The Effect of the Collapse of the USSR on Africa

The collapse of the USSR had two main effects on Africa:

- **Emergence of multi-party democracies**
- **Withdrawal of aid as Cold War was over** – led to the fall of military regimes

**Emergence of multi-party democracies**

- Before 1990s, military coups changed governments in Africa – many became one-party states
- 1980s: Growing opposition to one party states by:
  1. Religious organisations
  2. Trade unions (linked to liberation governments initially, but later became critical)
- Influenced by changes taking place in E. Europe – despite government attempt to control media
- There was a demand for a return to multi-party politics

**Early 1990s**

- Wave of democratic movements (started in Benin, Mali also early)
  1. 18 heads of states removed (About one-third of African leaders at the time)
- An example is Zambia:
  1. Kaunda in power since 1964 – elected to power, gradually became one party state
  2. Got blamed for economic problems – relied on copper exports and the prices dropped
  3. People protested and striked for elections, eventually Kaunda agreed
  4. Kaunda was defeated in elections in 1991 by a landslide
- Not all democratic movements succeeded
  1. In Kenya, President Daniel Arap Moi held on to power because opposition was divided

**Withdrawal of superpower support**

**During Cold War**

- There was rivalry between superpowers to gain allies in Africa:
  1. Supply of aid and weapons – AK47 poured into Africa; weapons had negative effect
  2. Intervention in civil wars – eg. Angola
  3. Dictators kept in power due to ideology – anti-communist Mobutu in Zaire

**After collapse of USSR and end of Cold War**

- No longer rivalry:
  1. End of Soviet aid to allies in Africa
  2. Collapse of pro-Marxist governments due to loss of Soviet aid
  3. US no longer competing with USSR for control of minerals and sea routes
  4. End of US support for anti-communist regimes – eg. SA, Zaire
  5. Aid agencies set democratic conditions before giving aid
Case study: The Democratic Republic of Congo

1960: Congo gained independence from Belgium

- USSR backed Lumumba; US backed Mobutu
  - US involved in assassination of Lumumba
- Power struggle won by US-backed Mobutu
  - Seized power in military coup in 1965
- US saw him as a useful ally against communism

Mobutu ruled Congo (renamed Zaire) for 32 years (1965-1997)

- Dictatorship
  - No criticism allowed
  - Opposition brutally suppressed
- Widespread corruption
  - Looting of government funds by Mobutu
  - His family had huge personal investments in Europe
- Despite this, he continued to receive financial and military support from the West

Early 1990s: Changes in internal situation

- Economy collapsed
  - Massive inflation rate of 9800%
  - Fall in copper production [Exports went from 450,000 to only 30,000 (tons per year)]
  - Income was 60% better in 1960 during colonization
- Presence of Hutu refugees and militia from Rwanda
  - Tensions and clashes created unstable situation (mainly in Eastern Zaire)
- Laurent Kabila emerged as leader ready to challenge Mobutu’s government
  - Support in Eastern Zaire
  - Built up an army and moved west

Effects of end of the Cold War

- Increasing pressure from NGOs and countries to stop corruption and human rights abuses
- US longer needed Zaire as an ally – attitude changed very quickly
  - No longer willing to support Mobutu
  - 1997: Kabila captured Kinshasa, welcomed as liberator
  - Mobutu fled into exile (died 4 months later in Morocco)
  - Kabile become president of DRC
  - Failed to introduce any good reforms and economic problems continued
  - Political instability continued due to faction and in-fighting
  - Kabila assassinated in 2001 and succeeded by Joseph Kabila, his son
Effects of collapse of USSR on South Africa

Collapse of USSR affected SA in 3 ways:

- **Attitude of Western governments towards SA**
- **Attitude of NP towards the ANC**
- **Attitude of ANC towards negotiating with NP**

These all helped bring about the **collapse of Apartheid**

**Attitude of Western governments**

**During Cold War**

- Didn’t want USSR to control **mineral resources** and **Cape sea route**
- Alarmed when communist governments came to power in **Angola** and **Mozambique**
- Accepted NP’s anti-communist **propaganda**
- SA was convenient as pro-Western and anti-Soviet ally
  - **Reagan** and **Thatcher** resisted calls for economic sanctions in 1980s
    - I. SA was strongly **anti-communist**
    - II. US and Britain had **substantial investments in SA**
- Policies began to **change** in mid 80s
  - I. Growing pressure from **anti-apartheid movements** *(news showed violence to world)*
  - II. SA **no longer significant** in Cold War politics
- **1986: Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act** passed in US congress
  - I. **Banned new investments** in SA
  - II. **Closed landing rights to SAA**
- Western governments applied **pressure** on SA
  - I. NP could **no longer rely** on Western backing
  - II. **One of the reasons** for NP’s change of policy in 1989/1990

**Attitude of NP towards the ANC**

- NP was **anti-communist** since 1948
- **SACP** banned 10 years before the ANC
- NP believed ANC, especially MK, was **under control** of SACP
  - I. Some SACP leaders were leaders in MK *(Chris Hani; Joe Slovo)*
  - II. Believed that SACP planned to **overthrow** them and establish communist government
- Once USSR had collapsed NP **no longer** saw communism as such a threat
  - I. Prepared to **negotiate** with the ANC
Attitude of ANC towards negotiating with NP

ANC was also affected by the collapse of the USSR:

- After 1960, ANC forced to go into exile
- ANC received substantial support from USSR
  - Money, military training, weapons and education
- But in late 80s, Gorbachev favoured a peaceful settlement in SA
  - Encouraged ANC to negotiate with NP
  - Had meetings and told them they couldn’t keep relying on the USSR
- 1988: International agreement over Namibia
  - SA and Cuba agreed to withdraw from Namibia and Angola
  - ANC had to give up MK camps in Angola, lost ability to train troops in Angola

Effects of collapse of communism post-1994

- Many ANC followers expected socialist economic policies after 1994
  - Example: Nationalisation of mines
- ANC influenced by poor performance of communist economies and its collapse
- ANC chose free market capitalist policies after 1994
- This led to tensions within the Tripartite Alliance
  - COSATU and SACP felt the ANC had betrayed them