

From Supporters to Cooperants: regarding the Canadian Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC) in its relationship with FRELIMO in Mozambique in the 1970s

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The struggle for national Independence in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa had developed in different areas. In addition to the guerrilla strategy adopted in Angola in 1961, in Guinea-Bissau in 1963 and in Mozambique in 1964, anti-colonial movements developed a constant political activity on a global scale. This dimension of transnational networking moved in a context that manifests a significant role of the Third World countries, performing a Cold War context that is neither static nor simply bipolar (Westad, 2007). Moreover the Statal dimension, it is crucial to highlight the importance of civil society activism and the role of the transnational perspective of NGOs worldwide in connecting internal and national campaigns to the international scenario of the struggle for the end of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. The history of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Portugal's African Colonies (TCLPAC) fits into this global scope. It articulates aspects of the Global 1970s (Hellema, 2019) to the particularities of Canadian society and its political activism. Initially organized as TCLPAC, the Committee changed its name in 1976 after the Independence of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, and São Tomé and Príncipe). However, the context of civil wars (in Angola and Mozambique) and the anti-apartheid struggle made the group expand its scope of action, assuming from then on, the name of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa (TCLSAC), as it became known.

The Committee brought together politicians, intellectuals, and religious leaders. They organized various actions supporting Africa's liberation struggle. Its actions manifest a remarkable breadth, starting from the edition of books, manifestos, leaflets, arranging events, cine-debates, marches, and even welcoming political leaders and artists from the Luso-African Anti-colonial movements at Canadian society and media. In

addition, it is worth mentioning the purchase and shipment of materials for Anticolonial War logistics, including donating a Scania truck in 1973 to FRELIMO in Mozambique. After the Independence, the Committee continued mobilizing events and implementing projects with other Canadian organizations. It varied from welcoming Mozambican politicians and artists in Toronto to sending Canadian citizens who voluntarily aligned themselves with the policies of building new societal standards in Post-colonial Mozambique. Working on literacy programs in rural areas or giving formative political courses to militants in cities, they still maintained consistent support to build socialist projects in Maputo. As opinion makers too, its reports and magazines have reached audiences far beyond Canada itself, always giving Anglophone readers and militants information that gathered insights and news about Mozambican and Angolan civil wars as well as about Zimbabwe and Namibia's independence, everything connected to the cause of the end Apartheid regime in South Africa. This presentation will present a historical overview of this transnational activity that connected the Global North and South and fostered commitment among comrades and cooperants.