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DEPT:PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

COURSE CODE:PCS 302

COURSE TITLE: THE COLD WAR

You are required to read up on the events that engendered decolonization during the Cold War era and the various waves of decolonization that ended European empires in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Write an essay of not less than 500 words as a summary of what you found out from your readings

Decolonisation is the undoing of colonialism, the latter being the process whereby a nation establishes and maintains its domination on overseas territories. The concept particularly applies to the dismantlement, during the second half of the 20th century, of the colonial empires established prior to World War I throughout the world. Scholars focus especially on the movements in the colonies demanding independence, such as Creole nationalism.

The fundamental right to self-determination is identified by the United Nations as core to decolonization, allowing not only independence, but also other ways of decolonization. The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization has stated that in the process of decolonization there is no alternative to the colonizer but to allow a process of self-determination. Self-determination continues to be claimed, also within independent states, to demand decolonization, as in the case of Indigenous Peoples.

Decolonization may involve either nonviolent revolution or national liberation wars by pro-independence groups. It may be intranational or involve the intervention of foreign powers acting individually or through international bodies such as the United Nations

Decolonization was a response to the globalization of European influence and a process of globalization that paved the way for the dismantling of the North Atlantic centered international system. It was driven simultaneously by imperatives of imperial. deconstruction and the constitution/reconstruction of sovereignty in the former colonies

One of the events that engendered decolonization during the Cold War era was the transfer of power from the British to India, Pakistan, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and Burma, and the Dutch decision to leave Indonesia,

Also the US decided to extend its colonial possessions by acquiring the Pacific territories that

had been held by Japan and France's decision to reoccupy Indochina and reassert its colonial rule. When the Chinese Communist party won the civil war in 1949, establishing the People's Republic of China (PRC), it became evident that the geopolitics of Asia had shifted against the colonial powers. It was also evident that the struggle over Asian independence would become a catalyst for the expansion of the cold war into Asia.

In addition, USSR and china embraced anti-colonialism as a strategy for limiting Western influence. Insurgents in Vietnam, Algeria, and Angola among others received military and diplomatic support from the communist powers. This support for the decolonization of the European empires, and the identification of the United States with the European colonial powers, illustrated the ways in which decolonization became an integral factor in the evolution of the cold war and the strategic calculus of the superpowers and their respective alliance partners.

When the South African military intervention in Angola began as a result of the portugese losing the war earlier the Cuban government were approached by the nationalist movement then the Cuban government responded to the request by the MPLA faction of the nationalist movement for support. Cuban troops routed the South African military forces, and the Soviet Union subsequently provided even greater support for the Cuban military forces in Angola as the MPLA sought to consolidate its authority against an insurgency supported by South Africa and the United States. The Cuban military success, and the Soviet decision to support the Cuban effort, reflected the shifting strategic balance in the international system. The Soviets displayed an unprecedented, and decisive, long distance force-projection capability that was critical in accelerating the end of colonial rule in Southern Africa. The demise of Portuguese colonialism posed a direct threat to the survival of the apartheid regime in South Africa, its control over Namibia, and the white supremacist regime in Rhodesia.