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North Korea and the liberation of Southern Africa, 1960-2020

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Propositions

1. Cooperation between North Korea and Southern African liberation movements was not driven by Cold War competition, but by the desire for independence
2. African-North Korean cooperation continues into the twenty-first century, as both North Korean and Southern African regimes are motivated by the need for survival
3. Southern African liberation movements utilized North Korea for the achievement, consolidation, and maintenance of power, whereby North Korean aid is primarily used for party building rather than state building
4. In Africa, North Korea operated independently from the Communist Bloc while South Korea was effectively a satellite state of the Western Bloc
5. The study of African-North Korean relations is dominated by a focus on North Korean motives for cooperation, which obscures African agency
6. Political culture in Southern Africa transcends national boundaries, which is a legacy of the exile dimension of the liberation struggles of the twentieth century
7. In the case of Southern Africa, scholarship must shift its focus from states to political regimes
8. The standard time frames of African history and the Cold War distort a proper understanding of African-North Korean relations
9. Western diplomats overlooked African agency during the Cold War, a problem that continues today in narratives about the New Cold War
10. The party archives of African liberation movements, both in Africa and exiled collections in Europe, contain valuable insights for the study of political power
11. Open source intelligence (OSINT) presents historians with new tools to research contemporary history
12. Universities are places where life moves at a slower pace, and must therefore be cherished