

## Gabon

Vanderbilt

Gabon is coded as an autocratic single-party-personalist-hybrid regime at independence in 1960 until our frame ends in 2008. In 1960 Gabriel Léon M'ba, of the Bloc Démocratique Gabonais (BDG), ruled as president. In 1964 there was a military coup and Jean-Hilaire Aubame took power. According to Gardinier (1981, 32-33, 58-61), Aubame was an opponent of M'ba in the national assembly. After M'ba had dissolved parliament, a group of army officers took control of the government. They asked Aubame, who did not partake in the coup, to head a provisional government<sup>1</sup> that included other leading opponents of Mba (Gardinier 1981, 58-61; Barnes 1992 42-43). However, Aubame was removed by the French in favor of M'ba within days. It is difficult to decide whether this should be coded as an ABA scenario (and thus we would code this as SOLSchange30) or whether we code no SOLS changes because Aubame was interim. We unfortunately do not know whether the regime would truly have been interim, since Aubame was removed so quickly by the French. However, the circumstances of the coup (which was a reaction to M'ba closing parliament) and the fact that the coup leaders handed power over so quickly to someone not affiliated with them, suggests that Aubame might truly have been interim. This is also the more conservative coding. So we code not SOLSchange30 here.

In 1967 M'ba died and was succeeded by Omar Bongo (Ngolet 2000, 58), also of the BDG. This is not a SOLS change. Starting in 1968 the BDG is renamed PDG (Parti Démocratique Gabonais). Bongo ruled through 2008. According to Worldstatesmen, BDG and PDG are same party but BDG changed its name to PDG in March 1968 (after that PDG is country's only legal party till 1990).

### References:

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- Ngolet, François. 2000. "Ideological Manipulations and Political Longevity: The Power of Omar Bongo in Gabon since 1967." *African Studies Review* 43/2: 55-71.

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<sup>1</sup> In a study of which the status is unclear Barnes also states that Aubame's government was indeed interim. There are no references in the part that deals with the coup, so we did not rely on this source. See Barnes, James F. The Republic of Gabon. *Southwestern Journal of International Studies*. Available at: [http://www1.appstate.edu/~stefanov/gabextra\\_2.pdf](http://www1.appstate.edu/~stefanov/gabextra_2.pdf).