

The background of the slide is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The main title is centered in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.

DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA: Past Failures & Future Challenges

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INTRODUCTION

AFRICA



ORIGINS OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

- The cradle of humanity
- Colonized by Britain, Germany, Portugal, France, Belgium, Spain & Italy, so **Colonial legacy**.
- Independence (politically), gained through protracted struggles (mostly mid 1950 – 60's).
- Made up of 54 countries but two (Somaliland & Western Sahara) are disputed. (Source UN).
- Independent countries largely had **constitutions developed by former colonizers**: political power in the hands of largely neo-colonial leaders: consequences: politics as before or even worse.
- Characteristics of the power wielders in Africa: **dictators, autocratic, military in politics and isolated cases of democracy**. Thanks to the rushed and dislocated organic growth of the **African State** (Courtesy of Colonialism). NOTE: Discussion to be followed up Later.

DEMOCRACY: Definition & origins

- Greece in Athens city state in 4th & 5th century BC.
- **But** some scholars argue that it originated in Egypt (food for thought) (<http://ssrn.com/abstract=2018722>), Great empires & kingdoms in Africa.
- Characteristics of Athenian democracy: mass citizen participation, a council of leaders with a president serving only one day in that capacity).
- Only men above the age of 18 were allowed to participate
- Women and slaves were prohibited from participating (source: (Heywood)

MODELS OF DEMOCRACY

- Classical democracy: Athenian democracy
- Liberal democracy: Liberal Ideology; individualism, freedom, consent, reason, toleration, equality & constitutionalism
- Developmental democracy: developmental and welfare state
- Peoples democracy: Orthodox Marxism, the proletariat revolution.

DEMOCRACY & ITS MANY MEANINGS

- Rule by the poor
- Rule by the majority thus mass participation
- Plurality: political parties & representation, civil society and direct citizen participation
- Government of the people, by the people, and for the people (Abraham Lincoln)
- “Movementocracy” (Mukwaya) (A NO party democracy??) In Uganda, one party systems. 2005 referendum restored multi-party politics. Discuss multiparty politics history in Uganda (divisive politics on ethnic, religious & party differences).

PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY: What do democracies do?

- Popular sovereignty: power belongs to the people
- Citizen have power of choice & the right to elect their leaders at all levels of governance.
- Free, fair & frequent elections & other forms of civic participation, with a level playing field (**note:** the election process & outcome are all important). What do these f's mean? **Free:** (adult suffrage to vote & be voted for, **fair:** fundamentally honest election **process** & election **outcome**, & **frequency:** regularity of elections for purposes of citizen control over government.
- Government is based on the consent of the governed (citizen)
- Majority decision making binding all the citizen but minority interest are respected & protected.

PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY: What do democracies do?

- Citizen have a voice & have an opportunity to be heard.
- Political equality of all citizen (one man, one vote)
- Citizen have a right to participate in decision-making regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion.
- Freedom of the press (no single source of info especially government is sufficient). Why?
- Note: modern democracy has three main principle, i.e. **Democracy, constitutionalism & liberalism.**

DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA.

- Should be seen thru the prism of colonialism, post-colonialism, neo-colonialism, (liberalism, neo-liberalism).
- Democracy should also be seen thru the prism of East – West Europe relations (cold war & post-cold war era).
- The triumph of the liberal ideology & its consequences on democracy in Africa (U.S.A, Breton Woods institutions & SAPs, the UN, EU & Human Rights, good governance & its ideals: participatory, Rule of law, transparency, responsive, consensus oriented, effective & efficient, equitable & inclusive, accountable, etc).

BEST PERFORMERS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

What have these countries done?

African Rank	Country	Global Rank	Score
1	Mauritius	16	8.22
2	Cabo Verde	=23	7.88
3	Botswana	28	7.81
4	South Africa	41	7.24
5	Ghana	52	6.69
6	Lesotho	=56	6.64
7	Tunisia	=69	6.32
8	Namibia	=71	6.31
9	Senegal	74	6.15
10	Zambia	85	5.68



WORST PERFORMERS IN AFRICA. What is common to these countries?

- Chad, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Guinea-Bissau
 - Political instability, insecurity, poverty (per capita), & long serving leaders.
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LONGEST RULING LEADERS IN AFRICA.

No.	Name	Country	Date to Power	Years in Power
1	Paul Biya	Cameroon	30/06/1975	43 Years
2	Teodore Obiang Nguema. M.	Equatorial-Guinea	03/08/1979	39 Years
3	Denis Ssassou Ngwesso	Republic of Congo	31/08/1979	35 Years
4	Yoweri Museveni	Uganda	26/01/1986	33 Years
5	Idris Deby	Chad	2/12/1990	28 Years
6	Isaias Afwerki	Eritria	24/05/1993	25 Years
7	Ismail Omar Guelleh	Djibouti	8/05/1999	20 Years

DEMOCRACY INDEX METHODOLOGY

- The **democracy index** is an index compiled by the [economist intelligence unit](#) (EIU), a UK-based company. Its intention is to measure the [state of democracy](#) in 167 countries, of which 166 are [sovereign states](#) and 164 are [UN member states](#).
- The index was first published in 2006, with updates for 2008, 2010 and later years. The index is based on 60 indicators grouped in five different categories, measuring [pluralism](#), [civil liberties](#) and [political culture](#).
- In addition to a numeric score and a ranking, the index categorises each country in one of four regime types: *full democracies*, *flawed democracies*, *hybrid regimes* and *authoritarian regimes*.

DEMOCRACY INDEX METHODOLOGY

- The [economist intelligence unit](#)'s index of democracy, on a 0 to 10 scale, is based on the ratings for 60 indicators,
- Grouped into five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture.
- Each category has a rating on a 0 to 10 scale, and the overall index is the simple average of the five category indexes.
- The category indexes are based on the sum of the indicator scores in the category, converted to a 0 to 10 scale.

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

- **FULL DEMOCRACIES** Are nations where civil liberties and basic political freedoms are not only respected, but also reinforced by a **political culture** conducive to the thriving of democratic principles. These nations have a valid system of governmental **checks and balances**, an **independent institutions** like judiciary whose decisions are enforced, **governments that function** adequately, and diverse and **independent media**. These nations have only limited problems in democratic functioning.

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS (CONTINUATION)

- **FLAWED DEMOCRACIES** Are nations where elections are **fair and free** and basic **civil liberties are honored** but may have issues (e.g. Media freedom infringement).
- These nations have significant faults in other democratic aspects, including **underdeveloped political culture**, low levels of participation in politics, and issues in the functioning of governance e.g. corruption, & ineffective & inefficient government.

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS (CONTINUATION)

- **HYBRID REGIMES** Are nations where consequential irregularities exist in elections, regularly **preventing** them from being **fair and free**.
- These nations commonly have governments that apply **pressure on political opponents**, non-independent judiciaries, widespread corruption, harassment and pressure placed on the media, no respect of rule of law, and more pronounced faults than flawed democracies in the realms of **underdeveloped political culture**, low levels of participation in politics, and **issues in the functioning of governance**.

CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS (CONTINUATION)

- **AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES** Are nations where **political pluralism has vanished** or is extremely limited. These nations are often **absolute monarchies or dictatorships**, may have some conventional **institutions of democracy but with meager significance**, infringements and **abuses of civil liberties** are commonplace, elections (if they take place) are **not fair and free**, the **media is often state-owned or controlled** by groups associated with the ruling regime, the judiciary is not independent, and there is omnipresent **ensorship and suppression of governmental criticism**.

CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE STATE IN AFRICA (AFRICA AT INDEPENDENCE & CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (TODAY OR MODERN))

- If the state was given a central role in earlier views of the process of development in Africa, the situation changed dramatically in the late **1970s and 1980s**.
- The **African state** is today the most **demonized social institution in Africa, vilified** for its weaknesses, its over-extension, its interference with the smooth functioning of the markets, its repressive character, its dependence on foreign powers, its ubiquity, its absence, etc.

CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE STATE IN AFRICA (AFRICA AT INDEPENDENCE & CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (TODAY OR MODERN))

- The state once the cornerstone of development is now the millstone around otherwise efficient markets.
- It is now the "rentier state", the "overextended state", the "parasitical state", the "predatory state", the "lame leviathan", "the patrimonial state" the "prebendal state (leaders who use state revenues to buy support ", the "crony state (partiality in awarding jobs)", the "kleptocratic (thieves/corrupt govt) state", the "inverted state", etc.

CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE STATE IN AFRICA (AFRICA AT INDEPENDENCE & CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (TODAY OR MODERN))

- Early criticism of the state in Africa came from the neo-marxists whose own epithets to describe the pathological condition of the African state included the "petty bourgeois state", the "neo-colonial state" and the "dependent state".
- The many epithets underscore the fall from grace of the African state. It is now argued that not only has the state become dysfunctional in terms of the management of larger societal issues, but also a real nuisance in *la vie quotidienne* of its citizens, as evidenced by the "withdrawal" from state-dominated economic and social spaces (chazan, 1988a; chazan, 1988b; rothchild, 1994).

CHARACTER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE STATE IN AFRICA (AFRICA AT INDEPENDENCE & CONTEMPORARY AFRICA (TODAY OR MODERN))

- Some even go so far as to conceive of developmental schemes that completely circumvent or marginalize the state as **non-governmental organizations**,
- the **private sector and local communities** proceed almost surreptitiously with addressing issues of poverty and development without the encumbrance of the state. (Mukandawire)

DEMOCRACY CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

- **Free and fair elections**
- Need for various sources of verification and, in particular, an independent electoral oversight body.
- **Power & primitive wealth creation/accumulation**
- Off-shore accounts: Political power and personal wealth. It is in very few African countries where one could become wealthy independently of political power. This needs to change in order to enable not only economic growth in the short term, but to also enable economic development in the long term. Secure property rights were identified as a prerequisite for economic growth.

CONTINUATION ON CHALLENGES

- **INDEPENDENT POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

The great importance of independent institutions, with a focus on the judiciary, The independence of crucial institutions was threatened by several factors, such financial dependence and the fact that their heads are often appointed by the executive. Independent, strong institutions are key to a successful democracy, or, in the words of Barack Obama, “it is time Africa replaced the culture of strong man, with the culture of strong institutions.”

- **Parliamentary Majorities**

“Until African political systems become less majoritarian and do a better job of protecting the rights and interests of minorities, the true benefits of democratic government are unlikely to be realised.”

CONTINUATION ON CHALLENGES

- **RISING REPRESSION, MILITARIZATION OF POLITICS, & THE MILITARY IN POLITICS**

In recent times high levels of repression have been witnessed across much of the continent. These include the [arrest of opposition leader, Kizza Besigye](#), as he campaigned against his defeat in the 2016 presidential election in Uganda.

- In Kenya there were a high number of human rights violations when security forces [cracked down on opposition protests](#) during the election.

CONTINUATION ON CHALLENGES

- **POLITICAL EXCLUSION**

Other forms of political exclusion are also prevalent. [Rwanda leads the world](#) on female legislative representation while Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda also [perform well on this metric](#).

But very few women are ever elected in the continent's largest states such as a Angola, Nigeria and the DRC.

- **Corruption**

Corruption in all its forms still rears its ugly head in most African countries from the north to the south.

CONTINUATION ON CHALLENGES

- **RISING INEQUALITY**

In many states, political exclusion has gone hand in hand with rising **economic inequality**. As a result the relative poverty – **the gap between the rich and the poor – is growing**. This is despite the fact that the level of absolute poverty has fallen in a number of countries.

CONTINUATION ON CHALLENGES

- **ABSENT POLITICAL REPRESENTATION**

- And with so few checks and balances on the exercise of power, it is unsurprising that minorities and opposition groups get such a raw deal.
- Of course, this is not to say that political inclusion is a cure-all: there are many established democracies with less exclusive political arrangements that have failed to reduce economic inequality.
- But until African political systems become less majoritarian and do a better job of protecting the rights and interests of minorities, the true benefits of democratic government are unlikely to be realised.

5 GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES FOR AFRICA

- **1. Dismal state of press freedom**
- **2. Proliferation of restrictive laws**
to eliminate opposition, to restrict the fundamental rights of citizens.
- **3. Entrenched leaders and the abuse of term limits**
- **4. Weak regional human rights mechanisms**
- **5. LACK OF economic competitiveness**

FUTURE PROSPECTS OF DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

- The future is uncertain.
- As poverty bites harder: The back is against the wall.
- Revitalized civil society: People power.
- The international political economy



THE END

- **DISCUSSION & FURTHER QUESTIONS**
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