

The first series of dissensions among the French-speaking African states surfaced over the question of priorities for these objectives. Those who saw themselves as the more revolutionary states — Algeria, the Congo (after the fall of Fulbert Youlou), Guinea and Mali — believed that there was no room for compromise in the pursuit of such objectives. They accorded them a priority that was indissociable from internal policy priorities. They not only championed the cause of anticolonialism but declared themselves ready to take the most radical measures to achieve their goals. In the OAU, they ranged themselves individually with other countries in advocating the use of force. In 1965-66, they urged Britain to send troops to bring Ian Smith's regime back into line. Dissatisfied with the response, they broke off diplomatic relations with Britain. The countries near the war zones, such as Guinea and Senegal, which border on Guinea-Bissau, or the Congo and Zaire, adjacent to Angola, were more interested in supporting the nationalists fighting in the Portuguese colonies by providing them with a relatively large amount of logistic support or the equivalent, in the form of "sanctuaries" in which to recoup their strength.

Although they did not explicitly say so, as Ivory Coast had done at one time, the actual policies of the other French-speaking African states indicated that the liberation of the Portuguese colonies and the end of all racial discrimination in southern Africa were for them long-term objectives, to be tackled on a continent-wide basis rather than by such tiny countries as themselves. They felt they should work towards their objectives through solidarity rather than through direct or immediate involvement. Common sense and realism told them that they should put the construction and consolidation of their own countries first, and they cited their lack of resources (small armies with outdated equipment, precarious financial conditions and insufficient manpower — since each had a population of fewer than six million) as their reasons for doing so. They exercised caution, dismissing rash policies that could have unpredictable or even disastrous consequences — like Zambia, which would have been in the front lines if a conflict had broken out and was reluctant to stand alone against the formidable manpower advantage of the Rhodesian army (not to mention the support of Rhodesia's South African ally).

#### Ways and means

A second series of disagreements concerning ways and means of achieving their

goals further divided the states of French-speaking Africa. The few that favoured the use of violence were outnumbered by those that agreed to condemn armed force in favour of negotiation. All were committed to supporting national liberation movements against colonialist governments, but different views were held on how this should be done. The French-speaking states agreed to work through diplomatic channels with the United Nations or the world powers, but most were sceptical about the benefits to be derived from breaking off diplomatic and consular relations with Portugal and South Africa, boycotting trade and imposing economic sanctions against them and Rhodesia or expelling the former two from international organizations. Over the years, these decisions either fell into abeyance or were avoided, as was the case with the boycott of Portugal — despite the solid and unanimous backing it had received in 1963. The states involved felt they had no real means of exerting pressure on the world powers, except by diplomatic notes and public declarations of very limited effectiveness. Except in a few cases (Guinea, Mauritania, Mali), this conviction led to the belief that it would be of no use to implement the OAU's decisions to break off diplomatic relations with Britain because of Rhodesia. The complex network of relations that exists between these countries and the former colonial powers or other Western nations has paralysed the former. As much from self-interest as from a natural affinity for France, Ivory Coast, Senegal and others have little inclination to chastize the French for their policy towards the Republic of South Africa.

#### Varied support

Support for national liberation movements in the form of financial contributions and technical and humanitarian assistance has also varied considerably. Promises are rarely kept. Up to 1970, the financial contributions received by the OAU Liberation Committee amounted to about \$1 million out of a total of over \$6 million that was supposed to be contributed for the 1963-1970 period. It is not known whether the French-speaking states were more negligent than the others. Nevertheless they are very uncommunicative about the nature or the extent of their support. This does not apply to states such as Algeria, the Congo, Guinea, Senegal and Zaire, whose support was acknowledged as being considerable even by some rival nationalist movements. For the most part, financial and other internal constraints

*No real means  
of pressuring  
world powers*