

Congo

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Congo is coded as a non-democracy throughout the entire observation period. Geddes codes Congo as a personalist authoritarian system from independence in 1960 until 1963. (Note that Cheibub et al. consider this time period to be a presidential democracy.) There is no SOLS change at independence. The country was ruled during this time by Fulbert Youlou of the Union Démocratique pour la Défense d'Intérêts Africains (UDDIA) party.

In 1963, Youlou was overthrown in a popular uprising. The military installed a civilian provisional government with Alphonse Massamba-Débat of the National Révolutionnaire Mouvement (MNR) at its head (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Because Geddes considers Débat's regime to be a single-party-personalist regime, Débat cannot be considered an interim leader. Thus this is a SOLS change where power is transferred from Youlou and his personalist clique to Débat, his personalist clique, and the MNR party. Débat ruled until 1968 when there was a military coup and Alfred Raoul, Mil, took power. His rule marks the beginning of a military-single-party-hybrid authoritarian regime that would last until 1992.

Raoul was succeeded by Marien Ngouabi, Mil/PCT, about four months later in 1969. Once in power, Ngouabi changed the name of the MNR to the PCT (U.S. Department of State 2010). Thus the MNR and the PCT are the same party. Since the single-party of Débat (MNR) is the same as the single-party of the regime starting with Raoul (Parti Congolais du Travail-PCT), we code Raoul's takeover as a minor SOLS change for 1968. We do not code a SOLS change for Ngouabi's takeover in 1969.

In 1977 Ngouabi was assassinated. The military created an interim government with Jacques Joachim Yhombi-Opango, Mil/PCT, as president. While Opango rules for more than 18 months and thus cannot be considered an interim leader by our coding rules, this is still not a SOLS change since his support group remains the PCT and the military. After a disappointing turn in office, Opango was removed in 1979 by the Central Committee of the PCT. Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Mil/PCT was installed in his place and ruled until 1992. This is not a SOLS change. Nguesso was a military general and he was named as interim president by the Central Committee of the PCT. PCT was the sole legal party established the 1979 constitution, with the chair of its Central Committee serving as president of the country (Muller et.al., 2011:320). The single-party-military regime ends in 1992 when Congo democratizes. We code Congo as a mixed-system democracy between 1992 (GWF code 1992 as provisional) and 1996. Pascal Lissouba of the Union pour le Développement et Progrès Social (UDAPS) wins elections to become president. This is a SOLS change since Lissouba had support from a party other than the PCT and also does not rely on the military. The 1997 elections became a battleground between Lissouba and Nguesso that led to a 4-month battle over Brazzaville. Angolan troops helped to put Nguesso back in power (U.S. Department of State, 2010), beginning a personalist authoritarian regime headed by Nguesso that would last from 2002 through 2008. He changed his affiliation in 2002 from PCT to FDU. But this change does not represent a SOLS change because Geddes codes his regime as a pure-Personalist regime

References:

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