

## **Namibia**

Rice

Namibia, originally a German colony, was occupied by South Africa in 1915 (at the time, the area was called "South West Africa"). It remained under South African administration until 1990, despite efforts from the international community (through the United Nations) to negotiate its independence. Within Namibia, a group known as the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) began armed resistance against South Africa in 1966. Finally, in 1988, an agreement was reached to begin the transition to independence, which overall went smoothly. South Africa withdrew its troops, and in November 1989, elections were held for the Constituent Assembly. SWAPO won 57 percent of seats, and its presidential candidate, Samuel Nujoma, was elected to office.

Geddes codes Namibia as a single-party state dating from independence to the present day and Cheibub et al. (2010) code Namibia as non-democratic. However POLITY (and therefore CHISOLS) codes Namibia as democratic. Though we lack data from Cheibub et al. (2010) on the type of democratic regime, sources indicate Namibia is a mixed system (Shugart 2005; van Cranenburgh 2013). Geddes notes that SWAPO has won four elections in which it holds more than 67 percent of seats in the Constituent Assembly. Nujoma was in office until 2005, serving three terms as President. Following this, in 2004, Hifikepunye Pohamba, the Minister of Lands (and a member of SWAPO) was elected President. Pohamba remains in office in the present day.

### **Source**

Shugart, Matthew. 2005. Semi-presidential Systems: Dual Executive and Mixed Authority Patterns," *French Politics* 3 (3): 323-351.

United States Department of State. "Country Background Note: Namibia". Last edited 10 June 2010. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5472.htm>

van Cranenburgh, Oda. 2013. Democracy Promotion in Africa: The Institutional context. In Gordon Crawford & Gabrielle Lynch (eds). *Democratization in Africa, Challenges and Prospects*.

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