

ARTICLE

FIDEL CASTRO AND SOCIOECONOMIC HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA:

A MULTI-LEVEL ANALYSIS

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I. INTRODUCTION

In February of 2008, Fidel Castro stepped down from power as Cuban leader, due to failing health, after forty-nine years in office.¹ In

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a farewell address to delegates at the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba (“CPC”) in April of 2016, Castro expressed his personal belief that the enduring “ideas of [...] Cuban communists” lent proof to the proposition that, with dedicated hard work, the Cuban government “can produce the material and cultural goods that human beings need.”² He advised the delegates to “fight without truce to obtain” these goods for citizens.³ Those material and cultural goods citizens need for a good life that, as a matter of human rights rather than privilege,⁴ their leaders must fight tirelessly to provide for them, form the focus of this Article.

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1. See, e.g., James C. McKinley Jr., *Fidel Castro Resigns as Cuba’s President*, N.Y. TIMES (Feb. 20, 2008), <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/20/world/americas/20castro.html> [<https://perma.cc/ZVV6-CEA8>]; *Castro Resigns Presidency of Cuba, After 49 Years*, NPR (Feb. 19, 2008), <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=19157999> [<https://perma.cc/M2JV-7VM2>].

2. Roy Carroll, *Fidel Castro Bids Farewell to Cuba’s Communist Party Congress*, GUARDIAN (Apr. 19, 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/19/fidel-castro-farewell-speech-cuba-communist-congress> [<https://perma.cc/96ST-SL7U>]. The congress of the party is the highest decision-making organ in both the government and the party. The first such congress, attended by a record 3,116 delegates, the largest ever, was held in December of 1975. See, e.g., *Communist Party of Cuba (Partido Comunista de Cuba - PCC)*, GLOBAL SECURITY, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/cuba/communist-party.htm> [<https://perma.cc/24K7-F7EK>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

3. Carroll, *supra* note 2.

4. See *Difference Between Right and Privilege*, DIFFERENCE BETWEEN (July 14, 2012), <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-right-and-vs-privilege/> [<https://perma.cc/KN7P-V7E9>] (explaining that “[p]rivileges are conditional and can be withdrawn[,] while rights are inherent and cannot be withdrawn.”). For a description of the distinction between these two doctrines in US constitutional history, see Dennis J. Mahoney Kenneth L. Karst, *Right-Privilege Distinction*, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION (2000), available at <https://www.encyclopedia.com/politics/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/right-privilege-distinction> [<https://perma.cc/6VW4-R6EN>]. From the standpoint of human rights advocacy, several factors make a human rights approach superior to one based on privilege. First, with human rights, the risk of derogation is minimized, given that phrasing one’s work in human rights terms “takes you back to the primacy of equality and dignity[,] no matter what the circumstance,” quoted in Philip C. Aka, *Analyzing U.S. Commitment to Socioeconomic Human Rights*, 39 AKRON L. REV. 417, 426 (2006). Second,

On November 25, 2016, little over seven months later, Castro died, aged ninety.⁵ Reactions all over the world, reflecting on his life and times, were mixed. Some remembered him positively for the access to socioeconomic goods he created at home and abroad, as well as for his commitment to equal treatment of peoples, evident in his support of national independence, opposition to colonial rule, and opposition to racism and xenophobia, to name these gestures.⁶ Representative of these positive tributes were separate statements from Bill Bonnar and Jeremy Corbyn. Bonnar observed that “Castro’s entire political life was given to the struggle for Cuban independence[,] and the struggle for liberation and socialism all over the world.”⁷ Corbyn, then leader of the Labor Party in the United Kingdom, eulogized Castro as a “huge figure of modern history, national independence[,] and 20th century socialism.”⁸ “For all his flaws,” which he left unspecified, Corbyn gave Castro credit for many achievements, including building world-class health and education systems, a record of international solidarity abroad, and support for the decolonization struggle in Angola which helped end apartheid in South Africa, ultimately making way for black majority rule in the land.⁹ In short, he said, the deceased Cuban leader “will be remembered both as an internationalist and a champion of social justice.”¹⁰

Other sympathizers viewed Castro’s legacy negatively, for example, by remembering him only as a dictator who suppressed

related to the first and reinforcing it, “[y]ou cannot reduce rights. You either have to hold the line or increase them.” *Id.* at 431 (quoting Cathy Albisa of the Center for Economic and Social Rights, a human rights group headquartered in Brooklyn, New York).

5. See, e.g., *Fidel Castro, Cuba’s Leader of Revolution, Dies at 90*, BBC (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-38114953> [<https://perma.cc/SV5B-K2JY>]; *Raul Castro Announces Death of Fidel Castro*, BBC (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-latin-america-38115171/raul-castro-announces-death-of-fidel-castro> [<https://perma.cc/74TA-G96H>].

6. See *infra* notes 7-10 and corresponding text.

7. Bill Bonnar, *Fidel Castro: A 90[-]Year Cuban Legacy*, SCOTTISH SOCIALIST PARTY (Nov. 27, 2016), <https://scottishsocialistparty.org/fidel-castro-90-year-cuban-legacy/> [<https://perma.cc/74TA-G96H>]. Bonnar was at the time the national secretary of the Scottish Socialist Party.

8. Jamie Doward, *Castro was “Champion of Social Justice” Despite Flaws, Says Corbyn*, GUARDIAN (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/26/jeremy-corbyn-left-uk-politics-fidel-castro> [<https://perma.cc/679Z-SPHJ>].

9. Dan Bloom, *Jeremy Corbyn Will Not Attend Fidel Castro’s Funeral, Labor Source Confirms*, MIRROR (Nov. 28, 2016), <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/jeremy-corbyn-not-attend-fidel-9353118> [<https://perma.cc/AC5X-V4E2>].

10. Doward, *supra* note 8.

freedom of expression in Cuba.¹¹ One such evaluation came from Donald J. Trump, then President-Elect of the United States who opined that Castro was “a brutal dictator who oppressed his own people for nearly six decades[,]” adding that his “legacy is one of firing squads, theft, unimaginable suffering, poverty and the denial of fundamental human rights.”¹²

There were also tributes that combined these diametrically opposite assessments. A tribute that typifies this category was a statement by one Erika Guevara-Rose, Americas director of Amnesty International who remembered Castro as “progressive but deeply flawed.”¹³ Guevara-Rose elaborated that Castro oversaw dramatic improvements in access to human rights, such as healthcare and housing, accompanied by an unprecedented drive to improve literacy rates across the country.¹⁴ However, despite these achievements in areas of social policy, she went further, Castro’s long period in office “was characterized by a ruthless suppression of freedom of expression[,]” including arrest and harassment of dissidents for speaking out against the government, which she assessed as “Fidel Castro’s darkest legacy.”¹⁵

Cuba has a population of approximately 11.5 million people, at least ten percent of which is Black.¹⁶ The largest island in the West Indies, it comprises the Island of Cuba (westernmost of the Greater Antilles), the Isla de la Juventud (Isle of Youth), and 1,600 small

11. See *infra* note 15 and corresponding text.

12. Julian Borger, *Trump and Obama Offer Divergent Responses to Death of Fidel Castro*, GUARDIAN (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/26/fidel-castro-death-obama-trump-response> [<https://perma.cc/A8BZ-NJCS>]. See Javier Corrales, *Fidel Was Hell*, FOREIGN POLICY (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/11/26/cuba-fidel-castro-was-hell/> [<https://perma.cc/6R7E-LB5N>] (contending that Castro “was a radical bent on transformational, alternative global development[,]” who paradoxically “left his country conservative, impoverished, and isolated”).

13. Erika Guevara-Rose, *Fidel Castro’s Human Rights Legacy: A Tale of Two Worlds*, AMNESTY INT’L (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/11/fidel-castro-s-human-rights-legacy-a-tale-of-two-worlds/> [<https://perma.cc/8MR4-DFHN>].

14. *Id.*

15. *Id.*

16. Sandra A. Levinson & Franklin W. Knight, *Cuba*, BRITANNICA ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA (section under “People”), <https://www.britannica.com/print/article/145542> [<https://perma.cc/9RDB-Q6CS>]. The number is actually higher, given that about two-thirds of Cubans have some African roots. Anita Snow, *Fidel Castro Heads to Africa*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Aug. 29, 2001), <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [<https://perma.cc/XDQ9-8XFA>].

offshore islands.¹⁷ Cuba is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean in the north-east, the Gulf of Mexico in the north-west, the Straits of Florida in the north-central, the Cayman Trench in the south-east, and the Caribbean Sea in the south-west.¹⁸ Cuba lies about 90 miles south of Key West, Florida in the United States. It also has an 18-mile land border in the south-east where the US government maintains a naval base at Guantánamo Bay that it leases from Cuba.¹⁹

From the standpoint of governmental system, Cuba is a socialist state founded on Marxist-Leninist doctrines, where the CPC retains a monopolistic role in the government and society as an “organized vanguard of the Cuban Nation.”²⁰ In the aftermath of his death, Castro’s successors have pledged to maintain this political system,²¹ at a time many socialist states elsewhere have abandoned communism.²² Still on governmental arrangement, Cuba has a unitary system of government—made up of a central government, fifteen provinces, and one special municipality in Juventud Island—that derives its legitimacy from a 1976 constitution as amended in 1992 and 2002.²³ For its legal system, Cuba has a civil law tradition based on Spanish civil code.²⁴

Economically speaking, Cuba operates a centrally planned economy matching its socialist government, but with a dose of market

17. Australian Gov’t Dep’t of Foreign Affairs & Trade, *Cuba Country Brief*, DFAT, <https://dfat.gov.au/geo/cuba/Pages/cuba-country-brief.aspx> [<https://perma.cc/ZY95-3J5C>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019) [hereinafter Australian Gov’t].

18. *Cuba*, WORLD ATLAS (July 12, 2016), <https://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/america/caribb/cu.htm> [<https://perma.cc/X5QV-AJLG>].

19. Australian Gov’t, *supra* note 17.

20. *See Communist Party of Cuba*, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA (Dec. 20, 2018), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Communist-Party-of-Cuba> [<https://perma.cc/T2DH-LHR3>]. *See also* Levinson & Knight, *supra* note 16 (under “History,” specifically “the Castro regime.”).

21. *See* Diego Oré & Sarah Marsh, *Cuba’s Raul Castro Vows to Defend Brother’s Legacy in Final Tribute*, REUTERS (Dec. 3, 2016), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-castro-idUSKBN13S0SG> [<https://perma.cc/2KNB-TT7B>] (stating that Raul Castro “pledged to defend the socialist legacy of his brother[,] Fidel Castro”); Shakir Husain, *Cuba Sticks to Castro’s Foreign Policy under New President*, DAILY SABAH (June 8, 2018), <https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2018/06/08/cuba-sticks-to-castrors-foreign-policy-under-new-president> [<https://perma.cc/965P-CTV5>] (referring to Miguel Diaz-Canel, first non-Castro president since the revolution, who took over from Raul Castro in April of 2018).

22. *See Socialist Countries 2019*, WORLD POPULATION, <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/socialist-countries/> [<https://perma.cc/8FDQ-DMLE>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019) As of today, 12 states, including China, Cuba, North Korea, and Vietnam, describe themselves as socialist states, while 23, including Angola and Mozambique, have abjured that title.

23. Levinson & Knight, *supra* note 16 (section on “Government and Society”).

24. Australian Gov’t, *supra* note 17. For more details, see, e.g., Kelly Buchanan, *FALQs: Cuban Legal System*, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS (Jan. 27, 2015), <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2015/01/falqs-cuban-legal-system/> [<https://perma.cc/C2L5-BSVC>].

forces designed to minimize the hardship effect of longstanding US embargoes on the country,²⁵ subsequently complicated by the withdrawal of generous Soviet assistance of about US \$5.6 billion per annum.²⁶ Sugar exports remain among the mainstays of Cuba's economy, but as the share of this product in foreign exchange has declined over the years from about seventy-five percent to below fifty percent, services appear to pick up the slack, with tourism, education, healthcare, and entertainment now accounting for about forty percent of employment within the country.²⁷

Under Castro, Cuban foreign policy in Africa was marked by energetic activities, particularly from about 1975 to 1991, that some commentators dub "intervention."²⁸ Since, as the Greek philosopher Socrates advised long ago, an unexamined life is not worth living,²⁹ this Article assesses and sheds light on these acts of "intervention," focusing specifically on the social, economic, and cultural human rights (or socioeconomic human rights) plank of that policy.

The academic literature tends to subsume Cuban investments in socioeconomic human rights in Africa under Castro (where it covers these rights at all) under its general program of military assistance in service of international communism (or the international socialist movement).³⁰ This Article takes a more disaggregating and

25. See *infra* note 106 and corresponding text.

26. Levinson & Knight, *supra* note 16 (section on "Economy").

27. Levinson & Knight, *supra* note 16 (section on "Economy").

28. See, e.g., Allan S. R. Sumnall, *Cuban Intervention in Africa*, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE (2008), <https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/cuban-intervention-africa> [<https://perma.cc/8EVW-2BQV>]; GEORGE EDWARD, *THE CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA, 1965-1991* (2012). See also Wolf Grabendorff, *Cuba's Involvement in Africa: An Interpretation of Objectives, Reactions, and Limitations*, 22 J. INTERAMERICAN STUD. & WORLD AFFAIRS 3, 5 (1980) (pointing out that "[m]ost African states view Cuban intervention in Africa as help in achieving independence through self-help, rather than as a step toward the type of dependence which would result from a similar commitment by the super-powers").

29. See James M. Ambury, *Socrates (469-399 B.C.E.)*, INTERNET ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY, <https://www.iep.utm.edu/socrates/#SSH2biii> [<https://perma.cc/CZ6L-ZZER>].

30. See generally JORGE I. DOMINGUEZ, *TO MAKE A WORLD SAFE FOR REVOLUTION: CUBA'S FOREIGN POLICY* (1989). On the international communist movement, see, e.g., Stephen A. Smith, *Introduction: Towards a Global History of Communism*, in *THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE HISTORY OF COMMUNISM* 1-36 (Stephen A. Smith ed., 2014). Specifically, for Latin America, see Mike Gonzalez, *Communism in Latin America*, in *OXFORD HANDBOOK OF THE HISTORY OF COMMUNISM* 252-67 (Stephen A. Smith ed., 2014). For one of the few exceptions to this general tendency, see Sergio Roca, *Economic Aspects of Cuban Involvement in Africa*, 10 CUBAN STUDIES/ESTUDIOS CUBA 55-90 (1980).

complicated view. It portrays Castro's contributions to socioeconomic human rights in Africa, in its own right, unattached to its general military assistance programs, as a function of three interrelated variables: (1) Cuban national security, (2) service to the international socialist movement, and (3) the synergistic interaction of these two variables. Moving forward, it argues that Cuba under Castro deserves recognition as a global Good Samaritan because of a broad view of national security the country undertook by pursuing principled policies abroad that consistently and systematically infused human rights in its external policies, one of a rare example from the socialist world in a literature dominated by attention to capitalist-oriented states.³¹

This Article has six sections, including this introduction and a conclusion. Part II defines socioeconomic human rights. Part III provides a brief background history of Cuban-African relations. Part IV lays out the measure of Cuban military and socioeconomic assistance in Africa during the period of active engagement from 1975 to 1991 at the heart of this Article. Part V, the centerpiece of the work, sets forth a multi-level explanation of Castro's contributions to socioeconomic human rights in Africa.

II. DEFINING SOCIOECONOMIC HUMAN RIGHTS

To define socioeconomic human rights, it is appropriate to first determine the broader concept of human rights. "Human rights" are guarantees of freedom of various categories that, ideally, individuals and groups everywhere have equally, free of invidious discrimination, by virtue of the fact that they are human beings who need these rights to live a life of dignity.³² There are at least thirty-eight of these rights distilled from the international bill of human rights³³—all, in turn,

31. *See infra* Part 5.D.

32. *See* Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. Res. 217A, ¶ 1 (Dec. 10, 1948) [hereinafter UDHR] (pronouncing recognition of "the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" as basis for "freedom, justice and peace in the world"); *id.*, art. 1 (stating that "[a]ll human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights").

33. *See* JACK DONNELLY, *INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS* 7 (Table 1.1) (4th ed. 2013). Instruments of the international bill of human rights include the UDHR (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the last two of which came into force in 1976. Some commentators include the U.N. Charter (1945), the first instrument ever to use the language of human rights, among the documents of the international bill of human rights. The UDHR sets forth "common standards of achievement for all peoples and all nations" that the two human rights covenants, as binding multilateral treaties, then elaborated.

traceable to the four-freedom doctrine of then US President Franklin D. Roosevelt: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.³⁴

The international human rights instrument that, in our time, popularized these rights is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (“UDHR”), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948,³⁵ in the aftermath of a bloody global war hallmarked by denial of every measure of basic rights, including the right to life, and of access to food.³⁶ As then Human Rights Watch chief, Kenneth Roth, poignantly stated in a commentary on this key human rights instrument, persons “who live in countries that respect the Universal Declaration in all its dimensions enjoy the freedom and means to live life to its fullest[,]” in that, for example, “[t]hey are able to speak their minds, practice the religions of their choosing, meet with their compatriots, be treated fairly by their government, and enjoy access to the necessities of life.”³⁷

In addition to individual rights, human rights also necessarily include group rights, testament of which is the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (known as the Genocide Convention) adopted on December 9, 1948,³⁸ one day before the UDHR’s adoption on December 10. Various classifications of

34. Louis Henkin, *Human Rights: Ideology and Aspiration, Reality and Prospect*, in *REALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS: MOVING FROM INSPIRATION TO IMPACT* 4 (Samantha Power & Graham Allison eds., 2000). President Roosevelt spoke about “four essential human freedoms” needed to build the peace after World War II. Each freedom was accompanied by the expression “everywhere in the world,” except for the fourth where he used “anywhere,” appellations which rendered these “essential human freedoms” universal. Regarding the last freedom, Professor Henkin commented: “freedom from fear—fear of enemies and tyrants—was doubtless a response to threats such as those posed by Adolf Hitler.” *Id.*

35. UDHR, *supra* note 32.

36. *See* UDHR, *supra* note 32, preamble (pointing out that “disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind,” paving way for “the advent of a world” where “freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people”); George J. Andreopoulos, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948*, *ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Universal-Declaration-of-Human-Rights> [<https://perma.cc/2Y2N-5RQW>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019) (pointing out that “[t]he massive and systematic human rights abuses committed during World War II, including the Nazi genocide of Jews, Roma (Gypsies), and other groups, spurred the development of” the UDHR.).

37. Kenneth Roth, *Human Rights Organizations: A New Force for Social Change*, in *REALIZING HUMAN RIGHTS: MOVING FROM INSPIRATION TO IMPACT* 230-31 (Samantha Power & Graham Allison eds., 2000).

38. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide art. II, Dec. 9, 1948, 78 U.N.T.S. 277.

human rights exist,³⁹ one of which is division into political-civil rights, such as the right to participate in one's own government, and the right to freedom of expression, among others; and socioeconomic rights, next below, such as the right to food, shelter, healthcare, and education, among others.

Socioeconomic human rights are guarantees of freedom, such as access to nutritious food, livable shelter, affordable healthcare, and affordable and skill-rich education, to enable individuals to provide these goods for themselves, without which non-socioeconomic human rights (i.e., political-civil rights), including even the right to life, ring hollow. They are the category of rights that Castro referred to as “the material and cultural goods that human beings need” that governments must “fight without truce to” provide.⁴⁰ The international human rights instrument which, in the contemporary period, popularized these rights is the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (“ICESCR”), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 but came into force in 1976.⁴¹

It should be clear by now that political-civil rights and socioeconomic rights are inextricably intertwined. Acknowledging the complementarity and inseparability of these two generations of human rights,⁴² the ICESCR proclaimed that socioeconomic rights represented a recognition that consistent with the UDHR, “the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be

39. See *infra* note 42.

40. Carroll, *supra* note 2.

41. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Dec. 16, 1966, 993 U.N.T.S. 3 [hereinafter ICESCR]. Interestingly, given its commitment to and achievements in this field, Cuba signed this instrument only in September 2008, after Fidel Castro left office, and is yet to ratify the multilateral treaty (without which it does not formally become part of its national law). See *Ratification Status for Cuba*, OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=44&Lang=EN [https://perma.cc/TBZ2-65GR] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

42. The division of human rights into generations is associated with Czech-French jurist Karel Vasak (1929-2015), who, in 1979, identified and theorized three generations of these rights coinciding with the tenets of the French Revolution: liberty, equality, and fraternity. See generally *Karel Vasak*, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/human-rights#ref61547> [https://perma.cc/B9X2-PGM8]. For Vasak, political-civil rights, tied to liberty, typify first-generation rights; socioeconomic rights, tied to equality, typify second-generation rights; and “collective-developmental” rights of peoples, such as the right to self-determination, tied to fraternity, typify third-generation rights. *Id.* See also *Three Generations of Human Rights*, GLOBALIZATION 101, <https://www.globalization101.org/three-generations-of-rights/> [https://perma.cc/Y6WM-4NR5].

achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights as well as his civil and political rights.”⁴³ Similarly, Franklin D. Roosevelt’s four-freedom doctrine, an acknowledged antecedent of the international bill of human rights, integrated these rights.⁴⁴

Many contemporary human rights scholars share this view regarding the interlinkage between political-civil rights and socioeconomic rights that counsel against sharp distinction between these rights. One of these scholars is Henry Shue who stated in his seminal 1980 work that, contrary to an evolved wisdom about the government’s role toward political-civil rights being “negative” mandating non-interference, vis-à-vis socioeconomic rights involving “positive” action, “the complete fulfilment of each kind of right involves the performance of multiple kinds of duties.”⁴⁵ Put differently, for Shue, all human rights, whether political-civil rights or socioeconomic rights, entail three correlative duties: the duty to avoid depriving, the duty to protect from deprivation, and the duty to aid the deprived.⁴⁶ Little wonder that the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna, Austria, in 1993, stated incisively and unambiguously that “[a]ll human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated.”⁴⁷

III. BRIEF BACKGROUND HISTORY OF CUBAN-AFRICAN RELATIONS

As they evolved under Castro, two discernible phases mark Cuban-African relations: (1) the period in the 1960s discussed in this section, and (2) the period of high energy circa 1975 until 1991 covered in the next section.⁴⁸ A downside to the historical account this section sets forth is that it injects a periodization into the narrative that, given

43. ICESCR, *supra* note 41, preamble.

44. Henkin, *supra* note 34.

45. HENRY SHUE, BASIC RIGHTS: SUBSISTENCE, AFFLUENCE, AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY 35-64 (1996).

46. *Id.*

47. Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, art. 5 (adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna) (June 25, 1993), <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/Vienna.aspx> [<https://perma.cc/L7VQ-RKC6>].

48. For clarity’s sake, subsequent reference to these two periods in this Article will designate them as Phase 1 and Phase 2.

the seamlessness in real life of the relations analyzed in the two sections, is ersatz and justified only analytically. Professor Gleijeses theorized that Cuban involvement in Angola in 1975, discussed later in this Article, “cannot be understood without looking at the past[,]” that, for him, began in Algeria (i.e., in Arab Africa, rather than Portuguese-speaking Africa).⁴⁹ Secondly, even more persuasive is the fact that Cuban involvement in Phase 2 mimicked its Phase 1, complete with similar tools of engagement, only bigger in scale in Phase 2. Thirdly, as Part IV shows, some scholars, such as again Professor Gleijeses merge Cuban military and socioeconomic assistance in the two phases together, rather than separate them.⁵⁰

Cuban interest in anticolonial movements in Africa developed soon after Castro came to power, mainly within the context of covert operations in support of liberation movements.⁵¹ The Cubans extended support to indigenous groups fighting for independence in Algeria, and in the then Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique as well as to newly independent African countries like Benin, Republic of the Congo (then Congo Brazzaville), Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Mali with whom Havana sought to build relations in Africa.⁵² Ernesto “Che” Guevara, Castro’s personal emissary, travelled to Cairo, the Egyptian capital, in June of 1959 and Raúl Castro did the same in July of 1960.⁵³ Then in September of the same year, Castro delivered a speech at the United Nations which gave accent to African issues.⁵⁴

49. See *infra* note 76 and corresponding text.

50. See *infra* notes 123-25 and corresponding texts.

51. Piero Gleijeses, *Cuba’s Intervention in Africa during the Cold War*, OXFORD BIBLIOGRAPHIES (Dec. 8, 2016), <https://blog.oup.com/2016/12/cuba-intervention-africa-cold-war/> [<https://perma.cc/S4E7-X49P>].

52. See Piero Gleijeses, *Cuba’s First Venture in Africa: Algeria, 1961-1965*, 28 J. LATIN AM. STUD. 159, 188 (1996).

53. *Id.* at 159.

54. *Id.* See Fidel Castro, Castro Denounces Imperialism and Colonialism, Speech before the U.N. General Assembly (Sept. 1960), available at <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/castro/db/1960/19600926.html> [<https://perma.cc/TB9N-TEGK>]. In the speech Castro declared emphatically: “[w]e are ... on the side of the Algerian people, as we are on the remaining colonial peoples in Africa, and on the side of the Negroes who are discriminated against in the Union of South Africa. Similarly, we are on the side of those peoples that wish to be free, not only politically ... but also economically free, for there is one truth which we should all recognize as being of primary importance, namely, that there can be no political independence unless there is economic independence, that political independence without economic independence is a lie; we therefore support the aspirations of all countries to be free politically and economically.” *Id.*

Cuba's socioeconomic assistance to Africa began in 1960 with a grant of scholarships to a group of students from Guinea.⁵⁵ The Cuban government sent military and medical supplies to the Algerian National Liberation Front ("ANLF") and after Algeria became independent in July of 1962, established a Cuban military mission in the country.⁵⁶ Similarly, Cuba sent a military mission to Ghana in 1961 soon after the country's independence in 1957.⁵⁷ And following Ernesto "Che" Guevara's visit in 1964 with leaders of progressive movements in the Portuguese countries, by 1965, Cuba sent military missions to these colonies.⁵⁸ By the same token, Cuba dispatched troops to Zaïre and Congo Brazzaville in 1965.⁵⁹ In the same year, in eastern Zaïre, about 120 Cubans, led by "Che" Guevara, fought side by side with Zaïrean rebels.⁶⁰ Cuba also provided assistance to insurgents in Guinea-Bissau between 1966 and 1974.⁶¹

Algeria typified Cuban relations with Africa at this early period. "Algeria was Cuba's headquarters in Africa[,]"⁶² a veritable gateway to Cuba's entry into the continent in a relationship that went on from 1961 to 1965.⁶³ Havana supported Algeria because of its progressive potential from a revolutionary standpoint—and the force of example it signified for other African countries still under colonial rule and domination.⁶⁴ "Until the overthrow of President [Ahmed] Ben Bella in 1965, Algeria was Cuba's closest friend on the continent. Cuba provided both military and civilian assistance not only to the Algerian republic but also, before their victory to the [freedom fighters] of the Algerian National Liberation Front."⁶⁵

55. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 165 n.24.

56. Sumnall, *supra* note 28.

57. *Id.*

58. *Id.*

59. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 194.

60. *Id.* at 167 n.28.

61. *Id.* at 194.

62. *Id.* at 185.

63. *See generally* Gleijeses, *supra* note 52.

64. In the words of the Cuban weekly, *Verde Olivo*, "[o]f all the countries in Africa, it is Algeria that takes the lead in helping the movements of national liberation. [. . .] It is a model that inspires other African peoples who are still marching along the slow road to national independence. The Algerian republic is a beacon for millions and millions of people throughout Africa." *Id.* at 173 (quoting *Verde Olivo*).

65. *Id.* at 159.

With little concern of possible backlash from France, Cuba under Castro “chose to help the Algerian revolution in deed and in word.”⁶⁶ Beginning with words (i.e., verbal gesture), from Castro down, Cuban officials strongly “proclaimed their country’s support for the Algerian cause,” including political support for Algeria at the United Nations.⁶⁷ Next to deed, in May of 1963, Cuba sent a medical mission of fifty-five medical workers to Algeria, made up of twenty-nine doctors, three dentists, fifteen nurses, and eight medical technicians.⁶⁸ Of the team, forty-five were men while ten were women.⁶⁹ The mission was led by Minister of Public Health José Ramón Machodo Ventura,⁷⁰ who believed that, as Public Health Minister, he had a duty to see for himself firsthand where his doctors were posted.⁷¹ In June of 1964, Cuba dispatched a second medical mission of sixty-one medical personnel, thirty-four men and twenty-seven women, comprising twenty-four doctors, four dentists, twenty-four nurses, and nine medical technicians.⁷²

Five observations are in order about this period. First, Havana operated very much as an independent actor, driven by Cuban domestic imperatives, rather than as a proxy of Soviet Russia, who would be a major player later in the ideological rivalry between East and West signified by the Cold War as it will unfold in Africa.

Second, military assistance and socioeconomic goods complemented each other hand in glove to the point of indistinction. Frequently, Cuban military assistance was accompanied with medical assistance. For example, in August of 1965, during a visit to Havana, Zairean rebel leaders “extracted [from Castro] the promise that Cuba would send fifty doctors [to the rebel area].”⁷³ As the following debt of gratitude from President Bella in October of 1962, months after the country’s independence July 5 of that year, makes clear, Cuban assistance included reckonable socioeconomic goods at the heart of this

66. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 161.

67. *Id.*

68. *Id.*

69. *Id.* at 165.

70. *Id.*

71. *Id.* at 167 n.28. Thus, “[i]n late September 1965, he appeared, unannounced, in eastern Zaïre, where some 120 Cubans, led by Che Guevara, were fighting side by side with the Zaïrean rebels.” *Id.*

72. *Id.* at 169.

73. *Id.* at 167, n.28, quoting the personal diary of Ernesto “Che” Guevara.

Article, “material and cultural goods that human beings need,” as Castro subsequently named them:

We will never forget all you did for our *refugees* in Morocco and Tunisia. We will never forget how you *cared* for our orphans and our wounded. Comrade Fidel Castro, the National Liberation Front of Algeria has awarded only one medal of honor. We have awarded it to you.⁷⁴

This statement not only speaks to the substantial scale of assistance by a small country under the threatening shadow of a hostile superpower, but also to Cuba’s status as a global Good Samaritan. Singling out medical assistance for quick mention, by the 1970s and beyond, this assistance rose to a phenomenon whose accretion some scholars come to praise as “medical internationalism.”⁷⁵

Third, whether in military assistance or socioeconomic goods, the tools of assistance mimicked those that the Cubans would use in the 1970s and 1980s at the highpoint of their engagement in the continent, the only difference being the larger scale of assistance extended in this later period. One Cuban official explained that Cuban involvement in Angola in 1975 “cannot be understood without looking at the past[,]” which past, in Professor Gleijeses’s assessment, “begins in Algeria, Cuba’s first love in Africa.”⁷⁶ This observation speaks to the seamlessness referred to earlier that makes periodization of the two eras covered in this Article artificial and understandable only from an analytic standpoint.

Fourth, even at this early point in its foreign policy, Cuba displayed the features of states and other political communities that some perceptive scholars came to denominate global Good Samaritans. These countries defined their national interests broadly in a manner that goes beyond narrow emphasis on *realpolitik*.⁷⁷ What for Cuba made these gestures particularly exemplary in selflessness was the picture of a “beggar” offering material help to others that the beggar was not really in a position to extend: the acts of socioeconomic assistance were

74. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 159, quoting Ahmed Ben Bella (emphasis added).

75. See generally JOHN M. KIRK & MICHAEL ERISMAN, *CUBAN MEDICAL INTERNATIONALISM: ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, AND GOALS* (2009).

76. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 194. The Cuban official in question, among the individuals Professor Gleijeses interviewed for his article, was Manuel Agramonte. See *id.* at 194 n.151. See also PIERO GLEIJESES, *CONFLICTING MISSIONS: HAVANA, WASHINGTON, AND AFRICA, 1959-1976* (2002) (analyzing missions with an unbroken time range from 1959 until 1976).

77. See *infra* notes 182-83 and corresponding texts.

“offered at a time when the exodus of doctors from Cuba following the revolution had forced the government to stretch its resources while launching its domestic programs to increase mass access to health care.”⁷⁸

To be sure, “[o]ne may argue that helping Algeria was in Cuba’s [national] interest, because Cuba needed friends in the Third World.”⁷⁹ Listen, for example, to this statement attributed to Jorge Serguera, Cuba’s ambassador in Algiers, capital of Algeria: “We will never forget the visit of President Ben Bella to our country one day before the Caribbean crisis [the Cuban Missile Crisis] exploded. Nor will we ever forget Algeria’s international solidarity toward us.”⁸⁰ However, “one cannot deny that in helping those whom they considered victims of aggression, the Cubans risked tangible interest,” such as good relationship with the French government then under Charles de Gaulle.⁸¹

Fifth, while the relations with Algeria exemplified Cuba’s investment in Africa, those relations were by no means limited to Algeria. Instead, driven by its Marxist beliefs and agenda, Cuba worked to exploit opportunities for relationship with countries in the still-decolonizing region that were not limited to any one independent state. In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly in September of 1960, Castro posited “[w]e are [. . .] on the side of the Algerian people, as we are on the remaining colonial peoples in Africa, and on the side of the Negroes who are discriminated against in the Union of South Africa.”⁸² And during his visit to Africa in 1964, Che Guevara, Castro’s right-hand man, after stopping for talks with Algerian leader Ben Bella, toured Bamako, Brazzaville, Conakry, Accra, Cotonou, and Cairo (the latter twice) before heading back to Havana on March 14, 1964.⁸³

78. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 166. The quote about a beggar offering help came from José Ramón Machado Ventura, Minister of Public Health, embodied in a note to Professor Gleijeses in July of 1995. According to the Health Minister, “[i]n 1959[,] Cuba had about 6,000 doctors, of whom some 1,500 had left the country by late 1962, and an equal number had asked to leave the country and the most we could do was to delay their departure for a while.” *Id.* at 166, n.25 (internal quotes deleted).

79. *Id.* at 191.

80. *Id.* at 173.

81. *Id.* at 191.

82. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 182.

83. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 188.

*IV. MEASURING THE SIZE OF CUBAN SOCIOECONOMIC
HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA CIRCA 1975 TO 1991*

Part IV of this Article highlights the quantum of Cuban socioeconomic human rights contributions in Africa in the period under review. Two observations are in order. First, the activities presented here are information in the public domain that, for example, do not include events below the radar of publicity, such as diplomatic initiatives. Moreover, given the climate of clandestineness that shrouded aspects of superpower competition in Africa during the Cold War, in which Cuba featured, there could have been some measures of assistance that went unreported.⁸⁴ It is not hard to imagine that these under-the-radar activities include health, housing, and other socioeconomic goods at the focus of this Article. Second, given that socioeconomic goods often tracked military assistance in the arsenal of Cuban aid, this presentation makes no sharp demarcation between the two tools.

The ensuing discussion proceeds chronologically, based on the timing and progression of Cuban involvement: Angola, then Ethiopia, then Mozambique, and finally other portions of Africa like Namibia and South Africa. In Angola, the freedom-fighting group Cuba pitched its tent with and therefore the beneficiary of its assistance was the Popular Movement of Liberation (“MPLA”) under the leadership of Agostinho Neto.⁸⁵ Compared to the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (“FNLA”) and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (“UNITA”) backed by the United States and minority-ruled South Africa, Cuba assessed the MPLA as the most progressive entity, judged by revolutionary credentials or potentials, that it could work with.⁸⁶ Growth of Cuban involvement in Angola and Mozambique during the 1970s coincided with the breakdown of peace negotiations in Portugal in 1975.⁸⁷ Initially, in Angola, Cuba sent three thousand combat troops and three hundred military advisers, along with tanks

84. See Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 2 (stating that “[t]here has been small Cuban covert operations in Africa in the 1960s in support of liberation movements”).

85. See Sumnall, *supra* note 28. The MPLA acronym and those of its two rivals, the FNLA and UNITA, are all in Portuguese.

86. See *id.*

87. See *The Angolan Civil War (1975-2002): A Brief History*, SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY ONLINE (Feb. 5, 2015), <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/angolan-civil-war-1975-2002-brief-history> [https://perma.cc/ATK7-6E4E].

and fighter aircraft to the MPLA.⁸⁸ Henceforth, the number of troops stationed in the country steadily increased: from twenty-four thousand in March 1976, to about forty thousand by 1984, and about fifty-five thousand in 1988.⁸⁹ Cuban records coupled with confirmation by Soviet defense officials showed that the decision to send Cuban troops in November 1975 to Angola was a Cuban initiative. It was a course of action based on the Castro regime's long-standing ties with the Angolan nationalist movement led by Agostinho Neto. At least initially, the Soviet Union had no hand in that decision because it was preoccupied with détente meant to tone down the Cold War and achieve improved relations with the United States.⁹⁰ The US government subsequently confirmed this narrative.⁹¹

In Mozambique, by the mid-1980s, Cuba sent seven hundred Cuban military and seventy civilian personnel.⁹² Compared to Angola and Ethiopia, Cuban engagement in Mozambique was low key.⁹³ Cuban involvement in Ethiopia in September of 1977 followed the Somalian invasion of Ethiopia. The invasion was Somalian leader Siad Barre's attempt to realize the irredentist dream of a Greater Somalia on the Horn of Africa. He took advantage of the weakened state of Ethiopia after the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974 by Mengistu Haile Mariam.⁹⁴ Cuba sent in 17,600 combat troops, including 6,000 military advisers.⁹⁵ These forces were well backed by Soviet military equipment, including air power, worth about US\$1

88. See *Fidel Castro: How Cuban Leader Changed Southern Africa*, BBC (Nov. 28, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-38130554> [<https://perma.cc/FGL2-B9F6>].

89. PIERO GLEIJESES, *THE CUBAN DRUMBEAT: CASTRO'S WORLDVIEW: CUBAN FOREIGN POLICY IN A HOSTILE WORLD* 34 (2009).

90. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 194. Then Soviet defense official Vasily Kuznetsov stated that the idea to intervene was part of Cuba's independent policy toward Africa that "had originated in Havana, not Moscow." *Id.* Then Soviet ambassador to the U.S. Anatoly Dobrynin, spoke similarly when he stated that the Cubans sent their troops "on their own initiative and without consulting us [i.e. with Moscow]." *Id.* at 194 n.150. See *Conflicting Missions: Secret Cuban Documents on History of African Involvement*, THE NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE (April 1, 2002), <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB67/> [<https://perma.cc/8CDE-2YUE>] (stating that Cuba made the decision to send troops without informing the Soviet Union and deployed those troops without Soviet assistance for the first two months).

91. Gleijeses, *supra* note 51, at 3 (stating that the CIA concluded years later that the intervention was a "unilateral Cuban operation designed in great haste").

92. Sumnall, *supra* note 28.

93. See *id.*

94. See Martin Plaut, *How Fidel Castro Became a Hero and a Villain in the Horn of Africa*, QUARTZ AFRICA (9, 2016), <https://qz.com/africa/859579/in-ethiopia-and-somalia-fidel-castros-legacy-is-very-different/> [<https://perma.cc/3L7E-VZVY>].

95. *Id.*

billion.⁹⁶ Prior to the invasion, both Moscow and Havana maintained relations with Ethiopia and Somalia, but switched decisively to the side of Ethiopia after attempts to reconcile the two sides failed.⁹⁷

Overall, under Castro, for a period spanning “over thirty years” from when it began in the 1960s, “Cuban soldiers and officers [were] on duty-service or [. . .] fought hand-in-hand with African soldiers and officers in [Africa] for national independence or against foreign aggression [. . . .]”⁹⁸ It did not come without cost. Within the same period, particularly during the second phase of Havana’s involvement in the region, about ten thousand Cuban soldiers died fighting for the freedom of Africans.⁹⁹ During the same period, over eighty thousand Cuban “civilian cooperators [. . .] rendered internationalist services in Africa [. . .].”¹⁰⁰ The number included 24,714 doctors, dentists, nurses and health-care technicians, as well as professors, teachers, engineers, and other skilled workers, numbering in the tens of thousands.¹⁰¹ In education alone, about “30,000 Africans studied in Cuba on full scholarships funded by the Cuban government[,]”¹⁰² and Cuban educational institutions “graduated 26,294 professionals and technicians” plus another 5,850 trained there.¹⁰³ While in disbursing its assistance, Cuba focused on revolutionary regimes, its support actually extended to both capitalist states as well as to those treading the path of socialism.¹⁰⁴ One evidence in support of this proposition is the fact that Cuba under Castro played a major role in the Non-Aligned Movement (“NAM”) second only to former Yugoslavia.¹⁰⁵ It was the only founding member then from Latin America.

96. *Id.* (stating that “[a]t one time a Soviet aircraft was landing in Addis Ababa every 20 minutes”).

97. *Id.*

98. Fidel Castro, Speech Delivered by Commander-In-Chief Fidel Castro at the South African Parliament (Sept. 4, 1998), <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/1998/ing/f040998i.html> [<https://perma.cc/82U4-FLN6>].

99. See Sean Jacobs, *If Africa is a Country, Then Fidel Castro is One of Our National Heroes*, AFRICA IS A COUNTRY (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://africasacountry.com/2016/11/viva-fidel> [<https://perma.cc/2MVM-9TRT>].

100. Castro, *supra* note 98.

101. *Id.*

102. Gleijeses, *supra* note 51.

103. Castro, *supra* note 98.

104. See DOMINGUEZ, *supra* note 30, at 184-218 (discussing Cuba’s relations with capitalist countries).

105. See Int’l Institute for Non-Aligned Studies, *Cuba and the Non-Aligned Movement*, NEW DELHI TIMES (Aug. 13, 2015), <https://www.newdelhitimes.com/cuba-and-the-non-aligned-movement123/> [<https://perma.cc/C44R-ZTBJ>]. The NAM is a forum of about

On the surface, from the standpoint of scale, these measures of assistance may not seem like a lot. But closely considered, this is phenomenal for a diminutive country of limited natural resources geographically closely located to the United States and under the behemoth's siege of economic embargo,¹⁰⁶ with the result that its economic lifeline depended on assistance from the Soviet Union, the United States' bitter rival.¹⁰⁷ As commentators point out regarding Cuban casualty emanating from its engagement in Angola and Mozambique, especially Angola, the estimated fourteen thousand soldiers who died there dwarfed the number of American fatalities in Vietnam.¹⁰⁸

120 developing states (Third World), not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc, neither the "First World" of capitalism nor the "Second World" of socialism (whatever still remains of the latter club, in the aftermath of the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe symptomized by the breakup of the Soviet Union). Next after the United Nations, NAM is believed to be the largest single grouping of states worldwide. During the highpoint of Cuban involvement in Africa that this Article analyzes, the NAM had a membership of about 90 developing world states, compared to the estimated 120 member states of today. See, e.g., *Member States [of the] Non-Aligned Movement*, WORLD DATA, <https://www.worlddata.info/alliances/non-aligned-movement.php> [<https://perma.cc/7MT6-UNQV>].

106. Dating back unbrokenly from March of 1958, the United States maintains the most consolidated and punishing set of embargoes that it reserves for any one country against Cuba. See *Cuba: The U.S. Embargo Against Cuba: Its Impact On Economic And Social Rights*, AMNESTY INT'L (Sept. 2, 2009), <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/44000/amr250072009en.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/8KLQ-4FA4>] (pointing out, citing a US government agency, that "[t]he embargo on Cuba is the most comprehensive set of US sanctions on any country, including the other countries designated by the US government to be state sponsors of terrorism"). As of 2018, the embargo is enforced mainly through six statutes: The Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations of 1963, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, and the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000. *Id.* Since 1992, the UN General Assembly has passed a resolution every year condemning the embargoes whose negative socioeconomic impacts on the Cuban population it views as a violation of the UN Charter and of international law. *Id.* See also *End Embargo on Cuba, U.S. Is Urged*, BBC (Sept. 2, 2009), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8232907.stm> [<https://perma.cc/MZP4-NG86>] (story on the Amnesty Int'l Report). For example, in 2014, 188 countries out of the 193 members of the U.N. General Assembly, voted yes on a nonbinding resolution to lift the sanctions, with only the U.S. and Israel voting no and three Pacific states (Palau, Marshall Island, and Micronesia) abstaining. Mirjan Donath & Louis Charbonneau, *For 23rd Time, U.N. Nations Urge End to U.S. Embargo on Cuba*, REUTERS (Oct. 28, 2014), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cuba-un/for-23rd-time-u-n-nations-urge-end-to-u-s-embargo-on-cuba-idUSKBN0IH1RN20141028> [<https://perma.cc/5HE9-3Y7Y>].

107. See Levinson & Knight, *supra* note 16 and corresponding text.

108. Jacobs, *supra* note 99.

A second factor, beyond raw numbers, that made Cuban assistance, including socioeconomic aid, phenomenal, is that it added up instructively to change the balance of power in the southern African region, from Angola and Mozambique all the way through Namibia and South Africa, to the benefit of Cuba and proponents of African decolonization.¹⁰⁹ The South Africans were on the verge of crushing the MPLA when Cuba airlifted thirty-six thousand combat troops into Angola.¹¹⁰ The scale of Cuban assistance strengthened the hand of the MPLA in its struggle against FNLA and UNITA in the civil war that engulfed Angola to the point that, with the encouragement of the US government, South African forces invaded Angola on the side of the FNLA and UNITA.¹¹¹ But it was too little, too late, as the MPLA coasted to victory against its rivals, driving South African forces out of Angola. Cuban military victory in Angola helped speed the collapse of minority rule in South Africa based on the policy of apartheid or separateness (with the socioeconomic immiseration it spelled for Blacks), paving the way for majority rule in the country.¹¹² It also simultaneously helped bring independence to Namibia, a trust territory that rather than prepare for independence, consistent with the stringencies of UN trust mandate, the minority regime in South Africa instead extended its policy of apartheid into. It was this weight of significance that Nelson Mandela had in mind when he pointed out that the Cuban military victory over the South African army “destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the white oppressor [. . .] [and] inspired the fighting masses of South Africa. [It] was the turning point for the liberation of our continent—and of my people—from the scourge of apartheid.”¹¹³

109. See generally PIERO GLEIJESES, *VISIONS OF FREEDOM: HAVANA, WASHINGTON, PRETORIA, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA, 1976-1991* (2013).

110. *Id.*; see *Conflicting Missions*, *supra* note 90.

111. See Keith Somerville, *It's 30 Years since Cuito Cuanavale: How the Battle Redefined South Africa*, THE CONVERSATION (May 29, 2017), <https://theconversation.com/its-30-years-since-cuito-cuanavale-how-the-battle-redefined-southern-africa-78134> [<https://perma.cc/VTJ5-BA38>]. Regarding the US encouragement of the invasion, see Gleijeses, *supra* note 51; *Conflicting Missions*, *supra* note 90. The latter source, a declassified document, indicated that, contrary to then U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's (re)presentation to Congress, “the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] helped the South Africans ferry arms to key battlefronts.” *Id.* Kissinger reasoned that success in Angola by way of defeating a pro-communist regime would boost US prestige and his own reputation, battered by the fall of South Vietnam in April of 1975. Gleijeses, *supra* note 51.

112. *Id.*; see Gleijeses, *supra* note 51.

113. Nelson Mandela, quoted in Gleijeses, *supra* note 51, at 188.

In many ways, the victory immensely benefited Cuban national security interests. This is why it is easy to understand why, as Gleijeses points out, Cuba insisted that its withdrawal from Angola be conducted in a manner that created a positive legacy of Cuban influence in African history.¹¹⁴ First, until Cuba's successful engagement in Angola, extra-continental military interventions were the preserve of the two superpowers, and a few West European countries.¹¹⁵ Cuba's massive use of force, first in Angola between 1975 and 1976 to repel a South African invasion, and next in Ethiopia in 1978 to help defeat a Somali invasion, were stunning developments that became even more impressive when it is considered that not even the Soviet Union sent this scale of troops beyond its immediate borders in those heady years of the Cold War between East and West.¹¹⁶ These factors were the reason Professor Piero Gleijeses praised Cuban foreign policy there, in its unprecedentedness, as "a policy without equal" in modern times.¹¹⁷ Professor Jorge I. Domínguez reasoned similarly when he portrayed Cuba under Castro as a diminutive country which boldly and repeatedly exercised and projected the foreign policy of a major power.¹¹⁸ And to the delight and pride of many Africans, Afro-Cubans played a visible role in the Cuban campaigns in Africa during this second phase in Cuban-African relations.¹¹⁹ This helped give teeth to Castro's campaign against racism and related prejudice like xenophobia.¹²⁰

114. Piero Gleijeses, *The United States and Castro's Cuba in the Cold War*, OXFORD BIBLIOGRAPHIES (May 5, 2017), <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766581/obo-9780199766581-0073.xml> [<https://perma.cc/6PM7-KDXN>].

115. Gleijeses, *supra* note 51.

116. *Id.*

117. GLEJESES, *supra* note 89 at 9.

118. *See generally* DOMÍNGUEZ, *supra* note 30.

119. *See, e.g.*, Frank F. Taylor, *Revolution, Race, and Some Aspects of Foreign Relations in Cuba Since 1959*, 18 CUBAN STUD. 19 (1988) (observing that more than domestic policy, foreign policy, including missions in Africa with the participation of Afro-Cubans, has promoted "full integration" of blacks into Cuban society); Sean Jacobs, *To So Many Africans, Fidel Castro is a Hero: Here's Why*, GUARDIAN (Nov. 30, 2016), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/30/africa-fidel-castro-nelson-mandela-cuba> [<https://perma.cc/KRY5-RS6J>] (reflecting on a "paradox" in Cuba's African policy embedded in "a progressive foreign policy on race," including missions abroad with Afro-Cuban participation, "at odds with the Communist Party's failure to reflect the full range of Cuba's racial diversity in its leadership structures or to fully address race politics").

120. *See infra* Part IV.C. (analyzing the interaction and intersection of Cuban national security and service to the International Socialist Movement, particularly the last portion of that discussion).

Second, Cuban engagement in Africa under Castro, including the access to socioeconomic goods that it afforded to revolutionary and non-revolutionary regimes alike, provided another platform for Cuban resistance to US power. As Professor Gleijeses recounts, when Castro attempted to spread revolution in Latin America, the United States responded by containing the spread of his influence within the hemisphere, including trying to overthrow him.¹²¹ Thus, the 1960s turned out to be years of unceasing hostility between Washington and Havana, but by the 1970s, particularly under the Jimmy Carter administration from 1977 to 1980, relations warmed up and the storm seemed to abate.¹²² Castro has consolidated his power and partly because of the failure of the Cuban regime's guerrilla offensives in Latin America, US officials believed Castro had lost his zeal to export revolution abroad.¹²³ This assumption proved incorrect with successive successful Cuban interventions, first in Angola and soon after in Ethiopia with tectonic impacts from the Horn of Africa all the way down to Namibia and South Africa. The unanticipated forays dismayed US officials who accused the Soviet Union of masterminding the interventions.¹²⁴ In short, compared to Latin America where Washington successfully flexed its muscles at Cuba's expense, in southern Africa, to the utter embarrassment, if not humiliation, of the US government, "Cuba changed the course of history[,] despite Washington's best efforts to prevent it."¹²⁵

121. Gleijeses, *supra* note 114.

122. *Id.*; Jennifer Lynn McCoy, *Jimmy Carter in Cuba*, THE CONVERSATION (Aug. 14, 2015), <https://theconversation.com/jimmy-carter-in-cuba-46109> [<https://perma.cc/EH2J-XB8Q>] (commenting on how in 1977, President Carter removed all travel restrictions on Americans to travel to Cuba and took the first big steps toward normalization of relations between the two countries while the Cold War still raged).

123. Regarding the failure of revolutionary activities in Latin America instigated by the Castro regime, see, e.g., Javier Farje, *Fidel Castro: A Latin American Story*, ALJAZEERA (Nov. 29, 2016), <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/11/161129085116132.html> [<https://perma.cc/ZKT6-CUUK>] (observing that "guerrillas tried to repeat the Cuban experience, ... but were mercilessly crushed by national armies, many of whose officers had been educated in the dubious art of counter-insurgency by the US at the School of the Americas in Panama," with the result that "[b]y 1967, when Che Guevara [Castro's personal emissary] was executed in Bolivia after he failed in his efforts to form a guerrilla group to invade his native Argentina, armed struggle as an instrument of change had fizzled out").

124. See *supra* notes 90-91 and corresponding texts.

125. Gleijeses, *supra* note 114, at 172.

V. DEFENDING SOCIALIST VALUES “TO THE LAST ATOM”: A
MULTI-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Explaining the reform of the “special period in time of peace” from 1990 until 2008, marked by termination of Soviet ideological and economic support, Castro advised Cubans “to have trust in what the government and party are doing[,]” elaborating that “[t]hey are defending, to the last atom, socialist ideas, principles[,] and goals.”¹²⁶ Leading to this viewpoint, Castro observed that even though his regime “do[es] not have a smidgen of capitalism or neo-liberalism” in its vein, nonetheless it faced “a world completely ruled by neo-liberalism and capitalism.”¹²⁷ However, the occurrence cannot and should not spell surrender.¹²⁸ Instead, it means the regime must “ad[a]pt to the reality of that [changed] world[,]” while staying true to its ideals and goals, precisely what Cuba is doing courageously and cool-headedly.¹²⁹ Cuba reached this crossroad in its revolutionary history because, under Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union chose to end its subsidies to Cuba, the result of *perestroika*, economic restructuring in the Soviet homeland coupled with a “new thinking” in external relations.¹³⁰

In performing its duties for the international socialist movement, Castro’s Cuba utilized socioeconomic instruments that the literature tends to lump together with military assistance.¹³¹ This Article has disaggregated these material and cultural goods human beings need.¹³² What remains in Part V is to put these socioeconomic goods in analytic perspective. To restate, this Article argues that the promotion of these socioeconomic goods in Africa were driven by a set of three interrelated variables: (1) domestic Cuban national security interest, (2) service to the international socialist movement, and (3) the synergistic interaction of these two variables. Additionally, this Article makes a case for why Cuba under Castro deserves due recognition as a global

126. LEYCESTER COLTMAN, THE REAL FIDEL CASTRO 291-92 (2003).

127. *Id.*

128. *Id.*

129. *Id.*

130. *Id.* at 260-61, 276. For details on the Soviet leader’s change programs, see, e.g., Martin McCauley & Dominic Lieven, *The Gorbachev’s Era: Perestroika and Glasnost*, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Russia/The-Gorbachev-era-perestroika-and-glasnost> [<https://perma.cc/8BK6-WPGM>]; David Holloway, *Gorbachev’s New Thinking*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Feb. 1, 1989), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/1989-02-01/gorbachevs-new-thinking> [<https://perma.cc/D434-9RA6>].

131. See *supra* note 30 and corresponding text.

132. See *supra* note 31 and corresponding text.

Good Samaritan, one of a rare example from the socialist world in an academic literature now dominated by exclusive attention to capitalist-oriented states.¹³³ The basis for the argument is the country's broad view of national security achieved through pursuit of principled policies abroad that consistently and systematically infused human rights in external policies.

A. Pursuit of Socioeconomic Human Rights in Service to Cuban National Security

Colloquially speaking, "national security" refers to the security of a country, including its people, institutions, and economy.¹³⁴ It is a bounden duty of any government.¹³⁵ National security is an indeterminate concept that different scholars define and operationalize differently.¹³⁶ Two of the most memorable of these definitions are by the writer Walter Lippman and the political scientist Harold D. Lasswell. Lasswell wrote laconically in 1950 that "[t]he distinctive meaning of national security [. . .] is freedom from foreign dictation."¹³⁷ For his part, in a 1943 definition, Lippmann stated that a state possesses this property "when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war."¹³⁸ More recently and most elaborately, Harold Brown, US Secretary of Defense under President Jimmy Carter, stated that a country has national security when it is able to perform certain key governing functions like preserve its "physical integrity and territory," "control its borders," "maintain its economic relations with the rest of

133. See ALISON BRYSK, *GLOBAL GOOD SAMARITANS: HUMAN RIGHTS AS FOREIGN POLICY* (2009). See also PHILIP C. AKA, *HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: BUILDING THE RECORD OF A MORAL SUPERPOWER* (2017) (extending the argument for application of human rights in external affairs to Nigeria, a capitalist state).

134. See Morton Berkowitz & P. G. Bock, *National Security*, *INT'L ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES* (2008), <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/political-science-and-government/military-affairs-nonnaval/national-security> [<https://perma.cc/FR99-YS2A>] (defining the concept, from a social science standpoint, as "the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external attacks," specifically as "the manner in which nations plan, make, or evaluate the decisions and policies designed" to increase their ability to protect their internal values from external attacks).

135. See *id.*

136. See generally Anton Grizold, *The Concept of National Security in the Contemporary World*, 11 *INT'L J. WORLD PEACE* 37 (1994).

137. JOSEPH J. ROMM, *DEFINING NATIONAL SECURITY: THE NONMILITARY ASPECTS* 79 (1993).

138. *Id.* at 5.

the world on reasonable terms,” and prevent its political system from external disruption.¹³⁹

Governments use various techniques, including political, diplomatic, economic, and military means to promote their countries’ national security.¹⁴⁰ Creative governments also embark on regional and international initiatives designed to reinforce domestic measures in promoting their national security.¹⁴¹ This is the key to the strong link between domestic and foreign policies. Some observers who have commented on this topic consider foreign policy an extension of domestic policy by non-domestic means.¹⁴² It was this interlinkage that former US President Dwight Eisenhower, a former army general, had in mind when, in his farewell, he advised the United States to beware of the military-industrial complex, because of the threat this phenomenon poses for democratic government.¹⁴³ The military-industrial complex is an opportunistic league between defense contractors and military interests in the US government to keep defense spending up beyond the real military needs of the country.¹⁴⁴ For Eisenhower, it is foolhardy to undermine at home the very goals the

139. CYNTHIA ANN WATSON, U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY: A REFERENCE HANDBOOK 281 (2d ed., 2008).

140. See, e.g., Jeff Farlin, *Instruments of National Power: How America Earned Independence*, Master of Strategic Studies Degree Thesis, U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE (2014), <https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/87.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/23HE-9D9L>]; DENNIS M. DREW & DONALD M. SHAW, MAKING STRATEGY: AN INTRODUCTION TO NATIONAL SECURITY PROCESSES AND PROBLEMS 36-44 (1988).

141. See, e.g., White House, *National Security Strategy*, NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY ARCHIVE (Feb. 2015), <http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2015.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/U5NL-KSPS>] (including issues like “combat[ing] the persistent threat of terrorism,” “prevent[ing] the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction,” and “confront[ing] climate change”); Cabinet Office, *The National Security Strategy Of The United Kingdom: Security In An Interdependent World*, CABINET OFFICE (Mar. 2008), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228539/7291.pdf [<https://perma.cc/RL2H-HJYD>] (listing issues of security challenges to include terrorism, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, transnationally organized crimes, global instability and conflict as well as failed and fragile states, civil emergencies, strengthening and reforming the international system, state-led threats to the UK, climate changes, and energy competition).

142. See, e.g., Carmen Elena Dorobãt, “Foreign Policy and Domestic Policy are but One System”: *Mises on International Organizations and the World Trade Organization*, 19 INDEPENDENT REV. 357 (2015).

143. *Ike’s Warning of Military Expansion, 50 Years Later*, NPR (Jan. 17, 2011), <https://www.npr.org/2011/01/17/132942244/ikes-warning-of-military-expansion-50-years-later> [<https://perma.cc/9PX5-FY4J>].

144. *Id.*

United States seeks, *ab initio*, to achieve abroad through design and implementation of a coherent foreign policy.¹⁴⁵

Cuban foreign policy under Castro was fundamentally nationalistic.¹⁴⁶ Castro understood the importance of promoting at home the very goals Cuba seeks to achieve abroad through the instrumentality of a well-designed and implemented foreign policy. Accordingly, it adopted a broader definition of national security going beyond political-military concerns to encompass socioeconomic benefits that it then exported abroad. Although at his death some critics called him a “radical bent on transformational, alternative global development,”¹⁴⁷ even his American detractors conceded that Castro was “inspired by a messianic sense of mission to aid his people.”¹⁴⁸ Although he occasionally showed sensitivity to Soviet views on issues bearing on the relationship between Cuba and the Soviet Union, the official positions of the Kremlin were rarely the decisive factor in his pursuit of causes either at home or abroad.¹⁴⁹

To the very end, Castro propagated production of socioeconomic benefits, as a matter of human rights, rather than privilege, that leaders must “fight without truce” to provide for citizens.¹⁵⁰ It was not a guarantee limited domestically only to Cubans. Instead, from the tone of his voice, the “human beings” penciled down for these benefits included Cubans at home and non-Cubans abroad alike.

*B. Pursuit of Socioeconomic Human Rights in Service to the
International Socialist Movement*

Another variable accounting for Castro’s contributions to socioeconomic human rights in Africa was service to the international socialist movement. Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State under Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford, observed that Castro “was probably the most genuine revolutionary leader then [in the 1970s] in power.”¹⁵¹ Kissinger was and is still a realist and believes that states

145. *Id.*

146. *See generally* H. MICHAEL ERISMAN, *CUBA’S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE ANATOMY OF A NATIONALIST FOREIGN POLICY* (1985).

147. *See* Corrales, *supra* note 12.

148. GLEJESSES, *supra* note 89, at 6.

149. CIA, *Bolsheviks and Heroes: The USSR and Cuba*, THE NATIONAL SECURITY ARCHIVE (Nov. 21, 1967), <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB67/glejesses8.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/MT43-T4Q9>].

150. *See supra* notes 2-4.

151. *See* Glejesses, *supra* note 51 (quoting Kissinger’s memoirs).

are unitary actors in world politics that must use self-help to navigate an international system without a world government (“anarchy”).¹⁵²

Commentators not influenced by realist theory have expressed similar views regarding the commitment of Castro to international communism.¹⁵³ These include Bill Bonnar, who, in his eulogy of Castro, praised the deceased former Cuban leader as “a giant of socialism.”¹⁵⁴ He elaborated in a statement arguably speaking to the intertwining of domestic and external policies next below, that “Castro’s entire political life was given to the struggle for Cuban independence[,] and the struggle for liberation and socialism all over the world.”¹⁵⁵ Bonnar was national secretary of the Scottish Socialist Party;¹⁵⁶ so, there may be observers who will consider his views as lacking in objectivity since, like Castro, he belonged in the international socialist movement. But there were non-socialist commentators who voiced similar assessments.¹⁵⁷ One such commentator was Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labor Party in the United Kingdom, who eulogized Castro as a “huge figure of modern history, national independence[,] and 20th century socialism.”¹⁵⁸ As previously mentioned, Corbyn praised Castro “as an internationalist and a champion of social justice.”¹⁵⁹ He gave Castro credit for many achievements, including building world-class health and education systems, a record of international solidarity abroad, and support for the decolonization struggle in Angola which helped end apartheid in South Africa.¹⁶⁰

The connection of all this to socioeconomic human rights is that, in serving the cause of international communism in Africa, Cuba utilized an assortment of assistance that ranged beyond conventional political-military assistance to include socioeconomic goods. Castro’s embrace of NAM and Cuba’s leadership of the Movement second only

152. See, e.g., Robert W. Merry, *The Morality of Kissinger’s Realism*, NATIONAL INTEREST (Apr. 25, 2013), <https://nationalinterest.org/commentary/kissingers-moral-foreign-policy-8398> [<https://perma.cc/978J-CPWQ>]; Walter Isaacson, *Henry Kissinger Reminds Us Why Realism Matters*, TIME (Sept. 6, 2014), <http://time.com/3275385/henry-kissinger/> [<https://perma.cc/F3AM-VX3Z>].

153. See *infra* notes 154-59 and corresponding texts.

154. Bonnar, *supra* note 7.

155. *Id.*

156. See Bonnar, *supra* note 7 (last sentence).

157. See *supra* notes 158-60.

158. Bloom, *supra* note 9.

159. *Id.*

160. *Id.*

to Yugoslavia, meant that these socioeconomic benefits were not limited to revolutionary states and regimes. Instead the benefits were occasionally extended to non-revolutionary states, especially those that touted themselves non-aligned. From 1979 to 1982, Castro was president of the Conference of NAM held in Havana. For him, the battle against imperialism was something larger than the Cold War and resistance of US hegemony; it was a battle against despair and oppression in the developing world.¹⁶¹ Accordingly, as the next section shows, Castro used his leadership of this movement to draw attention to global issues of interest to developing countries.

C. Interaction and Intersection of Cuban National Security and Service to the International Socialist Movement

This section deals with events that do not belong in the first two categories because, synergistically, those events bestride both categories. Jeremy Corbyn's assessment which praised Castro as a "huge figure of [. . .] national independence[,] and 20th century socialism,"¹⁶² arguably falls into this category. So too is the more elaborate evaluation by Bill Bonnar to the effect that "Castro's entire political life was given to the struggle for Cuban independence[,] and the struggle for liberation and socialism all over the world."¹⁶³

There are three such events that illustratively we highlight here. The first is represented in Castro's belief, demonstrated in words and deeds, in the indivisibility of political-civil rights and socioeconomic rights. Recall the comment earlier in this Article regarding the complementarity of political-civil rights and socioeconomic rights and therefore the inseparability of these guarantees.¹⁶⁴ Inspired by this wisdom or despite it, in a 1979 message to the United Nations General Assembly, Castro gave a speech that demonstrated the interlinkage between political-civil rights and socioeconomic rights, specifically how lack of attention to socioeconomic human rights can have consequences for political-civil rights, particularly "the rights to life and human dignity":

Why should some people walk barefoot, so that others can travel in luxurious cars? Why should some live for thirty-five years, so

161. *See generally* GLEJESES, *supra* note 89.

162. *See* Bloom, *supra* note 9.

163. *See* Bonnar, *supra* note 7.

164. *See supra* notes 42-43.

that others can live for seventy years? Why should some be miserably poor, so that others can be hugely rich? I speak on behalf of the children in the world who do not have a piece of bread. I speak on behalf of the sick who have no medicine, of those whose rights to life and human dignity have been denied.¹⁶⁵

Castro made another connection between the two categories of rights in 2002, when, in a speech that year, he pointed out that “the ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in the arsenals of the wealthiest and the mightiest can kill the illiterate, the ill, the poor and the hungry[,] but they cannot kill ignorance, illnesses, poverty or hunger.”¹⁶⁶ There were times when Castro took full advantage of the platform of the NAM to draw attention to global issues that affected the developing world. One such instance was in October 1979 when in his capacity as both President of the NAM as well as of Cuba he gave a widely-applauded speech on the disparity between the world’s rich and poor.¹⁶⁷

The second of the issues straddling the matter of national security and service to international communism that this subsection covers, a problem common to the developing world, is the debt crisis. Castro denounced the problem of Third World debt, going so far as to host five international conferences on the issue.¹⁶⁸ This should be viewed as another angle in measuring the size of Cuban contribution to socioeconomic human rights under him, bound to benefit Africans more, given the status of Africa as the poorest continent in the world from the standpoint of poverty alleviation.¹⁶⁹ For, despite the natural

165. COLTMAN, *supra* note 126, at 245.

166. Fidel Castro, Speech at the Int’l Conference on Financing for Development (Mar. 21, 2002), available at <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/2002/ing/f210302i.html> [https://perma.cc/V4AF-KDMU]

167. See COLTMAN, *supra* note 126, at 245.

168. *Id.* at 255.

169. See WORLD BANK, SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: FROM CRISIS TO SUSTAINABLE GROWTH (1989). The 1989 report focused on developing human skills and efforts in Africa, while reiterating the emphasis of previous reports on agricultural productivity (the main element that for many critics made it a conservative report). Following this conservative diagnosis, prescription for change, as the World Bank saw it, were liberalization aimed at freeing individual initiative at the grassroots level and above and improved governance defined to include more democracy. Thomas G. Karis, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth*, FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Fall 1990), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/capsule-review/1990-09-01/sub-saharan-africa-crisis-sustainable-growth> [https://perma.cc/SQ3T-UD7V] (book review of the World Bank’s 1989 report). On the Bank’s 2016 report, the official who introduced it, one Ms. Carolina Sanchez-Paramo of the Bank’s Poverty and Equity Global Practice unit, posited that in the worst sense of the term, Sub-Saharan African holds the key to success globally in the war against poverty. See *War on Extreme Poverty Faces Challenges in Africa: World Bank*, FRANCE24 (Sept. 19, 2018),

wealth of many African countries, many Africans live below the poverty line, as defined by United Nations institutions, compared to countries in other continents.¹⁷⁰

A third and last issue is the fight against racism and xenophobia. Castro assessed the current economic order in the world dominated by the United States and other industrialized countries to be “not only unjust, cruel, inhumane,” but also as well “racist.”¹⁷¹ This line of thought continued in his speech at the UN Conference against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in September of 2001 with fourteen thousand delegates from 194 countries in attendance. There, Castro opined that rather than being a natural human instinct, racism, racial discrimination, and xenophobia are sociocultural and political phenomenon “born directly of wars, military conquests, slavery and the individual or collective exploitation of the weakest by the most powerful in the history of human societies.”¹⁷² In addition to the issue of reparations for slavery of Blacks, Castro focused his speech on alleged Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians whom he called “victim[s] of the most fierce persecution, discrimination and injustice that history

poverty-faces-challenges-africa-world-bank [<https://perma.cc/V7HQ-U9AK>]. Put differently, she said, the war against poverty in the world “will be won and lost” in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Id.* She elaborated that as more states lift people out of poverty, a higher share of the world’s poor will be concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, a region that already has high poverty rates of forty-one percent, and slow progress. A common theme unifying these two reports over the timespan of nearly one full generation in-between them, is that Africa registered little progress on the war against poverty.

170. *See supra* note 169. *See also* World Bank, *No Poverty*, WORLD BANK, <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/sdgtlas/archive/2017/SDG-01-no-poverty.html> [<https://perma.cc/57K4-6KAU>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019) (showing that in 2017 about fifty percent of all people in extreme poverty in the world, defined as income of 1.90 U.S. dollars a day, lived in Sub-Saharan Africa).

171. Fidel Castro, Key Address by Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Republic of Cuba at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa (Sept. 1, 2001), *available at* <https://www.un.org/WCAR/statements/0109cubaE.htm> [<https://perma.cc/4K6P-M4FN>].

172. *Id.*

has known.”¹⁷³ He pled for an “end to the ongoing genocide against” them while the world watched rather than come to their help.¹⁷⁴

Castro accused the United States and the industrialized economies of being “beneficiaries of the conquest and colonization, of slavery, of the ruthless exploitation and the extermination of hundreds of millions of people born in the countries that today constitute the Third World.”¹⁷⁵ In a statement released ahead of the conference published in the Cuban official newspaper *Granma*, the Cuban government posited that although apartheid has been abolished in South Africa, “at least 250 million people on the planet are still living under the yoke of segregation and servitude.”¹⁷⁶ Moving further, it assessed the AIDS/HIV epidemic in Africa to be “the bitter harvest of a global discrimination,” in turn the result of “five centuries of racism, slavery and impoverishing colonialism.”¹⁷⁷ A news story reporting the visit indicated, “[a] heavily symbolic trip, Castro is traveling from a country where most of its 11 million citizens have some African ancestry to the continent where thousands of Cuban troops died helping free black nations from white colonialism.”¹⁷⁸

Following the conference, Castro met with a group of about 440 Cuban medical personnel said to be providing healthcare services in South Africa.¹⁷⁹ And before leaving South Africa, Castro met with former South African leader Nelson Mandela, unable to attend the

173. *Id.* The United States and Israel boycotted the conference due to what they perceived as “anti-Israel” for equating Zionism with racism in its agenda and for the United States additionally because of the inclusion of reparation for slavery in that agenda. See *Cuba Warns of Globalization of Apartheid; US Delegation Walks Out and Fidel Castro Terms U.S. Emancipation of Slaves “Purely Formal”*, AFROCUBAWEB, <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [https://perma.cc/RFF3-6EBR] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

174. Castro, *supra* note 171. Israeli activities in the Occupied Territories that Cuba assessed as genocide included forced evictions, occupation, blockade, and extrajudicial killings. Cuba and the World Conference against Racism. See *Cuba Calls for Slavery Reparations at Conference on Racism*, AFROCUBAWEB, <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [https://perma.cc/RFF3-6EBR] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

175. Castro, *supra* note 171.

176. Julio Cesar Mejias Cardena, *The Cuban Statement on the Meeting on Racism in South Africa*, AFROCUBAWEB (Aug. 30, 2001), <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [https://perma.cc/ZE32-2XB6]. *Granma* is the official newspaper of the Cuban Communist Party.

177. *Id.*

178. Snow, *supra* note 16.

179. See *Cuba Warns of Globalization of Apartheid; US Delegation Walks Out*, AFROCUBAWEB, <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [https://perma.cc/RFF3-6EBR] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

conference due to ill-health, who reportedly stated: “What [Castro] did for us is not easy to describe in words. During the struggle against apartheid, Fidel did not hesitate in giving us help, and now that we are free, we have many Cuban medical doctors working here, helping us in rural areas, where there are practically no physicians.”¹⁸⁰ Given that, as one commentator observed, Castro’s regime did “more for Afro-Cubans in 50 years than previous administrations [. . .] in the last 400 years[,]”¹⁸¹ Castro’s campaign against racism and xenophobia also paralleled and gave tonic to his achievements at home related to that campaign.

D. Cuba under Fidel Castro as Global Good Samaritan from the Socialist World

Global Good Samaritans is the name Professor Alison Brysk coined for states and other political communities who consistently and systematically apply human rights in their external relations.¹⁸² In their foreign relations, global Good Samaritans project a “kindness of strangers” driven by the biblical injunction to “love your neighbor as yourself.”¹⁸³ Six such states that Brysk surveyed in her seminal work, each of which, to varying degrees, applied human rights in external affairs, in alphabetical order, were Canada, Costa Rica, Japan, the Netherlands, South Africa, and Sweden. The seventh was a set of transnational human rights organizations, “coalitions of the caring,” including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Whether coincidentally or deliberately, all of these political communities were capitalist-oriented. The current author’s study, focused on Nigeria, equally involved a capitalist country.¹⁸⁴

180. See *Cuba Warns of Globalization of Apartheid; US Delegation Walks Out and Viewpoint: Globalized Solidarity Confronts Globalization of Apartheid*, AFROCUBAWEB, <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/wcr.htm> [<https://perma.cc/RFF3-6EBR>] (last visited Sept. 20, 2019).

181. Jacobs, *supra* note 99.

182. See BRYSK, *supra* note 133.

183. The appellation “kindness of strangers” is taken from the book’s frontispiece consisting of a poem on “The Kindness of Strangers.” The appellation “love your neighbor” goes to the biblical parable of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:25-37 (New Int’l Version). “Which of these three [a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan] do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” *Id.* at 36-37.

184. See *generally* AKA, *supra* note 133.

Given the extensiveness of its socioeconomic assistance documented in this Article, Cuba under Castro deserves to be included in the pantheon of global Good Samaritans. The academic literature related to this topic has holes that Cuba as a socialist state can fill. The critic might argue that Cuba promoted these rights as part of the privileging of socioeconomic over political-civil rights by the socialist world in its competition against “bourgeois capitalism” that hallmarked the Cold War.¹⁸⁵ But, as we see in this Article, there was no opportunism in the use of this tool: Cuba’s use of this tool predated the high point of the Cold War and Havana exported abroad the same “material and cultural goods that human beings need” that it dispensed so well at home without discrimination to all groups, including Afro-Cubans, for whom, socioeconomically, Castro did more “in 50 years than previous administrations [. . .] in the last 400 years.”¹⁸⁶

Commenting on Cuban military and socioeconomic assistance from 1961 to 1965, Professor Gleijeses aptly observed that “[i]f Cuba’s foreign policy were based solely on realpolitik, Cuba would have not helped Algeria. Its assistance to Algeria reflects a level of idealism that is unusual in the foreign affairs of great or small powers and that has continued to be part of Cuban policy toward Africa through all these years.”¹⁸⁷ Witness Castro recounting, in October of 1963, the story of Havana’s aid to Algeria:

Men and weapons from our country crossed the Atlantic in record time to fight side by side with the Algerian revolutionaries. [. . .] Distance did not prevent us from being the first to arrive. [. . .] We, a small country relentlessly threatened by the imperialists, sent some of our best weapons to the Algerian people.¹⁸⁸

Somewhat parenthetically, this statement also speaks to Cuba’s status as an independent actor, rather than as a Soviet proxy. This occurrence is contrary to the contention of many US and other Western analysts, much of which was shrouded in the propagandistic posturing that marked the Cold War. In intervening in Africa, particularly Angola, Castro’s Cuba acted independently without securing the support of the Soviet authorities then engaged in détente with the

185. See, e.g., Richard N. Dean, *Beyond Helsinki: The Soviet View of Human Rights in International Law*, 21 VA. J. INT’L L. 55, 57 (1980) (stating that “Soviet legal scholars view economic and social rights as primary”).

186. See *supra* note 99.

187. Gleijeses, *supra* note 52, at 191.

188. *Id.* at 190.

United States.¹⁸⁹ It also acted in defiance of the United States with whom before the intervention it sought to warm up relations. Worse still, it did this at the risk of US invasion. Both at home and abroad, Castro's commitment to socioeconomic human rights was driven by his personal "trust in the intelligence of peoples and men[,]" a trust driven by the belief that "the greatest crises have always given rise to the greatest solutions."¹⁹⁰ Therefore, it is hard to gainsay the observation that critics of Castro who complained about his one-party rule and repressive policies, including his intervention in Africa, never said he was "on the wrong side of history" or that he "sponsored dictatorships in [. . .] developing countries."¹⁹¹

Complementing Cuba's socioeconomic human rights efforts, Cuban military assistance in Africa during the period under review was arguably "human rights as foreign policy" in action.¹⁹² Recall Castro's farewell address to delegates at the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, specifically his observation that with hard work and dedication, Cuban communists "can produce the material and cultural goods that human beings need."¹⁹³ His overall action over his period in office suggests that the "human beings" he had in mind included people in Cuba and elsewhere in the world, including Africans. Like in everything else, global Good Samaritans need not be perfect so long as they robustly interject human rights in their principled foreign policy,¹⁹⁴ something Cuba under Castro did. Therefore, this Article's evaluation of Castro as global Good Samaritan by no means dismisses the human rights abuses, particularly in the realm of political civil-rights, that took place under his watch.¹⁹⁵

189. See *Conflicting Missions*, *supra* note 90 (stating that Cuba made the decision to send troops without informing the Soviet Union and deployed them without Soviet assistance for the first two months).

190. Castro, *supra* note 98, at 5.

191. Jacobs, *supra* note 119.

192. BRYSK, *supra* note 133.

193. See Carroll, *supra* note 2.

194. AKA, *supra* note 133, at 256 (focusing on Nigeria).

195. See Human Rights Watch, *Cuba: Fidel Castro's Record of Repression*, HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH (Nov. 26, 2016), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/11/26/cuba-fidel-castro-record-repression> [<https://perma.cc/9LA5-UMRY>] (pointing out that under Castro, "[t]he progress on economic, social, and cultural rights was never matched in terms of respect for civil and political rights"). This press release quoted José Miguel Vivanco, Americas director at Human Rights Watch to the effect that "[a]s other countries in the region turned away from authoritarian rule, only Fidel Castro's Cuba continued to repress virtually all civil and political rights." *Id.* It regretfully observed that "[m]any of the abusive tactics developed during his time in power," such as "surveillance, beatings, arbitrary detention, and public acts of repudiation,"

Events in the United States since January of 2017 when President Donald J. Trump took office teach the lesson that even countries usually regarded as paragons of democracy and human rights may at times backslide and tread in an unprogressive direction.¹⁹⁶

With Castro's death in 2016 and the end of his era, discussing his regime's qualification as global Good Samaritan is necessary for the dispassionate reassessment of his legacy. It has been argued elsewhere, using Nigeria in its Fourth Republic since 1999 as an example, that charity begins at home, and that countries that do not integrate human rights in their external affairs will have no human rights peace at home.¹⁹⁷ Specifically, states who deny their citizens socioeconomic benefits at home will not treat "strangers" abroad well.¹⁹⁸ Castro's Cuba illustrates this point. The country prioritized education, healthcare, housing and other welfare goods that it had no difficulty pursuing abroad with passion even with economic constraints at home.¹⁹⁹ Foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy by other means. As Dwight Eisenhower advised and Castro exemplified, it is foolhardy to undermine at home the very values a state seeks to realize abroad through the design and implementation of its external policies.²⁰⁰

Given its population of less than twelve million people and its modest natural resource base, Cuba under Castro consistently cast a

"are still used by the Cuban government." *Id.* Rather than all or nothing, we prefer a balanced approach of the type exemplified, coincidentally again by Amnesty International, which acknowledged Castro's impressive gains in socioeconomic human rights at home while pointing up the "dark[] legacy" evident in "a ruthless suppression of freedom of expression" that marked his rule. See *supra* notes 13-15. The press release quoted above in this footnote also reflects the same balanced approach.

196. See, e.g., Nick Bryant, *How Will History Judge President Trump*, BBC (Jan. 17, 2019), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-46895634> [<https://perma.cc/YY7A-YGJS>] (pointing out that no US leader "has so flagrantly flouted the normal rules of presidential behavior" the way President Trump has done). As opposed to the idiosyncratic coloration of U.S. chief executives, what sets America apart from many countries is that, as this author observed elsewhere, it is a nation constantly "in search of itself in an ongoing attempt to realize its founding principles" embedded abstractly in equal rights. AKA, *supra* note 133, at 258.

197. AKA, *supra* note 133, at 123-63.

198. *Id.* ("Political communities who visit ill on 'strangers' abroad will have no difficulty finding maleficent strangers at home").

199. See Aurelio Alonso, *Cuba: Society after Half a Century of Changes, Achievements and Setbacks*, 25 ESTUDOS AVANÇADOS 7 (2011) (painting a mixed picture of progress that included "improvement in meeting the basic needs of Cuban society," evident in improved nutrition, negligible unemployment, increase in the retail market for consumer goods, as well as an increment in the production of doctors and nurses).

200. See *supra* notes 143-45.

large shadow over the international stage in many areas, including socioeconomic human rights.²⁰¹ As John Kirk and Michael Erisman observed in their work instructively titled *Cuban Medical Internationalism*, despite its small size, Cuba has saved more lives in the developing world than all of the G-8 countries joined together.²⁰² Under Castro, in exemplary demonstration of “human rights as foreign policy” in action, Cuba provided medical services to the developing world that tracked the public health that it reserved for its citizens at home.²⁰³

VI. CONCLUSION

Given the level of poverty in Africa,²⁰⁴ there is imperative need for socioeconomic human rights to complement political-civil rights. No single statesman outside Africa promoted these rights more than Castro. Both in Cuba and abroad, in Africa, Castro fought tirelessly to provide access to socioeconomic goods. The scale and consistency of these contributions for a small country with an economy contained by US embargo make Cuba under Castro a global Good Samaritan within the context of principled application of human rights in external affairs. As Nelson Mandela observed during his visit to Cuba in 1991, “[w]hat other country can point to a record of greater selflessness than Cuba has displayed in its relations to Africa?”²⁰⁵

This Article seeks to promote proper understanding of Cuba’s military assistance programs in Africa, especially during the period of 1975 to 1991. Its position is that these programs may be profitably viewed from multiple levels, additional to the factor of service to international communism that dominates the academic literature. There are two shifts in the literature, hopefully this Article initiates, that need

201. See John M. Kirk et al., *Cuba’s Cold War Medical Aid Programs*, in KIRK & ERISMAN, *supra* note 75, at 59.

202. KIRK & ERISMAN, *supra* note 75 (abstract on the book’s back cover). Formed in 1975 in Denver, Colorado in the United States, the G-8 countries refer to the association of eight highly-industrialized states in the world—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—who meet annually to foster consensus and harmonize policies on a range of global issues, including economic growth, energy, and terrorism. The group was reconfigured to G-7 after Russia was suspended in 2014 because of its intervention in the Ukraine. See Zachary Laub, *The Group of Eight (G8) Industrialized Nations*, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN POLICY (Mar. 3, 2014), <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/group-eight-g8-industrialized-nations> [<https://perma.cc/A8E3-2DCR>].

203. KIRK & ERISMAN, *supra* note 75 (abstract).

204. See *supra* notes 169-70 and corresponding texts.

205. Gleijeses, *supra* note 51.

to take place. The first is disaggregation of socioeconomic goods from the general category of Cuban military assistance. The second is a movement away from the overemphasis on capitalist countries when it comes to countries who consistently apply human rights in their external affairs. For balance, these studies must now include socialist states.

Two interesting questions outside the scope of this Article must be kept in mind for future studies: first, given the indivisibility of civil-political and socioeconomic rights, to what extent has the socialist world now embraced political-civil rights rather than see it as part of the baggage of “bourgeois capitalism”? Second, related to this first question, to what extent, if any, does Cuba still provide access to socioeconomic human rights in Africa, given that post-Castro Cuba remains socialist? Regarding the second question, two intertwined trends are discernible that bear recounting here: medical internationalism, and “human rights as foreign policy” in action.²⁰⁶

Castro’s successors continue to provide socioeconomic assistance, in the form of medical missions, to Africa.²⁰⁷ Testament to this proposition is a tropical cyclone, Hurricane Idai, that, in March 2019, hit several countries in southern Africa but left the lion’s share of its destructive effect from high winds, rains, and flooding, on Mozambique.²⁰⁸ The cyclone wreaked extensive damage on the country, including the death of about 500 people.²⁰⁹ The Cuban

206. See generally BRYSK, *supra* note 133; KIRK & ERISMAN, *supra* note 75.

207. See, e.g., Rich Warner, *Why Cuban Doctors in Kenya Don’t Deserve the Treatment They’re Getting*, THE CONVERSATION (June 27, 2019), <https://theconversation.com/why-cuban-doctors-in-kenya-dont-deserve-the-treatment-theyre-getting-98774> [https://perma.cc/N66Q-DL9Q] (observing that nearly 132,000 “Cuban doctors have taken part in international [medical] missions” in 107 countries across the world, the latest, post-Castro, being Kenya). The treatment the commentator indicated the Cuban physicians did not deserve was the opposition to their arrival by Kenyan health personnel on the ground that the Cubans will take away local jobs, a contention the commentator disputed with facts he marshalled in his commentary. See *id.*

208. See, e.g., *Cuban Doctors Praised for Their Work in Post-Cyclone Mozambique*, ORINOCO TRIBUNE (June 3, 2019), <https://orinocotribune.com/cuban-doctors-praised-for-their-work-in-post-cyclone-mozambique> [https://perma.cc/2WJJ-RGZZ]; *Cuban Doctors Have Treated Thousands of Mozambique Hurricane Victims*, PERIÓDICO26.CU (Apr. 16, 2019); *Radio Havana Cuba, Cuba to Help Mozambique Idai Victims with Field Hospital*, ESCAMBRAY (Mar. 27, 2019), <http://en.escambray.cu/2019/cuba-to-help-mozambique-idai-victims-with-field-hospital/> [https://perma.cc/677C-4C6E]; *Cyclone Idai in Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe*, OXFAM INT’L, <https://www.oxfam.org/en/emergencies/cyclone-idai-malawi-mozambique-and-zimbabwe> [https://perma.cc/BEA6-SQ5X].

209. *Cuban Doctors Have Treated Thousands of Mozambique Hurricane Victims*, *supra* note 208.

government responded in humanitarian assistance with a field hospital installed in Beira (population: nearly 600,000 residents), one of Mozambique's largest city and one of the cities most affected by the natural disaster.²¹⁰ The field hospital consisted of 20 hospital beds with consultations, an operating room, a clinical and microbiological laboratory, and imaging equipment.²¹¹ The contingent of Cuban medical personnel, numbering sixteen doctors, twenty-two specialists and two service workers, who joined more than 300 already on the ground,²¹² spent 63 days in the country during which period they provided medical care to over 22,000 patients and performed over three hundred surgeries on adults and children.²¹³ In announcing the dispatch of the field hospital to Mozambique, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel tweeted "[f]rom Cuba, we sent personnel, equipment and medicines to strengthen health care [in Mozambique], assuming our solidarity and internationalist vocation."²¹⁴ Cuban Minister of Public Health Jose Angel Portal spoke no less effusively when he observed that the medical personnel "wrote a new page of solidarity for Cuban public health, and they are part of that history that shows the world what we are capable of doing."²¹⁵

210. *Supra* note 208.

211. *Cuban Doctors Have Treated Thousands of Mozambique Hurricane Victims, supra* note 208; *Radio Havana Cuba, Cuba to Help Mozambique Idai Victims with Field Hospital, supra* note 208.

212. *Cuban Doctors Have Treated Thousands of Mozambique Hurricane Victims, supra* note 208.

213. *Cuban Doctors Praised for Their Work in Post-Cyclone Mozambique, supra* note 208

214. *Cuban Doctors Have Treated Thousands of Mozambique Hurricane Victims, supra* note 208.

215. *Cuban Doctors Praised for Their Work in Post-Cyclone Mozambique, supra* note 208.