

## **Central African Republic**

Rice

The Central African Republic gained independence from France in 1960. At that point, the President (who had been the leader of the transitional government since 1959) was David Dacko, a member of the Movement for the Social Evolution of Black Africa (MESAN). GWF classify Dacko's government as personalist. It lasted until 1966, when Dacko was overthrown in a military coup led by Col. Jean-Bedel Bokassa, who was also a member of MESAN. This is classified as a SOLS change because Bokassa was not a predesignated successor of Dacko. Bokassa's SOLS is identified as MESAN/MIL. Bokassa abolished the constitution and assumed both executive and legislative power. In 1976, Bokassa declared that the CAR was a monarchy, and proclaimed himself Emperor Bokassa I.

In 1979, Bokassa (MESAN/MIL) was overthrown by Dacko (MESAN), in a French-sponsored coup, resulting in a SOLS change. He changed his affiliation from MESAN to UDC in 1980. This change does not represent a SOLS change because Geddes codes the country as a pure-Personalist regime from 1960 to Sep. 1, 1981. Dacko, however, was unable to remedy the economic and political situation in the country, and was himself overthrown in a bloodless military coup led by General Andre Kolingba. This is a SOLS change. Geddes classifies Kolingba's government as a military/personalist hybrid. In 1985, he created a political party, the Central African Democratic Rally (RDC), and his affiliation changed accordingly. But this change does not represent a SOLS change because Geddes codes the country as a military-Personalist hybrid since 1981 to Oct.1993. There is only one leader from September 1, 1981 to 1993: Kolingba. Some progress was made towards democratization during his time in office, however, culminating with presidential elections held in 1993. The winner of the elections was Ange-Felix Patasse, a member of the Liberation Movement of the Central African People (MLPC). This is a SOLS change.

Patasse was reelected in 1999, but faced increasing economic difficulties and social unrest. These events culminated in his being overthrown in a military coup on 15 March 2003, resulting in a SOLS change. There is a leadership change from Patasse to Bozizé Yangouvonda. The SOLS for the Bozizé Yangouvonda is Mil/Non-party. Bozize Yangouvonda, restored order to the country and passed a new constitution. He was officially elected President in 2005, though Geddes continues to code the CAR as being a personalist government, and remains in office in the present day.

### **Source**

United States Department of State. "Country Background Note: Central African Republic". January 8, 2010. <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4007.htm>>

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