**Lesson 3: The Cold War and Africa**

**1. Video Lesson**

**2. Competencies**

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- discuss the impact of the cold war on Africa;
- explain how the Apartheid system collapsed in South Africa.

**3. Brainstorming Questions**

- How did the "Cold War" Afect the African countries?
- Which African countries in Colonial Africa had a significant number of white settlers?
- What do you mean by Apartheid?

**5. Lesson Presentation**

**The Cold War and Africa**

Africa was also a hotspot for Cold War rivalry between the two superpowers: USA and USSR. The Soviets approached the African continent with a clear antiimperialist ideology. Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt was the first African ruler to develop an interest in Soviet support. Then Sekou Toure of Guinea followed the example of Nasser and began to look east ward. The assassination of Lumumba and the ideological cleavage over the Congo led other governments, like Mali, Ghana, and Algeria to seek Soviet support. In fact, the Soviets had a working relationship with pro-western states like Senegal, Nigeria, and even monarchic Ethiopia.

Throughout the 1960's, pro-Soviet African leaders were removed from power. Ben Bella was overthrown in 1965, Nkrumah in 1966, and Keita in 1968. Sekou Toure drifted back to France. From about $2 million in 1974, Soviet arms sales to Africa rocketed to $3.4 billion in 1979. The collapse of Portuguese colonialism ushered in this new era of Soviet involvement in continental affairs. Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and Angola have joined the socialist camp.

American relationship with Egypt changed dramatically under Sadat, following Egypt's defeat in the 1973 Yom Kippur War with Israel. Sadat needed U.S. support to achieve his aims in the Sinai, and the U.S. poured in military and economic aid. The Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1979 made the U.S. commitment even stronger. Whereas the US government had bad relations with Libya. Gaddafi's hostility to Israel stood against U.S. policy.

**The End of Apartheid in South Africa**

After the end of the Second World War, the South African white rulers in general and the Afrikaner National Party in particular, began to develop a strong fear towards the South African black population thinking that unless strong measures were taken to control them the blacks may

eventually dominate the urban areas and the economy of South Africa. The white leaders of South Africa also thought that the anti-colonial struggle which was getting intensified in other parts of Africa could be imported to South Africa as well. The Afrikaner National Party, which launched a strong anti-black racist propaganda easily, won the 1948 general election in South Africa.

The apartheid system considered the majority indigenous black population of South Africa as alien and foreigners in their own land. The South African black populations were forced to live in separate quarters which were overcrowded and relatively backward areas. In 1950, the white government in South Africa introduced a new racist policy known as 'Population Registration Act'. This newly introduced law classified and registered the people of South Africa based on race into whites and non-whites. The non-whites group included the majority blacks, Asians, and peoples with mixed races. The native black populations of South Africa too were further divided into several ethnic groups including the peoples of Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Venda and Sotho.

In the same year, an additional law was issued in South Africa known as 'The Group Areas Act'. This Act clearly indicated the residential areas where the white and non white settlers were allowed to reside, and work based on race. These acts made the native black Africans inferior and prevented sexual relations between different races. Separate public places, buses and schools were arranged for the whites and non-white peoples in South Africa. The white government of South Africa had gone to the extent of banning labor unions throughout the country. The other very unpopular law introduced by the apartheid regime in South Africa was 'the Bantu Education Act' which was issued in the year 1953. This act prevented black South Africans from learning in the missionary schools. Blacks were allowed to join only the government owned schools, the curricula of which were intentionally designed to show the supremacy of the white race and inferiority of blacks. The blacks were trained not actually to be creative and think independently but just to servants of their white 'masters'.

In the early 1970s, in particular, a new wave of successful strikes and demonstrations broke out by black workers in the Natal region demanding better pay. These mass risings forced the South African government to lift the ban it has imposed against some black trade unions. Concurrently, the South African blacks introduced a new movement which they called 'Black Consciousness' with the view to restore black dignity. The 'Black Consciousness' movement increased the determination of the blacks in South Africa to get independence by themselves without seeking the assistance of white men including white liberals. The struggle continued and in the early 1980s, the South African blacks refused to use white-owned shops and businesses, schools and renting houses particularly in Eastern Cape and Transvaal.