Zimbabwe
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CoW includes Zimbabwe as a state system member starting in 1965 but prior to 1980 Zimbabwe was still considered Rhodesia and not recognized as an independent state by Britain or the UN. Zimbabwe only became a member of the United Nations on August 25, 1980. Since we follow CoW, we start our coding in 1965. Based on our coding rules Zimbabwe is coded non-democratic from 1965 until 1969, as democratic from 1970 through 1978 and then again as non-democratic until the end of the observation period. The coding of a parliamentary democracy during 1970-1978 is problematic as this is a white minority rule where large parts of the population were excluded. However, several sources corroborate a coding of parliamentary democracy (Nijzink et al. 2013; Madhuku 2010; Giliomee 1999; though note that Cheibub et al. 2010 do not consider Zimbabwe a democracy in any period). We code no SOLS change at independence.

The first leader of Rhodesia is Smith from the Rhodesian Front (RF), a white nationalist party. He is in power until 1979 so there are no SOLS changes during that time despite the apparent regime changes to democracy and back to autocracy. The white nationalist government under Smith came under fire internationally with increasing domestic opposition by the black majority. A guerilla war between the white minority government and black resistance fighters erupted.

In 1978, Smith negotiated an "internal settlement" with Bishop Abel Tendekayi Muzorewa of the United African National Congress (UANC) to allow multiparty elections with universal suffrage (US Department of State 2010). In March 1979, Muzorewa won the election and took office as Rhodesia's first black prime minister. Note that it is difficult to determine whether Muzorewa should be considered interim or not because, on the one hand, his party won a majority in the elections that year, but on the other hand, sources suggest that he was an interim leader in charge to transition the country from white minority rule to majority rule. (The Telegraph, 2010) It appears that the use of the term "interim" in connection with Muzorewa is probably due to him being in office only a short time rather than it truly being an interim government. Thus, we code a SOLS change in 1979 when Muzorewa takes power. His support basis clearly is not the white nationalist party of Smith's. Muzorewa's assumption of the leadership role did not end the civil war between whites and blacks and Britain became more involved in solving the conflict.

Later in 1979 the British helped negotiate an agreement, the Lancaster Agreement, between the white and blacks. The Lancaster Agreement provided for a transition period under British rule during which multiparty elections would be prepared. In the February 1980 elections, Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party defeated Muzorewa (UANC) and won the elections to become Zimbabwe's first prime minister. (Note that we do not code the country as democratic at the time.) Geddes codes a single-party system under the ZANU-PF starting with Mugabe's election to office. Since Mugabe relies on this party rather than the UANC like Muzorewa we code this as a SOLS change.

Robert Mugabe resigned in 2017, ending his 37 year rule (BBC News 2017a). Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko served as acting president while tensions within the ruling party

rose over who would succeed Mugabe (BBC News 2017b). The ruling party, ZANU-PF, sworn in Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa as president in November 2017 (Griffiths 2017), and in 2018, he won the presidential elections (BBC News 2018). Zimbabwe is a single party system during this period, so SOLS changes only occur when the leader is not from the ruling party. The transition from Mugabe to Mphoko is not coded as a SOLS change because Mphoko is considered an interim leader. The transition from Mphoko to Mnangagwa is not coded as a SOLS change because Mnangagwa and Mugabe we both members of the ruling party, ZANU-PF.

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