activities could exacerbate tensions with China
-Cooperation between China and Russia in Africa	Mostly seen through similar positions during UN votes on peacekeeping missions; difficult to compare scale of involvement
-China’s position on Russian influence in Africa	Pragmatic; seeks to protect its own interests while maintaining positive relations with both Russia and African countries
-China’s efforts to maintain its position as a major player in Africa	Deepening military ties and maintaining position as main military partner to African countries

Table 7: Summary of Key Points on China’s Pragmatic Approach to Russian Influence in Africa.

3.4. Turkey’s Position

Russia has increased its engagement with African countries, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, and military cooperation. This growing influence has raised concerns among some countries, including Turkey, which is also increasing its engagement with African countries. Economic interests, notably in trade, investment, and infrastructure development, underpin Turkey's relationship with Africa. However, Russia's expanding

influence in Africa is likely to have an impact on Turkey's interests, and the purpose of this essay is to evaluate Turkey's stance on this topic.

Turkey has historically enjoyed close ties with many African countries and has invested heavily in the continent’s infrastructure and economy. As such, it has been closely watching the growth of Russian influence in Africa, which it sees as a potential threat to its own interests (Baev, 2021).

Both are engaged in a competition for global influence, with the African continent being a major area of focus. Both countries seek to strengthen their position in regional resource and energy markets, establish partnerships at the government level, conduct military exchanges with local powers, and negotiate the establishment of military facilities along the Mediterranean Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Atlantic Ocean (Al-Kindi, 2022).

Russia's military cooperation with African nations, which has included the transfer of weaponry, military training, and other types of assistance, is one of Turkey's primary concerns. Turkey is also a significant exporter of armaments to African countries, and it is anxious about future Russian competition (TRT World, 2021). Another area of concern for Turkey is Russia’s growing economic relations with various African countries. Russia is investing in infrastructure projects, including railways and power facilities, as well as establishing business partnerships with African companies. This has the potential to create competition for Turkish companies, which have invested heavily in similar projects across Africa (Tabekli Oglu, 2022).

While there are some areas of cooperation and common interests between the two countries, Turkey’s African approach is more diverse and has been pursued for much longer than Russia’s. Turkey adopted the vision of “neo-Ottomanism” in its African expansion, informed by practical political, economic and diplomatic relations, as well as cultural and religious relations with Africa based on the activities of the Ottoman Empire in North Africa and the African Sahara. Islamic identity with modern African countries (Al-Kindi, 2022).

One of the ways Turkey has sought to maintain its influence in Africa is by deepening economic ties with African countries. Turkey’s activity in Africa is much more

diversified than Russia's, starting with building infrastructure projects, and it has established a number of economic partnerships with African countries. This has helped offset the potential impact of Russian economic competition and helped maintain Turkey's position as a major player in the African market (Suleiman, 2021).

In addition to scholarships, development and military aid to countries such as Libya and Somalia. The Turkish Development Agency (TIKA) provided one billion dollars to African countries, while Turkish foreign direct investment in Africa exceeded $10 billion, and the volume of trade with African countries is expected to reach $26 billion by 2021 (Al-Kindi, 2022).

At the same time, Turkey has tried to strengthen its military ties with African nations, in order to maintain its position as a major supplier of arms to the continent. This included the provision of military training, as well as the sale of weapons and other military equipment. By maintaining its position as the main military partner of African countries, Turkey hopes to prevent the growth of Russian military influence in the region (Tabekli Oglu, 2022).

On the other hand, Russia has largely focused on a few select areas of interest where it has a strategic advantage, such as natural resource extraction and arms sales. Russia has been strategic in its diplomatic and economic expansion in Africa, focusing on the best partners to strengthen points of commercial, political and military importance (Al-Kindi, 2022).

Despite the differences in approach, both countries seek to establish themselves as "partners" with African countries that may benefit from relations with either of them. Russia and Turkey are both trying to develop credible rising powers in Africa and the international arena, destabilizing a fragmented monopoly world led by the US/EU, or perhaps a conflicting bipolar world led by the US/EU and China. Making a bigger place at the table for developing countries like Russia, India and Brazil (Al-Kindi, 2022).

While there is rivalry and tension between Russia and Turkey, particularly over the situation in Ukraine, there is also cooperation, such as Turkey's facilitation of talks between the groups involved during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 2019. There may

be opportunities for moderate cooperation between Russia and Turkey in other areas, like playing the Islamic Russia card (Al-Kindi, 2022).

The new race for Africa is still unfolding, and it is unclear who will be the winner or where Africa will end up. However, the activities of Russia, Turkey and other powers on the continent achieve an important goal not only for African but also for international development - diversification of options (Al-Kindi, 2022).

Turkey's relationship with Africa is largely motivated by economic reasons, and the country has been successful in expanding its footprint on the continent. However, Russia's increasing influence in Africa is expected to have an impact on Turkey's interests, notably in commerce and investment. More research is needed to assess the possible consequences of Russia's expanding influence in Africa for Turkey, as well as methods to offset any negative repercussions.

Point	**Description**
-Russia's engagement with African countries	Increasing engagement in trade, investment, and military cooperation; seeks to strengthen position in resource and energy markets, establish partnerships, and negotiate military facilities along the Mediterranean, Indian, and Atlantic Oceans
-Turkey's engagement with Africa	Historically close ties with many African countries; heavy investment in infrastructure and economy; primarily driven by economic interests
-Turkey's concerns about Russian influence	Potential threat to its economic interests in Africa
-Russia's military cooperation with African countries	Providing weapons, military training, and other forms of support; potential competition for Turkey's arms sales to African countries
-Russia's economic relations with African countries	Investing in infrastructure projects and establishing business partnerships; potential competition for Turkish companies
-Turkey's African approach	More diverse and pursued for longer than Russia's; informed by practical political, economic, diplomatic, cultural, and

	religious relations with Africa based on the activities of the Ottoman Empire
Turkey’s economic ties with African countries	Diversified approach, including building infrastructure projects and establishing economic partnerships; maintaining position as a major player in the African market
-Turkey’s military relations with African countries	Providing military training and selling weapons and other military equipment; maintaining position as the main military partner of African countries
-Differences in approach between Russia and Turkey	Russia focuses on select areas of interest where it has a strategic advantage, such as natural resource extraction and arms sales; Turkey’s engagement with Africa is more diverse and prioritizes economic interests
-Cooperation between Russia and Turkey	Mixed relationship with rivalry and tension, but also opportunities for moderate cooperation in other areas
-Implications for Turkey	More study is needed to investigate the potential consequences of Russia's expanding influence in Africa and to devise methods to prevent any negative consequences.

Table 8: Comparison of Russia and Turkey’s Engagement with Africa: Approach, Concerns, and Implications.

3.5. Britain’s Position

In order to offset Russia's influence in these regions, the UK intends to build long-term strategy for improving connections with nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. As these regions gain more power and influence in the global economy, the UK will tailor its offers to their needs and strengths, including trade, investment, defense, technology, and climate change, and provide reliable infrastructure investment, according to James Cleverly, Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Affairs. The UK will show strategic endurance and commit for the long term, constantly planning for the future. Cheverly's speech will outline his vision for the UK to develop new long-term partnerships with influential countries that share the belief in

sovereignty, territorial integrity, and free trade, and reinforce the principles, rules, and global institutions that have fostered peace and prosperity. The UK aims to create a credible and reliable alternative to countries like Russia (Foreign Office, 2022).

Russia and the United Kingdom are both re-engaging with Africa, but their tactics differ. While narratives about Africa's geopolitical competitiveness tend to center on the US-China rivalry, the terrain is becoming increasingly multipolar, with new powers such as Turkey, India, and the Gulf nations advancing their interests. It is critical to appreciate Russia's and the United Kingdom's positions in this environment. Russia is aiming to increase its involvement with Africa by exploiting its BRICS membership and promising security cooperation, whilst the UK is relying on historical ties and financial aid commitments. Both nations are fighting for commercial possibilities in the midst of Africa's economic expansion, and their perspectives on matters such as UN peacekeeping and sanctions disagree. Despite the struggle, Africa is vast enough to support both players, and African geopolitics is becoming increasingly multipolar.

While Russia and the United Kingdom compete for political influence and commercial prospects in Africa, both governments and their businesses must realize that this is not a zero-sum game. African countries are looking to diversify their development partners and are unlikely to respond favorably to arguments that larger geopolitical rivalries constrain their options. For many large-scale public bids issued by African countries, strengthening bilateral connections is likely to be as vital as commercial factors. In addition, when operating in challenging environments in Africa, geopolitical rivalries are less of a concern for companies. Companies that are ostensibly competitors have been known to cooperate and share information to address shared challenges and objectives, sometimes even aligning the objectives of geopolitical rivals. Ultimately, nationality does not grant a company a free pass (Fletcher, 2019).

CHAPTER 4: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT RUSSIA-AFRICA RELATIONS

4.1. Current State of Russia-Africa Relations

Russia now sees Africa as an opportunity to increase its power and influence. As President Putin disclosed to African countries and the rest of the world in October 2019, Russia's readiness to connect with the continent, as well as the symbolic importance of Africa to the Kremlin. According to the summit's common declaration, participants pledged to make progress toward collaboration on a variety of fronts, including trade, science, politics, law, security, environmental protection, and humanitarian aid.

Geopolitical and geoeconomic issues motivate Russia's interest and commitment to Africa. The 54 African states constitute the greatest geographic bloc in any international body in which African countries are represented, providing an unparalleled opportunity to act as a "political reserve" for Russian foreign policy objectives as well as political, economic, and social goals. African states have demonstrated a willingness to back Russia's difficult diplomatic positions, even when the West displays opposition and anger toward Moscow.

4.2. Diplomatic Relations

Russia-Africa diplomatic ties have become stronger in recent years, notably following the first-ever Russia-Africa Summit in 2019. Russia has been increasing its engagement with African countries, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, military cooperation, and infrastructure development. Russia has also been countering Western influence in Africa by providing an alternative source of investment and economic cooperation (Council on Foreign Relations, 2021).

Russia’s engagement with Africa has been driven by a desire to expand its global influence and access new markets for energy and natural resources. Russia has negotiated a number of trade and investment treaties with African nations in recent years, notably in the industries of mining, energy, and infrastructure development. Russia has also increased its military cooperation with African countries, providing weapons and training to several countries on the continent (Brookings Institution, 2021).

Some academics are concerned that Russia's rising influence in Africa may lead to increased competition and confrontation with Western countries, notably the United States and China. Some commentators believe Russia's participation in Africa is part of a larger strategy to threaten Western nations' dominance in the global system (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2021).

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has had an impact on African nations, with some voting in the United Nations General Assembly in support of Russia, opposition to its invasion, or abstaining. This has resulted in divisions among African blocs. (Isilow, 2022)

Russia views Africa as a chance to display its supremacy in the international arena, especially given that African states have the most voting power in the United states. The West (Vayez, 2020) has seen Russia's rising influence in Africa as a "great power struggle".

Russia is consistently and pragmatically attempting to gain long-term influence on the African continent through regular meetings with AU commissioners, as well as meetings with various African regional economic groups. At United Nations forums, Russia has also made important statements about promoting peace and security in Africa (Oxford Analytica.2023).

Russia, like China and Turkey, is striving to deepen its strategic ties with Africa. Its present focus is on Central Africa, Sudan, the Comoros, and South Sudan, but it hopes to strengthen ties with Egypt, Uganda, and Ethiopia. Russia’s approach to African nations is based on the principle of not having a colonial past, which means that it prioritizes economic pluralism, security, diplomatic relations, and cultural exchange (Blanchard et la, 2022).

Russia's approach to Africa is primarily geopolitical, with economic factors trailing closely behind. It wants to establish partnerships with African countries that oppose the West, such as Zimbabwe. Russia has restarted supply and finished commodities shipments to Zimbabwe, including timber and fertilizers, as well as printed materials, railway carriages, and electronics. Zimbabwe sells coffee and tobacco to Russia, and the two nations have mining joint ventures (Ayat, 2021).

Russia has been increasing its military cooperation with African countries, providing arms and training to several countries on the continent. Some African countries have welcomed Russia's presence as a counterbalance to Western dominance, while others have raised worries about Russia's objectives and the possible harmful consequences of its involvement in Africa (Brookings Institution, 2021)

Russia’s foreign policy in Africa often focuses on securing access to resources and strategic locations. In Libya, Russia supports Khalifa Haftar’s proxy forces through the deployment of Wagner mercenaries and military assets. With presidential and parliamentary elections postponed, Russia is expected to try to influence the outcome in order to emerge as the region's key power broker and obtain access to oil riches and deep-water ports in the eastern Mediterranean (Megerisi, 2020)

Russia is also striving to ensure access to Red Sea seaports, specifically Port Sudan in Sudan. It has long had links to the Sudanese army, remnants of the deposed regime of Omar al-Bashir, and Western gold smuggling networks. The survival of the Khartoum military rule opens the door to more Russian involvement (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021).

The military coup in Mali gave Russia a chance to become a key influence in the Sahel area. Russia might give political cover for Assimi Gota's military dictatorship, and Wagner mercenaries have allegedly already been dispatched to Mali.

After the fall of former Guinean President Alpha Condé, who was a defender of Moscow’s mining interests, Russia may refocus its diplomatic efforts on supporting Colonel Mamady Doumbouya’s military junta in Guinea. This could lead to political clout and unfettered access to the mining industry (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021).

Russia is also cementing its position in the Central African Republic in 2021, with intentions to expand its influence in surrounding nations, notably in the Gulf of Guinea, in 2022. It is establishing contacts with the presidents of all three countries in order to play a more important role in Central Africa's oil and mineral networks (Siegle, 2022).

Finally, President Joo Lourenço of Angola is an intriguing target for Russia's opportunistic methods due to his military academy training in the Soviet Union and Russia's Cold War-era connections to Angola. Increased Russian interest in Lourenço is projected in 2022, given Angola's huge diamond, oil, gold, and mineral potential (World Politics Review, 2021).

Overall, Russia’s foreign policy in Africa is likely to continue focusing on securing access to resources and strategic locations, as well as supporting friendly regimes and gaining political influence in the region.

4.3. Economic Relations and Trade

Russia has increased its economic engagement with African nations in recent years, notably in the fields of mining and infrastructure development, with the goal of gaining access to the continent's mineral assets. Russia's joint venture with Zimbabwe's Pen East Ltd to develop one of the world's greatest platinum ore deposits is one such example. In addition, agricultural products such as coffee, potatoes, fruits and cocoa account for about a third of Russia’s imports from Africa (Vuksanovic, 2023).

Russia also signed a number of trade and investment agreements with African countries and sought to provide an alternative source of investment and economic cooperation to counter Western influence in Africa (Brookings Institution, 2021).

Russia has become an important supplier of weapons and military expertise to African countries, accounting for 35% of all arms shipped to the region. Russia has signed about 20 bilateral military cooperation agreements with African countries since 2015. Russian weapons are less expensive than US weapons and do not raise human rights issues, which makes them more attractive to African countries (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021).

In return for access to natural resources, Russia helps several African countries with military weaponry and training. Certain analysts have condemned the resource-for-infrastructure approach as exploitative, but it has also been welcomed by certain African governments as a means of promoting economic growth (Brookings Institution, 2021).

Russia's growing engagement with Africa is motivated by a desire to gain access to new markets for energy and natural resources, as well as secure access to critical raw materials such as uranium, which is mined in African nations such as Egypt, South Africa, and Namibia. Uranium is a critical raw material for Russian nuclear firms, particularly Rosatom, which compete for nuclear energy globally. Russian firms have created large-scale natural resource corporations on the continent, and they are collaborating with African people and governments to open the Russian market to African commodities and vice versa (Vuksanovic,2023).

Russia is sorely lacking in key raw materials, and Africa’s abundant and dependable natural resources provide many opportunities for growth in resource-related sectors beyond meeting local demands. Russian firms such as Alrosa have capitalized on this opportunity by acquiring diamonds from South Africa, Sierra Leone, Namibia, and Angola. Furthermore, Russia is attempting to assist in the development of energy in Africa, with corporations such as Gazprom, Lukoil, Rostec, and Rosatom present on the continent (Vuksanovic, 2023)

Russia is also increasing its involvement in the mining sector in Africa, particularly in countries with large reserves of strategic minerals such as cobalt and copper. Russia has signed mining agreements with several African countries, and has sought joint ventures with African mining companies. (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021)

Russia is increasing its influence in Africa's energy industry, notably in the oil and gas sectors. Russian state-owned enterprises have made significant investments in African oil and gas reserves in order to get access to new supplies of hydrocarbons (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2021).

Russia's commercial and trade connections with Africa are motivated by a desire to secure access to raw materials and natural resources, as well as to improve its security and dominance as the continent's armaments supplier. The abundant natural resources in Africa provide ample opportunities for Russian companies to expand into resource-related sectors and increase their presence on the continent (Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 2021).

Russian commercial firms have a stake in 36 large African projects, including 14 mining and 9 hydrocarbon projects. Mining initiatives in Russia are focused in central and southern Africa, whereas hydrocarbon operations are centered in the Gulf of Guinea and the Mediterranean. The majority of hydrocarbon projects in North Africa are led by Rosneft, Tatneft, and Gazprom, all of which are at least partially owned by the Russian government and overseen by key members of Putin's patronage network. Lukoil, which is unaffiliated with the Kremlin, is more engaged in the less crucial Gulf of Guinea. Rosatom, a state-owned nuclear power business, owns all six African nuclear power plants, which span Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, and South Africa (Grissom et al., 2022).

4.4. Russian Aid

Over the past decade, Russia has been increasing its presence in Africa, providing assistance to several African countries in various fields, including military, economic, and diplomatic aid. The move is part of Russia’s broader push to expand its global influence and economic interests beyond its traditional spheres of influence.

Despite increasing its foreign aid expenditures, Russia’s investment in international development aid remains low compared to other countries. Russia has tripled its foreign aid expenditures between 2010 and 2018, but they are still close to Soviet-era levels, and Russia has a much smaller checkbook than most other countries active in the sector. Sanctions are expected to further reduce Russia’s aid budget in the coming years (Foreign Policy, 2021).

Moscow provides only modest assistance to African countries, with between 7.3% and 8.7% of its entire aid budget spent in Africa between 2012 and 2017. Russia’s humanitarian presence in Africa is also suffering, as it has no designated outside aid organization (Foreign Policy, 2021).

Despite its low investment in international development aid, Russian President Putin has met with African leaders at multilateral summits and during the 2019 Russia-Africa Summit. During the summit, Putin emphasized Russia's contributions to the UN Development Programme, the World Food Programme, and the World Bank, as well as a medical facility established in Guinea by the Russian mining company Rusal.

Russia has also supplied assistance to countries affected by Cyclone Idai (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2022).

Russia has been providing aid to African countries for many years, especially in the areas of development and humanitarian aid. In recent years, Russia's aid efforts in Africa have expanded, focusing on areas such as health, education and infrastructure (Tass, 2019).

Health has been one of the main areas of focus of Russian aid in Africa. Russia provides medical assistance and supplies to African countries, especially in the areas of combating and preventing infectious diseases. For example, in 2020, Russia sent medical aid to African countries to help fight COVID-19. (TASS. 21, 2020) .As well as building hospitals and providing medical equipment (Africa News, 2021).

Another area of focus for Russian aid in Africa is education. Russia offers scholarships and training opportunities for African students and professionals to study in Russia, with the aim of increasing educational and cultural exchanges between Russia and Africa. Russia announced intentions to boost the number of scholarships available to African students in 2020. (TASS. 2020).It also set up cultural centers in a number of African nations (TASS, 2021).

Russia also gives infrastructure development aid to African countries. For example, in 2019, Russia signed an agreement with the government of Sudan to develop infrastructure projects in the country, including roads, bridges, and power stations .TASS. Russia and Sudan sign a deal on infrastructure projects worth $1.5 billion (Tass, 2019).

Russia's assistance initiatives in Africa, in general, aim to develop contacts and increase collaboration between Russia and African countries. While some have expressed worries about Russia's motivations for delivering aid to Africa, such as attempting political influence, others have lauded Russia's actions as a constructive contribution to the continent's development (Brookings Institution. Russia's Return to Africa 2020).

Despite these efforts, Russian aid to Africa remains paltry in comparison to other key actors like China and the United States. However, Russia's rising participation in Africa

may provide African countries opportunity to broaden their alliances and benefit from a wide spectrum of aid and development support (Al Jazeera, 2019).

CHAPTER 5: THE FUTURE OF RUSSIA-AFRICA RELATIONSHIP

5.1. Examine the opportunities for potential barriers and challenges to Russian involvement in Africa

Russia's participation in Africa has grown in recent years as the country attempts to extend its influence and commercial links on the continent. While there are certainly opportunities for increased cooperation between Russia and African countries, there are also many limitations and challenges that must be addressed in order to establish stable and mutually beneficial partnerships. In this article, I will analyze the opportunities, limitations, and challenges of Russian engagement in Africa.

5.1.1 Opportunities

1. Natural Resources: Africa is rich in natural resources such as oil, gas, minerals, and metals, all of which are in great demand in Russia. Russian companies can invest in African infrastructure projects, such as energy, transportation, and communications, while African countries can export natural resources to Russia. According to a report by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, “Increased cooperation can help African countries diversify their economies, create jobs, and reduce poverty.” This could lead to economic growth in both regions (Brookings Institution Russia’s Return to Africa, 2019).

Russia’s involvement in Africa provides opportunities for African countries to diversify their partnerships and benefit from a broader range of aid and development assistance. Russia's presence in Africa might provide a counterbalance to Western dominance on the region and help to establish a multipolar world order. Furthermore, Russia's experience in fields such as energy, mining, and infrastructure development may be used to help African economies expand and flourish (Brookings Institution, 2020a, b).

Russian involvement in Africa could also provide opportunities for increased trade and investment between Russia and African countries. Russia seeks to expand its economic presence in Africa, particularly in the fields of energy and mining, and has expressed interest in increasing trade and investment with African countries. This may lead to increased economic growth and development in both Russia and Africa (Reuters, 2019).

2. Political clout: Russia's expanded participation in Africa may boost the country's political clout on the continent. Russia may boost its political and diplomatic influence in international forums by forming alliances with African countries. "Russia's involvement in Africa is part of its broader strategy to counterbalance Western influence on the continent," according to a Carnegie Moscow Center assessment (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2019).

3. Security collaboration: Greater collaboration between Russia and African nations may result in increased security cooperation. Russia can help African countries confront security concerns such as terrorism and insurgency by providing military aid, training, and weaponry. According to a US Institute of Peace research, "Russia's engagement in Africa can help enhance regional stability and security." (United States Institute of Peace, 2019).

5.1.2 Limitations

1. Limited economic relations: Despite the potential for economic cooperation, Russia and African nations now have very modest levels of trade and investment. "Russia's trade with Africa is only a small part of China's or the European Union's trade, and its investments in Africa are limited," according to UN data (United Nations, 2020). Relatively small compared to other major players such as China and the United States. This limits the impact that Russia's involvement can have on African development and could lead to African countries prioritizing relations with other major powers over Russia (Al Jazeera, 2019). This limits the potential for economic growth and cooperation between Russia and African countries.

2. Competition from other global powers: Russia faces competition from other global powers such as China, the United States, and European nations, all of whom are attempting to strengthen their ties with African countries. "Russia will have to compete with other countries that have already established a foothold in Africa and have greater economic and political influence," according to a Brookings Institution analysis (Brookings Institution, 2019).

3. Political instability: Many African countries are characterized by political instability, corruption, and weak governance, which may make it difficult for Russia to establish

stable partnerships. According to a report by the Carnegie Moscow Center, “Russia has to navigate the complex political landscape of African states, which are often characterized by weak institutions, political instability, and corruption.” This could limit the possibility of political influence and security cooperation (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2019).

4. Russian intervention in Africa with conditions, such as demands for natural resources or political influence. This could limit the sovereignty of African countries and could lead to tensions between Russia and African governments. Moreover, some have raised concerns about the lack of transparency and accountability in Russia’s aid and investment in African countries Council on Foreign Relations.

5.1.3 Challenge

1. Reputation: Russia's participation in Africa has been characterized by the employment of private military contractors, weaponry sales, and misinformation efforts, all of which are disruptive and may harm Russia's reputation on the continent. According to a Council on Foreign Relations study, "Russia's essential exports to Africa - mercenaries, weapons, and disinformation - are inherently destabilizing." This is an inadequate basis for long-term relationships (Kumar, 2022).

2. Human rights concerns: Russia’s involvement in Africa has been criticized for its lack of concern for human rights. According to a report by Amnesty International, “Russian companies have been involved in projects that have led to human rights abuses in African countries, including forced evictions, environmental damage, and labor abuses.” This could damage Russia’s reputation and limit the possibility of further cooperation in the future (Shelton, & Carozza, 2013).

3. Sustainability: For Russia's participation with Africa to be long-term effective, it must be both sustainable and beneficial to both parties. According to a report by the Carnegie Moscow Center, “Russia must ensure that its engagement in Africa is sustainable and takes into account the long-term development needs of African countries.” This requires focusing on economic diversification, infrastructure development, and capacity building, rather than simply exploiting natural resources (Moscow Center, 2019).

4 Lack of cultural and linguistic ties between Russia and Africa. This can create barriers to communication and understanding and can limit the effectiveness of Russian aid and investment in African countries. Moreover, Russia's historical relations with African nations during the Soviet era could create tensions with African nations now allied with the West (Foreign Policy, 2019).

5 Other big players, such as China and the United States, are competing for influence in Africa. Russia's involvement in Africa is relatively new compared to these other countries, and it may struggle to establish itself as a major player on the continent. Moreover, competition between these major powers may lead to tensions and conflicts in Africa (Carnegie Moscow Center, 2019a, b).

Overall, while there are certainly opportunities for increased cooperation between Russia and African countries, there are also opportunities also several limitations and challenges that must be addressed in order to establish stable and mutually beneficial

Partnerships. By focusing on economic diversification, infrastructure development, and capacity building, Russia can help promote sustainable development in Africa and establish itself as a reliable partner on the continent.

Category	**Opportunities**	**Limitations**	**Challenges**
-Economic Relations	- Investment in African infrastructure projects, including energy, transportation, and communications	- Low level of trade and investment compared to other major players, limiting impact on African development	- Potential for intervention with conditions, such as demands for natural resources or political influence
	- Diversification of African economies through increased trade and investment with Russia	- Competition from other global powers, such as China, the United States, and European countries	
	- Increased economic growth and development in both Russia and Africa through expanded trade and investment		

-Political Influence	- Increased political influence on the continent through established partnerships with African countries	- Complex political landscape in African states characterized by weak institutions, political instability, and corruption	- Reputation for destabilizing actions, such as the use of private military contractors, arms sales, and disinformation campaigns
	- Counterbalancing Western influence on the continent and promoting a multipolar world order		
-Security Cooperation	- Greater security cooperation with African countries through military assistance, training, and weapons provision to address security challenges, such as terrorism and insurgency		- Lack of concern for human rights in some Russian engagement with Africa
	- Enhanced regional stability and security through Russian engagement in Africa		- Competition for influence with other major players, such as China and the United States
	- Support for African-led peacekeeping forces and UN peacekeeping missions		- Sustainability in engagement, including focusing on economic diversification, infrastructure development, and capacity building
			- Lack of cultural and linguistic ties between Russia and Africa, creating barriers to communication and understanding
			- Historical tensions with African nations

			now allied with the West

Table 9: Opportunities, Limitations, and Challenges of Russian Engagement in Africa: A Detailed Overview.

5.2. Future Prospects

Russia's engagement with Africa has grown in recent years as the country attempts to increase its influence and commercial links on the continent. An important step in this direction was the Russia-Africa Economic Summit and Forum 2019, which was attended by representatives from all 54 African countries. However, the future prospects for Russian-African relations are complex, with opportunities for cooperation and potential for conflict (The Moscow Times, 2019).

There is potential for increased economic and political cooperation, particularly in areas such as energy, infrastructure and security cooperation. Russia has experience in these areas, and African countries need investment and assistance for their development. By increasing economic diversification and investment in Africa, addressing concerns about human rights abuses, and working with African countries to promote sustainable development through capacity building and infrastructure development, Russia and African countries can deepen their relations and promote mutual benefits (Foreign Policy Research Institute, 2019)

Russia and other international powers, such as China, the United States, and European countries, may develop rivalry. These powers also seek to deepen their relations with African countries, which may lead to tensions and conflicts in areas such as trade, investment and influence. African countries may also use competition between global powers to their advantage to reap more benefits from their partners. (The Guardian, 2020)

Or political instability, weak governance and conflicts in many African countries may lead to tensions and conflicts between Russia and African countries. Russia’s military cooperation with African countries, such as supplying arms and military training, could also lead to unintended consequences and conflicts (Deutsche Welle, 2020).

Because of Russia's disregard for human rights, its presence in Africa may be criticized, perhaps leading to diplomatic isolation and international pressure. This might impede Russia's capacity to strengthen relations with African countries, with severe effects for both Russia and African countries (Brookings Institution, 2020 ; the Diplomat, 2019)

The future prospects for Russian-African relations are complex and uncertain, with opportunities for cooperation and potential for conflict. In order to navigate these scenarios, policymakers and other stakeholders must focus on promoting mutual benefits and avoiding zero-sum competition, addressing concerns about human rights abuses, and working with African countries to promote sustainable development through capacity building and infrastructure development. Cooperation with other world powers, such as China and Western countries, can promote multilateral cooperation and avoid the outbreak of a new cold war in Africa. It is important for Russia to balance its interests with those of African states, and to avoid actions that might be seen as exploitative or undermining its sovereignty.

Russia's involvement in Africa has far-reaching ramifications for global politics and the African continent. Russia's increasing interest in Africa is motivated by a desire to increase its economic and political influence in the continent, as well as to offset the growing influence of the United States, China, and other international powers. This article will look at the economic, political, and security ramifications of Russia's engagement with Africa.

Russia’s engagement with Africa has significant economic implications for both Russia and the African continent. Russia has been seeking to increase its trade and investment ties with African countries. According to the UN, Russia's commerce with Africa has more than quadrupled in the last decade, hitting $20 billion in 2018. Russia's principal exports to Africa include machinery, military equipment, and agricultural items, while raw resources such as minerals, oil, and gas are imported from Africa. This economic cooperation has the potential to benefit both Russia and African countries, particularly as Russia moves to diversify its economy away from reliance on oil and gas exports. However, Russia's economic engagement with Africa faces geopolitical rivalry from other international powers, which may restrict its potential economic rewards (Sullivan, 2021).

Russia’s engagement with Africa also has significant political implications. In recent years, Russia has sought to increase its political influence in Africa by strengthening its diplomatic ties with African countries and providing military and technical assistance. This has included the negotiation of military cooperation agreements with a number of African countries, as well as the supply of arms and military training. Russia’s increased political engagement with Africa has the potential to challenge the dominance of other world powers in the region, particularly the United States and China. However, Russia’s engagement with African countries has also been criticized for its lack of transparency and for potentially undermining democratic institutions and human rights (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2019)

Russia's involvement in Africa has important security ramifications. Russia has been attempting to enhance its military footprint in Africa by supplying several African governments with armaments and military training. This has aroused fears about the risk of greater war and instability in the region, as well as Russian meddling in African crises. Russia's military presence in Africa has also been chastised for escalating arms races and worsening existing crises. Russia, on the other hand, has claimed that its military presence in Africa is designed to support regional security and battle terrorism.

5.2.1 Possible areas for future Russian engagement in Africa

Based on the extent of present participation and potential for expansion, viable areas for future Russian engagement in Africa may be classified into four categories.

The first tier consists of five North African countries: Algeria, the Central African Republic, Egypt, Libya, and Sudan, where Russia already has a substantial degree of participation and the major private military businesses are already receiving large rents. Russian meddling is projected to rise further in these nations.

Tier 2 nations comprise 14 countries with exceptionally favorable local conditions for Russian engagement and at least some present Russian presence. Gabon, Nigeria, Chad, Guinea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Angola, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zimbabwe are among them. While Russian resources are limited, and several of these nations are outside the

North African priority zone, Russia is likely to extend its participation in these countries as chances emerge.

Tier 3 nations have a low degree of Russian influence and somewhat favorable conditions for developing Russian participation. Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, and Republic of the Congo, Senegal, and Tanzania are all included at this level.

Tier 4 includes six countries with low Russian participation and low capacity, including Botswana, Djibouti, Eswatini (Swaziland), Lesotho, Malawi, and Namibia. It is unlikely that Russia will significantly expand its activities in these countries (Grissom et al., 2022).

5.2.2 The future of Russian moves in Africa

The creation of a new international order, marked by the fall of American hegemony and the growth of a multipolar world in which emerging countries such as Russia attempt to maximize their impact chances, is predicted to intensify rivalry and conflict in critical parts of the world. Because of these changes in world politics, the Horn of Africa area, notably the Red Sea basin, is expected to play an important role in Russian politics in the future. The isolationist policies pursued by the Trump administration in Washington are considered an incentive for Russia to achieve gains in this regard. The extent of major powers' gains and their weight in the future will be determined by their competition in various vital regions of the world.

The current competition between the West and Moscow is being likened to a new Cold War by Western media and research centers, as it involves competition and struggle over spheres of influence between international powers, particularly in strategic regions such as the Middle East and the Horn of Africa. These two regions hold significant geostrategic importance in relation to the interests and policies of major powers. As with the original Cold War, some traditional powers will seek to preserve their areas of influence, while other countries will seek to obtain new areas of influence and third countries will seek to restore their status and influence. Thus, this new competition can be seen as similar to the original Cold War.

Russia is equipped with the knowledge and experience gained from the Cold War, as well as a deep distrust of the West, as it enters into this new competition. As a result, Cemoglu forecasts that if Russia's connections with Eritrea, Sudan, and other countries in the Horn of Africa continue to strengthen, re-establishing influence in the critical region around the Red Sea and Suez Canal would be difficult. This competition is reminiscent of the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union (Davutoglu, 2010).

In the Middle East and Horn of Africa, the roles of traditional regional powers have declined following the Arab Spring revolutions and the collapse of the Arab regional order. This has led to the emergence of new regional powers and policies, which have

Encouraged major powers to compete for influence in the region through dangerous militarization policies. This behavior is particularly evident in some Arab Gulf states during the post-Arab Spring period. The absence of an effective regional political system specific to the region and independent of major powers' policies further exacerbates these problems.

The Horn of Africa is facing negative external interventions as it grapples with intractable crises such as extreme poverty, terrorism, and insecurity. The existing national states in the region are characterized by fragility and failure, and they are further weakened by external competition. Additionally, there is an absence of an effective regional political system that is specific to the region and independent of major powers' policies (Salih Abbas, 2018).

5.3. The Russian-Ukrainian Conflict's Effect on Russia-Africa Relations

His Ukrainian-Russian war has the potential to impact various aspects of African life, including the economy, politics, military, and education. Ukraine's historical relationship with Africa was linked to the Soviet Union, and after its dissolution, Ukraine maintained friendly relations with some African countries, particularly in providing education to African students in Ukrainian institutions. Recently, Ukraine's presence in Africa has grown through the export of wheat, which Russia also supplies, meeting around 30% of the continent's demand.

African nations' attitudes towards the Ukrainian war have varied on both an institutional and individual level. Some African countries remained silent on the issue, while others expressed support for Russia. Russia's involvement in Africa has included providing security for governments through training, intelligence, and equipment, as well as deploying Russian mercenaries to local conflicts (Zakaria, 2022).

Russia has grown its footprint in Africa in recent years, and it may expect its African allies to lend assistance or remain neutral in international bodies such as the United Nations following its invasion of Ukraine. Russia has intervened militarily in various African nations, including Libya, Mali, Sudan, the Central African Republic, and Mozambique, typically assisting in the battle against rebels or jihadists (Barabanov, 2022).

While Kenya has condemned Russia's activities in Ukraine, other African countries, like South Africa and the Central African Republic, have been less harsh. Africa has become an important market for the Russian arms industry, with nearly half of all weapons imported to the continent coming from Russia, according to the country's state arms export agency. Algeria and Egypt are the main importers, but there are also emerging markets in countries such as Nigeria, Tanzania, and Cameroon (Zakaria, 2022).

Simultaneously, certain individual viewpoints lead to pro-Russian positions. Sudan's tacit support for Russia was explained by Lieutenant General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo's travel to Russia as Vice President of the Sovereignty Council. However, the Ugandan president's son, General Muhozi, relied on declaring his unequivocal support for Russia against Ukraine. The position of the Central African Republic on the Ukrainian war is similar to that of South Africa, which rejected Russia's actions and called for the withdrawal of Russian forces, despite the strong relations between the two countries. As the war continued and developed, the positions of African nations diverged further in the international voting halls. Twenty-eight African countries voted in favor of condemning Russia, while another 26 countries had varying positions, including voting, absenteeism, or rejecting the decision. Only one country, Eritrea, sided with Russia in the session. The African Union issued a statement expressly condemning the Russian war on Ukraine. It seems that the crisis in Ukraine is continuing, and it will inevitably affect relations between countries and their positions

on this issue. This is due to the interdependence of international relations and their overlap with each other in multiple African regions or countries. NATO has been active on the continent since the events of September 11, 2001, and has established partnerships with some African countries (Zakaria, 2022).

Africa controls more than a quarter of the votes in the United Nations General Assembly, giving it a strong collective voice in international organisations. A 2021 report by the Moscow Higher School of Economics revealed that African countries tend to be neutral towards Russia's actions in the past, and no African country has imposed sanctions on Russia since 2014. If African nations maintain their neutrality or contribute extra votes. Support in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine may be viewed as a payback for Russia's recent efforts to enhance its influence in Africa. (Barabanov, 2022).

Western sanctions on Russia have resulted in the closure of important Black Sea port operations, worsening commercial flows between Russia and Africa. This has raised fears about worldwide fertilizer shortages, which might raise food costs and harm agricultural output and food security. Furthermore, the worldwide market disruption of oil prices is likely to result in increased fuel prices and an increase in food production costs. Certain places, such as the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, are more vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of country-specific shocks, climate change, export restrictions, and hoarding, especially if rising fertilizer and other energy-intensive input costs disrupt the growing season. The continuing confrontation between Russia and Ukraine exacerbates these difficulties (Sacko & Mayaki, 2022).

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) collaborated with African countries in 2021 to develop a common African position for the Food Systems Summit in accordance with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over the next decade, the African Common Position aspires to improve Africa's food systems by concentrating on resilience in the face of increasing vulnerability and shocks. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth serve as its foundation (African Union, 2021)

Increasing agricultural and food production has been highlighted as a game-changing approach for preventing future supply chain disruptions in Africa's wheat and sunflower supply chains. Nations that produce these crops must enhance their capacity to produce and provide to other African nations via intra-African commerce. Those that don't should think about introducing certain food crops within their agricultural value chain. This would reduce dependency on wheat and grain imports from Russia and Ukraine, while also encouraging intra-African commerce and expanding Africa's agriculture industries.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) went into effect on January 1, 2021, and it offers African countries the potential to reform their agricultural systems. It is the world's largest free trade zone, and it is projected to provide major economic advantages, with a combined GDP of US$2.5 trillion. The agro industry is projected to make a considerable contribution to this expansion. African nations may benefit from the AfCFTA by increasing agricultural output and value addition, as well as improving their quality infrastructure and food safety standards, in order to serve and expand local and regional agri-food markets.

African nations must improve their oil and gas production and exploration capacity to avoid future food price shocks caused by rising global oil and gas prices. Countries that already produce fuel and gas, such as Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Libya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, and Tanzania, should consider increasing production to fill any gaps that may arise due to supply chain disruptions among major global producers. This would assist to mitigate gasoline price shocks, resulting in lower food prices. African governments should also look at investment opportunities to encourage more foreign investment in oil and gas exploration, especially in countries where subsurface oil deposits are suspected but have yet to be discovered.

The African Union (AU) has declared 2022 the Year of Nutrition in order to build food and nutrition security resilience. However, the 2019 biannual assessment report of the AU Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) found that Africa is unlikely to fulfill its target of eradicating hunger by 2025. In order to boost food production and expand Africa's food basket while meeting nutrition and resilience goals, deliberate investments in improving the yield and output of traditional and

indigenous crops are required. Some of the issues that African food systems confront include climate change and extreme weather events, limited adoption of yield-increasing technology, and low levels of irrigation. Climate-resilient technologies have the potential to boost food production and productivity while also increasing resilience and decreasing poverty and hunger. Digital advances and biotechnology have the potential to boost agricultural competitiveness while also promoting development and wealth creation. To address structural flaws, poverty, and inequality, regional solutions are required. Adoption of continental and regional solutions to create and sustain increased resilience in the face of external shocks is required for the effective transformation of African food systems (Zakaria, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Russia’s foreign policy toward Africa has evolved dramatically over the years, reflecting historical developments and a changing global landscape. Russia has maintained a constant presence in Africa, from substantial Soviet-era backing for African liberation forces to economic and political participation in the post-Cold War era. Russia's connections with Africa have seen ups and downs, but there has lately been a revival of involvement.

Several factors contributed to Russia’s renewed engagement with Africa, including a desire to expand its global influence, find new markets for its goods, and access the continent’s natural resources. Russia has used various strategies to deepen its relations with Africa, including political and economic partnerships, arms sales, and cultural exchanges. Russia's participation in Africa is also motivated by a desire to counteract the region's rising influence of the US, China, and other international powers.

Furthermore, Russia's engagement in Africa is complex, with economic, political, and security implications. And that Russia’s economic engagement with Africa focuses on increasing trade and investment relations, while its political participation aims to strengthen diplomatic relations and enhance Russian influence in the region. Likewise, Russia’s military involvement in Africa is driven by its desire to support regional stability and combat terrorism.

Western countries are concerned about Russia's rising influence in Africa, fearing more rivalry and violence. Some African countries, on the other hand, consider Russia as a viable alternative partner for the West and welcome its engagement.

Russia’s intervention in Africa has major ramifications for global politics and the African continent. While Russia’s involvement in Africa can benefit both Russia and African countries, it is also subject to geopolitical competition with other world powers. Russia's foreign policy toward Africa will be determined by a variety of issues, including the evolution of the global balance of power and internal politics. and Russia's economic interests.

Challenges to Russian engagement in Africa include political instability, security threats, and a lack of institutional capacity. These challenges can be addressed through

partnerships with African countries, investment in infrastructure and education, and increased participation in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts.

Some recommendations that may be useful to the policy maker and other stakeholders when exploring the future of Russian-African relations can be considered:

1. Promote transparency and accountability: Policymakers and other stakeholders should encourage Russia to increase transparency and accountability in its dealings with Africa. This includes providing greater clarity on the nature and scope of its economic, political, and military engagement with African countries, as well as ensuring that its engagement is consistent with international legal norms and human rights standards.
2. Enhance Dialogue and Cooperation: Policymakers and other stakeholders should strive to promote further dialogue and cooperation between Russia and African countries, particularly in areas of mutual interest such as energy, infrastructure, and security. This could include supporting initiatives that promote people-to-people contacts, academic exchanges, and cultural diplomacy.
3. Addressing geopolitical competition: Policymakers and other stakeholders should recognize the potential for geopolitical competition between Russia and other global powers in Africa. They should seek to manage this competition in a way that promotes regional stability and avoids exacerbating existing conflicts or fueling arms races.
4. Supporting sustainable development: Policymakers and other stakeholders should encourage Russia to support sustainable development in Africa, including by promoting investment in renewable energy, responsible resource extraction, and social and environmental safeguards.
5. Promote regional integration: Initiatives that foster regional integration in Africa, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area, should be supported by policymakers and other stakeholders. This can help create a more favorable environment for economic growth and development, and can also provide opportunities for further cooperation and dialogue between Russia and African countries.

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