

Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism

FRELIMO

*A statement in A Voz da Revolucao, published by
FRELIMO in Dar es Salaam in 1965. Translated from*

Today we fight against Portuguese colonialism. We create, at the same time, the conditions which will prevent neo-colonialism from establishing itself in our country. But we must know exactly what colonialism and neo-colonialism are in order to be able to fight them. Let us begin with colonialism.

The best way to understand the nature of colonialism is to analyse the situation in our country, which is a colony itself. We can see that a foreign country (Portugal) has occupied Mozambique. Portugal has sent out troops to fight the people, they rebel; it has organized an administrative machine – with governors, administrators and policemen spread out all over the country in order to control every region and area of Mozambique. It has created special laws meant to protect the interests of the Portuguese, with absolute disdain for the interests and the rights of the Mozambicans. It has established a system of exploitation of the land and the people, giving out the most fertile areas and the best jobs to the Portuguese, submitting the Mozambicans to forced labour, and creating companies that belong to the Portuguese and others (such as the English, the French, the West Germans, the Swiss and the Belgians) who exploit the industry, the commerce and the agriculture of Mozambique. That is: Portugal dominates and exploits Mozambique *directly*. The government in Mozambique is Portuguese, the law by which we must abide are made in Portugal, the army comes from Portugal the profits are sent back either to Portugal or to the imperialist countries which, by agreement with the former also participate in the exploitation of our country; further, if these profits or riches do stay in Mozambique they are shared only by the Portuguese.

This is what colonialism is all about: the exploitation and the direct control of one country over another (in our case, the control and exploitation of Mozambique by Portugal).

Neo-colonialism is a modern form of colonialism. Actually, colonialism and neo-colonialism are the same thing; it is only in their form and in the way they exhibit themselves that they differ. Neo-colonialism is more disguised, more 'modernized'.

It appears as a consequence of the liberation struggle of the colonized peoples. At a certain stage (mainly in Africa) the people rebel against the foreign invaders and enter into an open fight against them. The colonial countries are then forced to spend a great deal of money on the army which they send out to the colonies to fight against the people, with all the necessary war *materiel*, police and administration. In addition, the nationalists seem to threaten the economic structure created by the colonizers, by burning down plantations and warehouses, sabotaging factories, destroying bridges, roads and railway tracks. All this causes a great loss for the colonizing countries. They invent, then, a way of eliminating this difficulty and of exploiting the territory, as before. This they do as follows: the colonialist countries give the colony its independence, but it is only a formal independence, not a real one.

Let's take Mozambique as an example. The Portuguese are spending billions on the war. They may well want to end the war tomorrow without, however, losing the riches of our country. In that case, they will do this: they will declare that they are giving Mozambique its independence. But they choose someone – it may well be an African – who is a friend of theirs, willing to accept and carry out their orders, for the Presidency of Mozambique. Mozambique, in this event, would appear to be independent for it would have its own government, its flag and its anthem. But, in fact, everything would be just as it is today, because its puppet government chosen and controlled by the Portuguese would not do anything for the progress of the people of Mozambique. On the contrary, it would allow the Portuguese full freedom to exploit, as they do today, the commerce, industry, mines and banks of our country. The people of Mozambique would be just as miserable, and the Portuguese would continue to grow rich at our cost. This is what we call neo-colonialism. Its main difference in relation to colonialism is that, in the former, there is no territorial occupation; there is only economic control. The Portuguese would no longer need to have an army or administrators in Mozambique. It would be the puppet government itself which would open all the doors to the Portuguese, forcing us to work for them.

This is the danger of which every Mozambican must beware. We are fighting in order that in Mozambique there may exist a government chosen by the people, representing the will of the people and working for the good of the people of Mozambique.

We fight so that we may destroy colonialism in every one of its forms.

Down with colonialism!

Down with neo-colonialism!