Niger
Vanderbilt

Niger is coded as an autocracy from independence in 1960 until 1991 and then again from 1996 through 1998. Hamani Diori, of the Parti Progressista Nigeriano (PPN), is the country's first post-independence leader, ruling until 1974. Geddes (1999) has coded Diori's regime as a single- party regime. In 1974 Seyni Kountché heads a military coup and takes power from Diori. This is a SOLS change as he established as a military-personalist hybrid regime, which represents a break with Diori's single-party regime.

In 1987 Kountché dies and is succeeded by his chief of staff, Brigadier General Ali Saïbou (Davis and Kossomi 2001, 81). This is not a SOLS change because Saïbou is Dior's pre-designated successor and is coded by Geddes as being affiliated with the same regime as Diori. Saïbou ushers the country toward democracy. In 1989 Saïbou's title changes from President of the Supreme Military Council to President of the Supreme Council of National Orientation and then again to just simply "President." His SOLS changes from "Mil" to "MNSD" or Mouvement National de la Societé de Développement. However, his is not a SOLS change because his regime continues to be classified as a military-personalist hybrid.

In 1992, while Saïbou is still in power, the country is coded as a democracy. Cheibub et. al. (2009) has classified it as a mixed democratic system. GWF code provisional for the period from 1992 to 1993. We do not code a SOLS change for 1992 because Saïbou remains in power and is not democratically elected. In 1993 Niger holds its first free and fair democratic elections and Mahamane Ousmane (CDS- Convention Démocratique et Sociale) becomes president. This is a SOLS change.

He rules until 1996 when there is a military coup and Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara takes control of the country as President of the National Salvation Council. Geddes codes the regime under Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara as personalist. Thus, there is a SOLS change in 1996. Later in 1996 Maïnassara's title changes to just "President" and his SOLS changes from Mil to UNRID, or Union Nationale des Independants pour la Renoveau Democratique. This is not a second SOLS change for 1996 because he continued to rule as a personalist authoritarian leader.
In 1999 Maïnassara is assassinated by members of his presidential guard under orders from Daouda Malam Wanké. Wanké establishes the National Reconciliation Council, which serves as an interim government. (The fact that Wanké so quickly leads the transition to democracy and led elections shows that he considers himself transitional.) Thus, there is no SOLS change for the leader transition from Maïnassara to Wanké. Later in 1999 elections are held and Mamadou Tandja becomes president. This is a SOLS change as Tandja was not in any way part of Maïnassara regime which was the last regular regime.

In February 2010, a military coup led by Salou Djibo captured president Tandja and took control of the country (Smith 2010; Nossiter 2010). The military coup pledged to return the country to democracy and created a transitional government led by coup leaders with some civilian involvement (Al Jazeera 2010). By 2010, Niger is considered a non-democracy, so we use the predesignated successor rule to determine whether a SOLS change occurred. The transition from Tandja to Djibo is coded as a SOLS change because Djibo was not Tandja's predesignated successor. Djibo led the military coup against Tandj, and stayed in power through

the transitional government. The military-led transitional government organized elections in early 2011. The military did not actively support either candidate and opposition leader Mahamadou Issoufou was elected president (BBC News 2011). Issoufou's election marks a return to democracy for Niger. The election of Issoufou is coded as a SOLS change because he was not a candidate actively backed by the military.

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