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DEMOCRACY AT THE SERVICE OF FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The article examines the place and role of democracy and human rights in South Africa's foreign policy. The author analyzes the process of South Africa's foreign policy change after the fall of the apartheid regime and transition to democracy. He gives characteristics of the foreign policy under different presidents of South Africa from 1994 to 2018 and analyzes the political activities of South Africa in the area of peacekeeping and human rights on the African continent.

Key words: *apartheid, foreign policy, democracy, human rights, African National Congress, South Africa, BRICS.*

South African foreign policy was developed at the democratic stage under different presidents from Nelson Mandela to Jacob Zuma. South Africa has its specific features due to its unusual history. The country had experienced a number of racial conflicts for various reasons, in particular the redistribution of access to the mineral resources. After apartheid was declared national policy in 1948 South Africa was completely isolated in the international arena. Then, the national liberation struggle unfolded inside the country under the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC), established on January 8, 1912. The collapse of the apartheid regime was a turning point in South Africa's history. The ANC won the first general race-free elections. After the ANC came to power, the political leadership of the "new South Africa" set itself the task of changing the country's foreign policy.

The change in South Africa's foreign policy is associated with the redefinition of its role on the African continent and in the community of Nations. Since 1994, the date of the country's reintegration into the international community, South Africa, with its status as a regional power, has found itself in a changed international political, economic and social context, it faced with new regional responsibilities and the need to build a new foreign policy in which Africa holds a special place. Six points formed the basis of the new foreign policy of Pretoria: human rights, freedom and democracy, justice and respect for international law among nations, peace and internationally agreed mechanisms for the conflict resolution, the protection of Africa's interests in world affairs and the expansion of economic cooperation at both the regional and international levels [10].

Under Nelson Mandela's presidency, the country's foreign policy was guided by universal and moral principles. Since that period, the foreign policy of South Africa can be described as broadly progressive in its expression, it includes: the obligation to solve global problems (such as climate change, poverty, low level of development, the main problems in the field of health and promotion of human rights), compliance with international law and respect for international legal obligations [15]. In these two positions, it is important to note that since 1994 South Africa has been actively involved in international affairs and has made a significant contribution to various multilateral processes aimed at resolving the above problems. In addition, South Africa has taken its international obligations seriously during its foreign policy period.

The new foreign policy of South Africa has formulated a grand vision of a harmonious world and its concept is strongly influenced by what can be described as a "liberal-democratic-egalitarian structure". Since 1994, the South African government has intended to strengthen democracy and social stability in the country, actively support the principles of democracy and respect for human rights on the African continent and in the world and promote the idea of multilateralism.

Thus, South Africa's foreign policy has changed significantly since the transition to democracy. The country's leadership defended the ideals of freedom. The political documents adopted at that time, including the Interim Constitution of 1993, focused on issues related to human rights and the struggle for peace. From 1994 to the present day, democracy and human rights have played an important role in the foreign policy concept of the ANC and, consequently, in the foreign policy of South Africa itself. The main ANC document on foreign policy of 1994 focuses on the role of democracy in the country's foreign policy. At the same time, the ANC notes that the country's foreign policy belongs to the people of South Africa. According to the leaders of the ANC, democratic South Africa will actively contribute to the achievement of democracy, peace, stability, development and mutually beneficial relations among the peoples of Africa as a whole, promote and develop pan-African solidarity: "Despite our own limitations and challenges, our goal is to make a significant contribution to peace, democracy, respect for human rights and sustainable development. These principles are fundamental to our foreign policy [4]". The new Constitution of South Africa of December 4, 1996 clearly reflects these principles [8]. Based on this, it should be concluded that democracy is understood as an important component of South Africa's foreign policy, and the contribution of the ANC to the inclusion of human rights and democracy in foreign policy is significant. It would be quite paradoxical if the ANC, which pursued a policy of human rights within the country, would ignore it in foreign policy.

Thus, under the Mandela administration (1994-1999), South Africa explicitly acted as a defender of human rights and democracy in Africa and beyond. As a "regional hegemon," South Africa intends to promote these values on the Afri-

can continent. This was supported by the general optimism associated with the country's transition to democracy and went well with the liberal foreign policy focused on the example of Europe and America. In his article written for *Foreign Affairs* in 1993, Nelson Mandela, then ANC leader and future President, outlined his vision of ANC foreign policy in "South Africa after apartheid." His far-sighted message read: "Human rights issues are at the heart of international relations and go beyond politics to encompass the economic, social and environmental spheres; just and lasting solutions to the problems of humanity can come only through the promotion of democracy in the world; considerations of justice and respect for international law should determine relations between nations; peace is a goal to which all countries must aspire and, when that fails, mechanisms based on international consensus and non-violence must be developed ... The concerns and interests of the African continent should be reflected in all possible representations of South Africa's foreign policy ... [6]".

During Thabo Mbeki's presidency (1999-2008), South Africa's foreign policy aspirations were focused on the African continent and manifested as public administration initiatives. Mbeki was one of the few African leaders who worked actively and effectively for the development of the continent. In addition, during his presidency, he opposed the model of the world order, which he considered outdated [12. P. 107-120]. In all respects, Thabo Mbeki was an idealist, but one of the obvious weaknesses of his idealism was that he overlooked human rights issues, especially the rights of Africans, who had suffered from dictators. It is important to note that it was during the reign of Mbeki that the idealism of the Mandela era faced problems of African solidarity, as evidenced by Mbeki's "quiet diplomacy" towards Zimbabwe headed by Robert Mugabe. Stefan Chen notes that in Mbeki's relations with Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, it seemed that South Africa's President had always postponed his decisions on human rights issues in Zimbabwe to a later period [3. P. 215-216]. Mbeki's relations with Mugabe were negatively assessed in the Western world. There, South Africa was perceived as a country that placed African solidarity above the principles of democracy and human rights. Thus, the credibility of the President of South Africa as a mediator in the tense relations between the political party ZANU PF, headed by Mugabe, and the Movement for Democratic Change, led by Morgan Tsvangirai, was questioned and subjected to close scrutiny by its observers [9]. It should be concluded that, under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki South Africa clearly did not protect the rights of Africans on the continent in its foreign policy, giving priority to the African solidarity over the claims of freedom in some countries. Issues of democracy and human rights simply retreated to a less significant place in accordance with the foreign policy vision of the government of Thabo Mbeki. Based on this, it becomes obvious that the foreign policy of presidents Mandela and Mbeki differed significantly. For example, Mandela strongly opposed human rights violations by the government of Sani Abacha in Nigeria in 1995, while Mbeki chose to remain silent about similar events in Zimbabwe.

South Africa has played a crucial role in the political processes at the continental level. These include the creation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the promotion of the African Renaissance, and the transformation of the Organization of the African Union (OAU) into the African Union (AU), strengthening regional integration through the development of SADC (Southern African Development Community), peacekeeping interventions on the continent. South Africa's programme of engagement with these organizations, particularly the African Union, emphasizes the building of peace, democracy and human rights. At the policy briefing by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) Alfredo Zurima Xengari suggested that with the establishment of the African Union in 2002, possibilities have arisen for an ambitious agenda in the area of democracy and human rights in the framework of the foreign and continental policy of the African countries. According to the author's recommendations, the small African states that have succeeded in protecting human rights should adopt diplomacy and external identity that promote democratic norms. And the African Union itself must develop a global partnership with the civil society and countries that have succeeded in democracy and the protection of human rights [11]. This is the only way for the Organization to maintain the trust of internal and external partners. With regard to the role of individual countries in the work of the AU, it is important to note that major powers such as South Africa, even in times of internal crisis, must advocate an agenda of human rights, democracy and good governance. By 2063, "Africa is expected to have a universal culture of good governance that reflects democratic values, gender equality, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law [1]"

However, South Africa was not always successful in the field of peacekeeping, promotion of democracy and human rights on the continent. For example, in the 1990s, South Africa failed to persuade the governments of Angola, Mozambique and Congo to reconsider their military approach to the rebel movements in favour of a negotiated settlement and the establishment of a government of national unity. The South African government also failed to prevent the involvement of some of its SADC partners in the DRC war. But, these clearly disappointing results can be countered by the success in other cases. For example, in 1998, under the auspices of SADC and at the request of the government of Lesotho, South Africa, together with Botswana, carried out military intervention in the country, which was on the verge of a war. With the assistance of Botswana and South Africa, the situation in the country has been stabilized and political negotiations on a new Constitution and a new electoral system have begun [5]. As mandated by the African Union, South Africa has also taken a number of diplomatic steps in the Comoros, where there was a threat of a coup d'état. South Africa's intervention has contributed to the creation of a new political order and the achievement of relative stability. In 2002, during the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, the leadership of the African Union entrusted Thabo Mbeki with the role of mediator. In

April 2005, following a meeting of the then President of South Africa with key political leaders of Côte d'Ivoire, significant progress was made on the country's security, elections and ongoing consultations, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the rebels into the national army. Finally, the best example of the implementation of the soft power policy by the government of South Africa is its involvement in the settlement of the conflict in Southern Sudan. Committee, appointed by the African Union to chair the Sudan reconstruction, the South African government has concluded that one of the key factors for a successful transition to peace in Sudan would be the ability of the Sudan people's liberation movement to govern the South following the peace agreement signed on 9 January 2005. In October 2018, the Deputy President of South Africa David Mabuza arrived in the Republic of Sudan as special envoy of the President Cyril Ramaphosa. At a meeting with local leaders, Mabuza said that "South Africa will continue to support South Sudan and will share its experience gained as a result of South Africa's transition to democracy [14]".

In 2009, President Jacob Zuma opened a new phase of foreign policy in which South Africa increasingly embraced South-South cooperation and consolidated the African agenda. In this policy, economic diplomacy with rapidly developing countries is becoming increasingly valuable [7]. Thus, in 2010, South Africa's membership in BRICS became a reality. South Africa's accession to BRICS is undoubtedly regarded as an important achievement of the foreign policy of the Zuma administration. It should be noted that the attractiveness of South Africa as an ideal starting point of influence on the entire continent, or a "gateway to the continent," as well as the need to include an African representative in the BRIC group made China to lobby for the inclusion of South Africa in this organization. In addition, joining BRIC has provided South Africa with a solid platform for success in two important areas: the establishment of South Africa as a regional leader of Tropical Africa and the ability to demand and take action to address global issues within the framework of the work of some international multilateral organizations, such as the UN or the IMF. In addition to the economic factor, and the role of the regional leader of South Africa, it is important to note that the "political quality" of the country as an example of democracy and political stability on the African continent played a role for its adoption in BRICS. If this factor was unimportant, the BRIC group could consider other African economic giants such as Nigeria or Egypt as a partner. However, the situation of stability and human rights in these countries is not yet satisfactory.

Promotion of democratic norms by the government of South Africa on the African continent has significantly improved the country's image in the world. South Africa is a member of the open Government Partnership, whose goals are in a sense complementary to the struggle for the rights of man and citizen, and democracy in general. Today, more than 20 years after gaining freedom and democracy, the goals and objectives of South Africa's foreign policy have not

changed, but the conditions in which this policy is implemented have changed [2]. Understanding the trends in the development of South Africa's foreign policy requires considering the process of implementing the tasks through the prism of the country's activity in international organizations.

Overall, South Africa's transition to democracy was a turning point in the country's political history. Since then, a new foreign policy has been defined, in which democracy and human rights have taken a fundamental place. Despite the internal political difficulties that South Africa has faced in the process of its development, the country adheres to the ideals of democracy and human rights, which are certainly instruments of its foreign policy. It should be concluded that the success of African countries in the area of democracy and human rights depends largely on them, as well as on the policies of the continent's leading states, such as South Africa, which should not weaken attention to human rights and democracy issues. South Africa must strengthen the ideals on which its peoples' struggle for freedom was based.

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