

Economic and security competition between the United States and Russia in Africa

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Introduction:-

With the beginning of the third millennium AD, the African continent, with its diverse regions, and for various and varied reasons, acquired an exceptional position and importance. This has placed it at the core of the international and regional competitive strategies of the major powers. Among the most important international powers competing in the African continent are the United States and the Russian Federation, which are considered traditional powers that have been and are still engaged in different types of competition in this continent since the Cold War until now, and they will likely continue this policy of competition.

One of the most important areas of competition between the United States and Federal Russia on the African

continent is the economic and security-military fields.

In the economic field, competition operations are concentrated in commercial and investment activities and the field of energy mainly, while the security-military aspect is witnessing a parallel competition, especially in the field of establishing military bases and intelligence and security offices as well as competition in the field of armaments and controlling important waterways, in addition to establishing military and security partnerships with the countries of the continent and coordination in the field of combating terrorism, organized crime, illegal immigration, maritime piracy, and others.

Despite the apparent power difference in favor of the United States, both forces have distinct relationships with certain allies from certain political regimes and

governments and have a special interest system on the African continent that they are working to achieve according to their possibilities and based on their awareness of the importance of these interests and their desire to achieve through different mechanisms.

Thus, both parties have long been involved in competitive activities in the economic and security fields in this continent, and this competition leaves various repercussions on African affairs in particular and at the global level in general, it is useful to follow, analyze, and draw conclusions about it and this is the importance of the research.

Research problem:

The main research problem that directs the research towards its main objectives by raising an important question about the title of the research is as follows: Is there an economic and security competition between the United States and the Russian Federation on the African continent? What is the nature and level of that competition? What is its impact on the African continent and the world?

Research hypothesis:

To answer the research problem, we proceed from a basic hypothesis that is considered a preliminary solution to the problem, which is that there is a fluctuating economic and security competition between the United States and the Russian Federation in the African continent, as some regions in the African continent are characterized by intense competition, while other regions do not receive equal attention. This competition led to repercussions on the African continent in particular and the international community in general.

Research Methodology:

The research depends on the inductive approach as a scientific method to reach the conclusions, which proceeds from the specific to the general by studying only two aspects of the competition between the United States and Russia in the African continent and trying to reach general conclusions as a result.

Chapter one: The economic and security importance of the African continent.

The first requirement: the economic importance:

Until the beginning of the third millennium, the African continent was considered one of the richest continents in its potential resources, while its peoples were the poorest among the peoples of the world before many countries of the continent witnessed positive economic and development transformations.

Thus, many African countries no longer have the traditional features that have long been characterized for decades as poverty, disease, ignorance, famine, degradation of infrastructure, a narrow economy, underdevelopment, deteriorating political and security situations based on military coups, political corruption and the rule of dictatorship.

International transformations related to the African continent itself have brought about an unprecedented change in the importance of the African continent at the regional and international levels as a result of the growing international interest in economic aspects, especially

those related to increasing energy reserves, including oil, gas, and uranium, in addition to various primary resources and large freshwater reserves as well as the significant growth in the economic opportunities available to international and regional powers that desire trade and investment in the markets of the African continent.¹

For example, estimates of the world's oil reserves estimate that the African continent has 13-15% of the world's oil reserves concentrated in North and West Africa, while it has 8% of the world's gas reserves concentrated in Nigeria, Algeria, Mozambique, Egypt, Libya, and Mongolia.²

Also, other primary resources such as iron, manganese, and others, as well as water, forests, and other agricultural lands in various African countries, which has greatly expanded the economic opportunities available to regional and international powers and investors wishing to employ promising economic

¹ Secretariat of the International Labor Office, Empowering the Peoples of Africa by Providing Decent Work, Annual Report of the African Regional Meeting, Johannesburg, 2011, p. 83.

² OPEC: Organization the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Annual Statistical Bulletin, 2016, p 22. British Petroleum, statistical Review of World Energy, 2016 [www. Bp .com](http://www.bp.com), P 6.

opportunities in this developing continent.

The second requirement:

Security importance

The African continent has great regional and global security importance stemming from its global strategic importance from its geographical location, which has allowed it to control the southern entrance to the Red Sea, one of the world's most important waterways, as it represents the corridor for the transit of oil and gas to the European continent and the Americas, especially as it is one of the closest to the world's abundant oil region, the Arabian Gulf region and the abundant industrial production region, East and Southeast Asia. The importance of the Red Sea is complemented by its connection to the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which is considered one of the most turbulent and threatened security straits, especially after the outbreak of war in Yemen in 2015³.

In addition to its connection to the Suez Canal, which is under Egyptian sovereignty, which links the north and south of the world and provides a high possibility of commercial maritime transport and the crossing of military naval vessels to the north and south.

The geopolitical advantage of the eastern side of the African continent has given it a great place in the global strategies of the major powers, especially in the security aspects, and has given strategic-security control in the field of civil and military navigation in the Red Sea to forces that possess the capabilities to exert influence and domination in this region.

In addition to the importance of the Red Sea region and the African coast overlooking it, the African continent has other global security features no less important than that of the Red Sea, namely, the view of many of its States over the Mediterranean Sea, its proximity to the Strait of Gibraltar, its proximity to the European Union, as well as the

³ Zach Vertin, Great Power Competitions in the Red Sea (Executive Summary), GLOBAL CHINA 2020, p. 14.

importance of the Cape of Good Hope as an international navigation route.

This situation has made it possible to influence and affect the security and economic interactions in the region, including the European Union, in terms of illegal migration to Europe, which is one of the most serious challenges facing the European Union, as well as the impact of the security crises in some North African countries, notably Libya, on the European security and political decision⁴. The nature of political and security interactions and alliances in Libya and external interference negatively influenced the European political decision and led to real clashes between the capitals of the European decision, especially between France and Italy, where each country supports one of the parties to the conflict in Libya, in addition to the fact that the nature of the Libyan crisis has allowed other parties to intervene and impose their political and security agendas in North Africa, including Turkey, the UAE, Russia, and others.

⁴ Maan Abdel Aziz, The European Union, and International Interaction in the Light of the New World Order, Master's Thesis, College of Political

The location of the African continent and its view of the oceans, seas, and important waterways, the possibility of consolidating the foreign military and security presence, and its containment of huge reserves of natural and water resources, human forces, and available economic opportunities, and at the same time the suffering of many of its countries from chaos, economic backwardness, political turmoil and the spread of insurgencies and terrorism put it in the balance Opportunities and economic and security obstacles for many competing international and regional powers since the period of US-Soviet competition until now. Many forces compete for dominance or influence in this important security, political and economic continent, including the United States, China, Russia, India, and European powers, as well as regional powers, including Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Israel.

Chapter two

Science - Middle East University, Amman, 2014, p. 145.

The economic and security interests of the United States and Russia in the African continent

The first requirement: economic interests

First: the interests of the United States

The United States was not interested in Africa compared to its economic importance or its strategic importance. This was reflected in the American indifference to the decisions of the Berlin Conference in 1884, which led to the division of control and influence on the African continent between the European colonial powers.⁵

This position of the United States is due, *inter alia*, to the lack of sufficient information in the United States Administration on the importance of the African continent and its unwillingness to break the principle of isolation and the competition of the European powers in their colonies to maintain the situation in Latin America based on the prevention of justification for the intervention of the

European powers in this continent. Besides, reasons related to the completion of US capacity-building and not reaching the point of colliding with traditional European powers away from US territory.

However, the American policy gradually began to mature and change towards the African continent in the economic aspects in the twentieth century, especially after the Second World War, especially with the increasing influence of the African American citizens on the activity of the American society or the American foreign policy in general.

The US foreign policy during this period reassessed US economic interests in this continent based on developing new strategic considerations depending on the importance of the continent's large primary resources, primarily oil and gas. The United States has significantly increased its commercial dealings in the field of energy when it reduced its oil purchases coming from the traditional oil regions in the Persian Gulf, including Saudi Arabia, to expand its imports from

the commodity price boom of 1835-1885." *Journal of Economic History* (2018): 231-267.

⁵-Frankema, Ewout, Jeffrey G. Williamson, and P. J. Woltjer. "An economic rationale for the West African scramble? The commercial transition and

the countries of the African continent, especially Angola, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria⁶ and the importance of the international trade corridors overlooked by the countries of the African continent, foremost of which is Red Bahrain connected to the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean Sea connected to the Strait of Gibraltar, as well as the importance of partnerships and economic projects with the countries of the continent itself as well as focusing on controlling the main ports to facilitate US trade operations around the world, including trade with the countries of the African continent.

The United States made an important adjustment in its economic policy towards the countries of the continent when it shifted from providing economic aid and soft loans to the countries of the continent to activating direct economic projects and activities in the countries of the continent, increasing the rates of trade exchange and focusing on direct

investments, especially in the energy, ports and other infrastructure sectors.

Hence, the observer of US foreign policy towards the African continent since the end of the Cold War notes the double interest of successive US administrations at the level of the US president and his foreign minister whether in the era of President (Bill Clinton) and (Bush Jr.), then (Barack Obama) to (Donald Trump) and (Joseph Biden), where all the heads of US administrations are keen to visit the countries of the African continent and send foreign ministers to the important countries on the continent to emphasize giving strategic importance to the continent and strengthening ties of cooperation and economic partnerships and working to encourage African countries to reform their economic policies.⁷

Second: the interests of the Russian Federation

The Federal Republic of Russia is among the last traditional major countries to pay

⁶ Hassan Sadiq Hajim, US-Chinese competition for energy in Africa, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, College of Political Science, University of Baghdad, 2017, p. 184.

⁷ Basma Saad, Blinken's African tour towards a new American approach to Africa, issues, and analyzes, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Egypt, 2021, p. 39.

attention to the African continent. The main reason may be that the African continent was not at that time of strategic importance for Russia, which was focusing on two main strategic regions, namely Europe, especially the East Side, and the Middle East region, which gives Russia access to warm waters, open up freely to the world, and draw closer to its main competitors, the United States and Western European countries in the Cold War era.

However, Russia's priorities at the time of the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the African continent changed relatively particularly in the 1960s after the intensification of the conflict with the Western camp, where the Soviet Union realized that the requirements of the conflict with the West necessitated an economic and security presence in all regions of the world, including Africa, to trap Western presence or at least take away the flexibility of strategic performance.

Based on this Soviet strategic objective, the Soviets sought to strengthen its economic, military, and security presence on the African continent through the

political, economic, and military support of a group of political systems of African countries that adopted the socialist system and ensured a communist approach to the management of society and the state economically and politically. Hence, the Soviets focused in this era on spreading communist values in the countries of the African continent, targeting countries from which the Americans are located, as is the case, for example, with the competition for influence in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, sub-Saharan countries and others⁸.

With the arrival of President Vladimir Putin as President of the Russian Federation in 2000, Russia has witnessed significant gradual changes within the framework of domestic and foreign policies that ultimately reflected Russia's position on many global strategic issues and files, including the position on the issue of redefining Russian interests in the world in general and in Africa in particular. Russia realized that its economic and political withdrawal to the West in the strategic regions of the world under the justification of preventing the

⁸ Islam Zaabal, Russian foreign policy towards Africa, Egypt as a model, executive summary,

Analyst Magazine, Center for Middle East Studies, Ankara, 2020, p. 18.

depletion of Russia's modest capabilities in a conflict or new competition with the West was a strategic mistake that only led to further Russian vulnerability, the blockade of Russian economic and strategic interests⁹ and the strengthening of the West's standing on the one hand and new competitors such as China, India, and the emerging regional powers such as Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, on the other hand.

Hence, the new Russian foreign policy at the beginning of the third millennium was gradually based on the principle of redefining Russian economic interests in the countries of the African continent to promote them and build new partnerships with the countries of the continent on new bases based on mutual dependence and provide Russian capabilities or expertise to African countries willing to cooperate with Russia, especially in the field of the energy industry of oil and natural gas at the level of discoveries or production and export as well as providing financial or in-kind assistance to some African

countries as part of Russia's supportive endeavor to gain the acceptance of African countries for its foreign political movement that was employed to serve its economic interests.¹⁰

Russian decision-makers defined economic interests in the African continent in this era with two types of interests, the first is public interests that have economic implications related to the strategic location of Africa, as it overlooks the most important trade corridors in the world, as well as its security-military role in aspects related to international competition and aspects related to combating piracy and terrorism and obtaining a license to establish various military or intelligence bases...etc. As for the second, it is purely economic interests that focus on Russia's desire to access the great primary resources in Africa, especially oil and gas, as well as other great economic opportunities, including arms exports and investments in oil industries or other infrastructure.

⁹ Becca Wasser, *The Limits of Russian Strategy in the Middle East*, RAND Corporation, Washington, 2019, p. 26.

¹⁰ Nasser Zeidan, *The Role of Russia in the Middle East and North Africa from Peter the Great to Vladimir Putin*, Arab House of Science Publishers, Beirut, 2014, p. 59.

The second requirement:

Security and political interests

First: the interests of the United States:

The United States has attached remarkable importance to the African continent since 1957, as President Eisenhower followed a new approach to communicate with the newly independent countries of the continent against the background of the increasing role of African American citizens in American political life. Accordingly, the importance of maintaining good relations with African countries on the one hand, and the increasing role of the African continent geographically, politically, and militarily within the framework of the strategies of the conflict with the Soviet Union, and from here increased official US visits to the countries of the newly independent continent to establish a new era of political relations as the Nixon administration completed what the Eisenhower administration had begun by granting privacy to bilateral relations

with the countries of the African continent, despite its recognition of the strength and centrality of the European role in Africa.¹¹

Within the framework of its relations with the African continent, the United States focused on countering the Soviet-backed communist tide and attempting to prevent Soviet military and security positioning in strategic areas of the African continent, particularly near the sea lanes and strategic straits that gave the Soviet Union great military flexibility in the face of the US military presence and movement across the world.

At this point, the security and political interests of the United States in the African continent have undergone major changes based on new variables. The importance of the strategic underpinnings of American-African relations has increased. In addition to the strategic determinants that represent key points of American interests in Africa, which are the first strategic position and the second major natural resources¹². The pattern of

¹¹ Amira Abdel Halim, Military Bases in the Red Sea and Changing the Balance of Power, *Journal of International Politics*, Al-Ahram Center, Cairo, January 2018, p. 142.

¹² Ahmed Bou Khurais, Sino-American Rivalry on the African Continent, *Journal of Political Studies*, Egyptian Institute for Studies, Cairo, 2020, 23.

mental image of American decision-makers, political leaders, and strategic thinkers about the African continent has changed in the form of placing Africa at the center of the global policy of the United States. This necessitated a redefinition of the essence and nature of US security and political interests in the African continent in a manner consistent with the rapid global developments, especially after US decision-makers realized with apparent concern that the US's allied European powers could no longer confront or compete with rising international powers that wanted to make Africa a strategic hub for US competition globally, most notably China and Russia.

This American concern was embodied through major security measures on the ground, represented in working to contribute to the overthrow of political regimes loyal to China and Russia, whether in Sudan (Omar al-Bashir's regime) or Libya (Muammar Gaddafi's regime) or other countries in exchange for the support of other African regimes

that support the American security presence and western in Africa.

Since 2001, American security interests have become the main compass underpinning the objectives of the United States' foreign policy towards the African continent, particularly in the area of countering international terrorism, which has found safe places in many African countries, whether in Somalia, Nigeria, Senegal, Chad, Mali, and others.

Based on the African continent's importance to American security interests, the United States established an integrated military command in Africa, the United States Military Command in Africa (USAFRICOM), in Djibouti; It is home to Camp Lemonaire, which is the only permanent military organ of the United States on the African continent and the United States Counter-Terrorism Operations Centre¹³.

This American military and security presence is supported by the intensification of diplomatic activity and the opening of many new missions and

¹³ The US military presence in the Horn of Africa, a symposium organized by the Monitor Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Khartoum on

6-8-2019, Khartoum Center for Strategic Studies, Sudan, 2019.

embassies and the dispatch of more ministers, officials, and special envoys to the countries of the continent, as well as the employment of American military aid in terms of weapons, equipment, training, and various military expertise. It has become the military and security arm that serves the strategic interests of the United States, including It is political, economic, and security.

Second: Russian Federation's interests

Russia paid attention to the African continent, both security, and military, during an era of intensified conflict with the United States and the Western camp in general, especially since the 1960s when the Soviets raised the slogan of support for revolutionary peoples against Western colonialism and the exploitation they had adopted to subdue colonial peoples and control their wealth, including those of African States. The Soviets supported the independence of African countries in this era and the Soviet Union tried to generalize its

socialist philosophy in the newly independent African countries through the communist tide, which represented a milestone in the level of conflict between the two camps during the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century and one of the most important tools of the Soviet Union to confront the United States in important areas for American interests.¹⁴

During the various Cold War eras, the Soviet Union was able to obtain great influence in the regions of the African continent, especially the Horn of Africa, where it was able to obtain official permission from countries such as Djibouti, Somalia, South Yemen, and Ethiopia, which controlled Eritrea to establish naval bases and various military and security offices, especially in the areas bordering the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab and the opening to the waters of the Indian Ocean. This matter was very necessary within the framework of the Soviet Union's global strategy to confront the United States and the Western camp during the Cold War¹⁵

¹⁴ Ismail Hammoudi, Increasing Russian influence in North Africa, the limits of Putinism, analytical paper, Al Jazeera Center for Studies, Doha, 2022, p. 5.

¹⁵ Gilbert Khadiagala, East Africa: Security and the Legacy of Fragility, Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, No. 86, Abu Dhabi, 2009, p. 63.

After the end of the Cold War with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the factors of weakness appeared in the Russian Federation, after the disintegration of its production structure, the concentration of corruption factors in its public institutions, the increase in poverty and unemployment, and other factors of weakness that made Russia an ordinary power incapable of confronting Western military and security expansion, including the expansion of NATO towards the southern Russian borders. Russia has remarkably coordinated behind Western demands in the political, economic, and even military fields.

However, the arrival of President Vladimir Putin to power in 2000 and the restoration of part of the ability of the Russian state to establish a balance in state administration institutions, overcome the Chechen war, and the rise in energy prices were all factors that transformed the Russian power that pushed the Russian leadership to try to restore Russia's global role by restoring its influence in many regions of the world, including the African continent.

The most important goals that the Russian Federation seeks to achieve through its security and military policy on the African continent are to support its global position and restore its role as a superpower that can compete with the United States and other powers on this continent and ensure the flexibility of the rapid Russian military and security movement in different regions around the world by securing the presence of Military and security forces in the waterways and strategic straits, especially the Red Sea, the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the Arabian Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and others.

Besides, achieving a strong Russian influence on the African continent, especially at the military, security, and economic levels, will eventually affect its political power¹⁶, establish a new kind of international balance, and rewrite new principles of international politics that give Russia a greater role. These are the most important goals of the current Russian leadership under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, which aspires to

¹⁶ Mustafa Sayej, Russia's New Strategy for a Geo-Strategic Player and Access to Warm

Waters: Ar'aa Al-Khaleej Journal, No. 2019 (134) pp. 88-77.

activate the Russian global role as a great power again.

Chapter three

The mechanisms of economic and security competition between the United States and Russia in Africa (and their international reflection)

The first requirement: the economic mechanisms

Both the United States and Federal Russia have employed economic factors as a very important field of competition in the African continent through the basic mechanisms of the economy, as follows:¹⁷

First: trade

In the context of the rivalry between the United States and Federal Russia on the African continent since the partial restoration of the Russian Federation's global role after Vladimir Putin came to power, foreign trade has been used as one of the most important grounds for the

overall competition between the two Powers.¹⁸

Since the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, the United States has been aware that it is facing unprecedented competition on the economic level, especially on the commercial level, from international powers, led by China, which invaded African markets with its available goods and massive investments, and Russia, which is looking forward to regaining its role in the world and on this continent, India thirsty for markets and resources, and motivating regional powers, led by Turkey, this necessitated the restoration of commercial relations between the United States and the countries of the African continent by launching new business and commercial projects with the countries of the African continent, especially countries that have distinguished political relations with the United States.

The American awareness of the danger of international competitors, including

¹⁷ Muhammad Ismail and Gamal Qassem, Foreign Trade Policies in the Arab Countries, Journal of Economic Studies, Issue 66, Arab Monetary Fund, Cairo, 2020, p. 48.

¹⁸ Abbas Al-Hadithi, Theories of Strategic Control and the Clash of Civilizations, Osama House for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, 2004.

China, Russia, and India, and the regional ones including Turkey, to its economic interests in Africa, prompted it to develop new mechanisms to manage its commercial and non-commercial interests in Africa by launching the annual American-African Summit since 2014 when the first summit was under the title of investment in next generation.¹⁹

In this context, the United States has concluded many free trade agreements with African countries that cooperate economically and politically with the United States to increase the rates of trade and investment exchange and to enhance the opportunities of the American private sector, which is the strongest arm of the United States for influence and domination of international markets, including promising African markets. It involves undiscovered opportunities based on the possibility of escalating growth rates, business expansion, and the integration of infrastructure in the field of trade, industry, agriculture, and services, thus greatly expanding the size of the African economy, which consists of 54

countries and more than one billion people.

As for the Russian Federation, its new strategic approach related to restoring its global role has placed the African continent at the center of this strategy through the unprecedented expansion of bilateral relations at all levels, including trade relations through the conclusion of collective and bilateral agreements with the countries of the African continent in the field of promoting trade, industrial and investment exchange.

This Russian performance culminated in successive summits between the Russian Federation and the countries of the African continent at the level of presidents, which began with the (Sochi) summit, which included the attendance of the heads of more than 20 African countries in Russia, as well as many African organizations. This summit has become a context in Russian-African relations to strengthen cooperation and

¹⁹ Larry Hanauer, Lyle J. Morris, Chinese Engagement in Africa Drivers, Reactions, and Implications for U.S. Policy, Rand, 2014.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/R521.htm.

economic partnership, especially the trade partnership.²⁰

Among the most important trade fields between Russia and Africa is the Russian arms trade with many African countries, including Egypt, Algeria, Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and others, where Russia's arms exports to Africa represent 13% of its total arms exports.²¹

Cereals, primarily wheat and maize, also represent an important aspect of Russia's foreign trade on the African continent. Russia has a large surplus of strategic grains, whose reasonable prices represent an important opportunity for many African countries, including Egypt, as a source of food.

Russia employs trade relations with Africa to improve its reputation with the countries of the continent, enhance standing, influence, and competitiveness and support various political, security, and economic interests in the context of competition with the United States and

other powers to ensure its share in the future African market. These objectives have been reinforced by the establishment of the Coordinating Committee for Economic Cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa in 2009 to help support Russian commercial interests.²²

Second: investment

The investment was used as an effective mechanism in the field of gaining more influence in the African continent by the USA and Russia. According to the United States, investment is a distinct mechanism to gain more influence on the African continent, contributing to stabilizing its political and military position around the world and supporting its commercial and economic power through systematic investment policies.

The United States sees China as its most dangerous competitor in the field of trade and investment and is working to develop its mechanisms to respond to the expansion of Chinese influence in Africa and contain its political and military

<https://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/reports/2019/1/191111071345904.html>

²⁰ Group of authors, Russian interests in Africa, readings and future expectations, SMT Center, Political Studies Unit, 2019, p. 43

²¹ Obeid Amigen, is Russia interfering through trade in the competition for Africa?

²² Group of authors, Russian interests in Africa, readings and future expectations, a previously mentioned source, p. 27.

movement by besieging its economic influence. After China, Russia comes as an international competitor that requires taking what is necessary to surpass it or at least prevent it from excluding the United States from the arenas of competition in Africa. On the other hand, the American perception based on replacing Africa's economic aid and soft loan policy with an investment policy that contributes to the better interests of both the United States and the African parties has become robust.

To overtake its competitors in this area, the United States has developed sovereign funds to support US foreign investment by high-growth start-ups that have achieved unprecedented investment expansion in Africa, and Russia and China have long been oblivious to this. These sovereign funds and entrepreneurial investment companies work in coordination with the US federal government and the US Agency for International Development.

For example, US investments in a large number of countries in the American

continent until 2020 amounted to 50 billion dollars, distributed over 107 projects in the energy field, 75 commercial and agricultural projects, 55 projects in the health field, and 43 projects in the field of technology and communications²³.

The Russian investments were concentrated in the field of energy, especially oil and natural gas, in the main, whether in the stages of exploration, production, refining, or export, as well as investing in the field of manufacturing weapons and military equipment. The Sochi summit in Russia between the Russian President and the heads of state of the African continent in 2016 represented a turning point in the field of strengthening bilateral relations and strengthening the Russian presence in one of the traditional regions of the West and the United States in particular.²⁴

This summit led to an agreement to boost Russian investments in Africa and welcome Russian companies, especially those working in the energy, mining, and infrastructure sectors. In this area, Russian investments in energy alone

²³ Sadeq Onawi, *Africa: the growing global struggle for influence*, first edition, Ankara University, Turkey, 20, p. 68.

²⁴ Putin and Sisi inaugurate the first Russia-Africa summit in Sochi, France 24, October 23, 2019, (access date: May 6, 2021): <https://n9.cl/tk5l>

amounted to \$13 billion by 2021, a very large figure for all Russian foreign investments around the world.²⁵

Third: Energy and Primary Resources

Today, Africa is one of the most important regions witnessing intense competition over energy and raw materials in its various forms, especially oil, natural gas, and minerals. The United States and the Russian Federation are at the forefront of the competition for energy and natural resources on the African continent. Mostly, China views the energy and raw materials sector in Africa as an economic opportunity, while Russia and the United States view it as a political and strategic opportunity before it is an economic opportunity. The objectives of Russia and the United States when talking about ensuring their energy influence in Africa relate to the topic of geopolitical and security influence and ensuring that the global role is maintained and ready to confront the prospect of

future conflict by creating new spheres of influence.²⁶

For example, by strengthening its relations with African energy-producing countries, Russia seeks to prevent the West or the United States from influencing the decision of African oil and gas-producing countries, which could harm Russian interests, especially in the area of the possibility of the West persuading African countries to compensate for Russian oil and gas supplies to the European Union, as well as the great economic benefits that Russia can derive from investments in the African energy sector. Thus, Russia succeeds in building a partnership with the countries of the African continent, especially those run by political regimes that agree with Russia in many political convictions. As the Russian Lukoil and Gazprom companies expanded in Egypt, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Libya in the field of energy, minerals, and raw materials industries

²⁵ Eguegu, Ovigwe, US threat to withdraw from African security efforts leaves Sahel vulnerable, *The African Report*, January 8, 2020, (Seen May 4, 2021), <https://n9.cl/02vb1>

²⁶ Saad Obaid Al-Saidi, *The Role of Energy Policy in the Strategy of Restoring the Russian Global Role*, *Journal of Political Science*, No. 58, College of Political Science - University of Baghdad, 2018, p. 81.

significantly after 2019²⁷, the result has led to the strengthening of Russia's global position as a major power that cannot be easily bypassed.

While the United States is working to achieve several goals through the energy sector in Africa, including confronting the great Chinese expansion and securing energy for its allies in the European Union away from blackmail and Russian pressure.

The second requirement:

Security mechanisms

First: Military and intelligence bases

Based on its international responsibilities as a superpower and its interests throughout the world and to strengthen its international standing as a dominant force, the United States gives the military and security aspects the utmost importance within the framework of its global strategy. Africa represents a very important part of the geography that the American military and security strategy is concerned with, based on its proximity to the two most important regions for the United States, namely the European

Union and the Middle East, as well as its importance as a link towards the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It also supervises the most important sea lanes that control international trade, maritime transport, and maritime military movements.

Hence, the United States has paid great attention to the issue of strengthening its military presence in strategic joints on the African continent by establishing military and security bases and intelligence offices in many African countries, where the United States chose Djibouti due to its distinguished geographical location overlooking the southern entrance to the Red Sea from the side of the Bab al-Mandab Strait and which opens towards the Suez Canal down to the Mediterranean Sea to be a base and permanent headquarters for its military command in Africa (AFRICOM), which is based in the Djibouti Lemonnier Camp.²⁸

The mission of combating international terrorism was one of the most important goals of the US military and security presence in Africa as well as monitoring the movements of countries competing

²⁷ Mohamed Farag, from weapons to oil and mining ... Russian ambitions to control Africa. <https://attaga.net/2020/08/09/8>

²⁸ Mark P. Lagon and Rachel Sadoff, America Must Not Allow China to Go Viral in Africa, National Interest, May 1, 2020 ,P. 91.

with the United States, the most important of which are Russia and China, in addition to securing the passage of American fleets through important sea lanes and securing American and global trade, as well as supporting American economic interests and American companies operating in Africa and strengthening American influence on the African continent in general.

The United States military and security efforts on the African continent have been reflected in several military and security training, cooperation, armaments, and security partnerships involving the exchange of information with selected African countries, most notably Kenya, Ethiopia, Angola, Senegal, Morocco, and others, as important pillars of the United States military and security strategy on the African continent.

Russia, too, focuses heavily on military and security factors as part of its important mechanisms for preserving its interests in Africa, as it vigorously seeks to regain its former influence on the

African continent and strengthen its international standing in its competition with the United States in particular and with the West in general.

A leaked Russian military document indicated that Russia was working to open military bases in at least six African countries, namely Egypt, Central Africa, Madagascar, Mozambique, Sudan, and Eritrea, as well as to open several logistical support centers in these and other countries.²⁹

Russia's military and legal security activities in Africa are concentrated in the following:³⁰

1. Selling weapons, military and security equipment, and supplies.
2. Military and training agreements: Russia has about 21 agreements with many African countries in this field, including Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Angola, Sierra Leone, Madagascar, Chad, and Burkina Faso.
3. Military bases.

²⁹ National Interest: Russia looks to establish 6 military bases in Africa, Al Jazeera, August 12, 2020, <https://n9.cl/6xtoj>

³⁰ -Russell, Martin, Pichon, Eric, Russia in Africa A new arena for geopolitical competition, (European Parliamentary Research Service, November 2019), p. 2.

As for the mysterious and illegal Russian military and security presence, it was mainly represented by the unofficial Russian military groups that spread remarkably in many African countries as mercenary groups to fight alongside certain parties, whether governments or militias in Libya, Central Africa, Chad, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan ... etc. Among the most important of these armed Russian groups that have been active in Africa is the Wagner Group, which was founded by retired Russian General Dmitry Utkin in 2014 and was involved in the events of the war in eastern Ukraine and then contributed to many military events in Africa as an effective military arm of Russia for the provisions of military influence on important issues in Africa.³¹

Second: Sale of arms and security and military partnerships

The United States of America and Russia topped the first place in selling arms to

developing countries, including African countries for a long time, as the United States is the first country in the world with an important difference, followed by the Russian Federation, according to a report prepared by the US Congress in 2020. For example, the United States arms sales from 2007-2014 only amounted to 250 billion dollars, while Russia's sales in the same period amounted to 85 billion dollars.³²

The United States has had a clear vision regarding the need to boost arms exports to African countries since 2008 after the United States Congress voted on the need to strengthen United States-African relations and support American interests on this continent. US arms sales to African countries are estimated at 14% of total African arms purchases³³. The low percentage of U.S. arms sales to African countries is mainly due to the high costs of U.S. weapons as well as the negative role of U.S. conditions imposed on arms buyers.

³¹ -Jacobsen, Katja Lindskov, *Russia's Showy and Shadowy Engagements in Sub-Saharan Africa*, (Djøf Publishing In cooperation with Centre For Military Studies, 2020), p.38.

³² Hakan Chopper, US arms sales amount to \$175 billion in 2020 <https://www.aa.com.tr/ar/>

³³ Kutluhan Gorogo, *Mercenaries of the Russian Wagner Group*, SITA Studies Center, Turkish Vision Studies Series, No. 196, Istanbul, 2020, p. 84.

However, the balance of arms sales to African countries tilts in favor of Russia, as the available data estimate that Russia's arms exports to Africa are twice the US and Chinese exports. This is what the Stockholm Peace Research Institute indicated 49% of the purchases of African countries from 2014 to 2019 of weapons came from Russia³⁴. The main reason for this may be the licenses, quality, and compatibility of Russian weapons with the fighting doctrines of the African armies are more than other weapons and the non-imposition of important political conditions by Russia on buyers.

Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Egypt, Angola, and Ethiopia are among the first African countries to buy Russian arms.

The legal and illegal military and security partnerships between the United States and the Russian Federation as two competing countries and African countries are also among the most important military and security mechanisms employed by the United States and Russia in the context of their competition in the continent, where both

the United States and Russia have many forms of military and security cooperation and partnership with some African countries with which they meet visions or interests embodied in the provision of facilities in opening military bases, intelligence coordination offices, or certain arrangements to track wanted persons or terrorists or the use of some military facilities for economic gains, military support, or certain security guarantees.

The military and security machinery of military bases, military presence, arms sales, and military and security partnerships appear to be among the most effective in the competition between the United States and Federal Russia, as well as other economic and political machinery and has been employed by both sides vigorously and deeply to gain greater influence in the context of the rivalry between the two Powers.

Conclusions

1. The renewed rivalry between the United States and Federal Russia in many regions of the world, including the African continent,

³⁴ Yahya Ayyash, 21 African countries receive Russian arms exported by three Arab countries.

<https://arabi21.com/story/1274324/21-F>

- has become a reality, especially in recent years when Russia was convinced of the need to restore its global role by expanding and gaining economic, political and military influence.
2. The African continent, especially some of its important regions, has major strategic advantages in the field of international competition and conflict strategies that push the competing countries, led by the United States and the Russian Federation, as well as other countries such as China.
 3. While the United States is making remarkable progress in both trade and investment aspects of its competition with Russia, military and security aspects appear to be in Russia's interest, supported by arms sales factors and semi-official Russian armed groups that have achieved significant influence for Russia in many countries on the African continent.
 4. The two countries' entry into competition on the African continent does not mean their indifferent to the danger posed by international and regional competitors to their interests such as China and Turkey
 5. Despite the apparent rivalry between the United States and Russia on the African continent, this does not mean a lack of bilateral cooperation and understanding between the two parties, particularly in cases that call for cooperation to prevent such competition from descending into an open conflict that drains their capabilities.
 6. In other cases, this competition may lead to positive results related to preventing the domination of a particular party on the African continent, and the competing parties are trying to present better economic, political, and military offers to the countries of the African continent to win their friendship at the expense of the other competing parties.