

Malawi

Vanderbilt

Malawi is coded as a non-democracy from independence in 1964 until 1994. Between 1994 and 2008 it is coded as a democracy with exception of the years 2001 and 2002. Geddes codes Malawi as a personalist authoritarian regime from 1964 until 1994. Hastings Kamuzu Banda of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) ruled for this entire period as the country's first president. Two years after independence, Malawi changed its constitution to become a one-party state with Banda as its first President (U.S. Department of State 2010). Banda's title changed from PM to President. Domestic and international pressure pushed Malawi toward democracy. In 1994 the country held its first free and fair elections, electing Bakili Muluzi of the United Democratic Front (UDF), as president. This is a SOLS change given that he relied on a different party and thus different supporters than his predecessor. From 1994 until 2000 the country is coded as a presidential democracy. In 1999, Muluzi was re-elected for another 5-year term. During his second term, in 2001 and 2002, the country is coded as being ruled by an authoritarian regime. Then in 2003 the country returns to presidential democracy. Freedom House (2010) explains: "Towards the middle of his second term, Muluzi embarked on an effort to amend the constitution so that he might stand for a third presidential period. The campaign to amend the constitution consumed Malawian politics in 2001 and 2002. A protracted struggle over the issue came to a close in January 2003, when it became clear to Muluzi that he did not have sufficient votes in the parliament to pass the desired amendment." The whole time Muluzi is coded as the leader, thus there are no SOLS changes during that time. Not being able to run for the presidency himself, Muluzi chose Bingu wa Mutharika of the UDF to succeed him as candidate for president. Mutharika won the 2004 elections. Although Mutharika belonged to the same party as Muluzi (UDF) at the beginning, he left the UDF and formed a new party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) after an ideological falling out with Muluzi and other leaders of the UDF on February 5, 2005, (U.S. Department of State 2010; Freedom House 2010). Because this split happens less than a year after Mutharika took power, we code a SOLS (from UDF to DPP) from the beginning of his presidency.

References:

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