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Portuguese-Angolan relations after 2002

Summary

Bilateral contacts between Portugal and Angola date back to the end of the 15th century, to the Age of Discovery and the construction of the Portuguese Colonial Empire. They have been developed for hundreds of years in the social, economic, cultural and political area. Relations between the countries have a complex background, their course was part of the broader context of the development of international relations. Angola gained independence in 1975, but it quickly plunged into a devastating civil war that lasted nearly forty years and ended only at the beginning of the 21st century.

The doctoral dissertation is about Portuguese-Angolan relations after the year 2002. The main purpose of my work is to investigate the contemporary relations between Portugal and Angola since the end of the civil war in this African country. The time range of the analysis reaches the year 2017, when the head of state of Angola changed for the first time since the late 1970s. In addition, the dissertation also characterizes the basis of bilateral relations and the framework of their functioning, i.e., cooperation agreements concluded between the countries.

The basis of my work was the analysis of both Polish and foreign sources about Portugal and Angola. To a large extent, the research for the doctoral thesis was conducted during my stay on a scholarship in Portugal. The contemporary Portuguese-Angolan relations represent a topic rarely tackled, not only in Polish but in world's literature, what influenced choice of the subject for my work.

The structure of the thesis consists of four parts arranged thematically, intended to show the development of interstate relations. The first chapter of the dissertation contains the comprehensive characteristics of Portugal and Angola. There are introduced issues related to the situation of the states, important in the subsequent detailed analysis of their mutual relations. What is more, factors having a great impact on the position of the countries, such as social, cultural and economic issues, are discussed, as well as their foreign policy.

The second chapter of the thesis focuses on the genesis of Portuguese-Angolan relations. Throughout this chapter, the development of the Portuguese Colonial Empire is described, the goals of expansion and the related struggle for influence. Furthermore, the beginnings of the Portuguese presence in Africa are shown, and the way of shaping their contacts with the inhabitants of this continent. Moreover, this part of the thesis refers to the construction of Portuguese influence in the territory of present-day Angola and the way of formation of a colony in that area until Angola became an independent state.

The third chapter of the dissertation examines the most significant bilateral agreements concluded between Portugal and Angola. The states are linked by numerous mutual agreements that constitute a base for their cooperation. The description is arranged chronologically to depict the development of two-sided relations over the years. The agreements cover a wide variety of diverse issues, ranging from economic to scientific, cultural and social. The vast thematic scope of agreements existing between the countries proves the multifaceted cooperation that they undertake in manifold fields.

The fourth chapter of the thesis seeks to investigate the Portuguese-Angolan relations after the end of the civil war in Angola. It presents the conditions in which mutual contacts between the states were shaped. Apart from this, the chapter places emphasis on the most relevant issues in the bilateral relations between Portugal and Angola until the year 2017, when the change of president of Angola took place for the first time in almost forty years. This event opened a new stage in Portuguese-Angolan cooperation.

At the end of the dissertation the research is summarized. The last part of the work examines the results of the study, as well as it strives to point out the conclusions. It is even more significant in the light of the fact that the area of the analysis, the Portuguese-Angolan relations after the year 2002, is not widely discussed in Polish or world's literature.