

COMOROS

Polity5 regime codes:

fac	scode	polity	pers	bmon	bday	byear	emon	eday	eyear	exec	exconst	polcomp
0a	COM	4	0	7	6	1975	8	3	1975	7	5	5
0b	COM	-5	3	8	4	1975	9	30	1978	3	1	5
0c	COM	0	4	10	1	1978	10	23	1982	3	5	4
0d	COM	-3	2	10	24	1982	9	29	1984	3	3	5
0e	COM	-9	5	9	30	1984	3	20	1990	3	1	1
1X	COM	4	5	3	21	1990	9	15	1995	7	5	6
1Xa	COM	-77	0	9	16	1995	3	24	1996	-77	-77	-77
1Xb	COM	4	3	3	25	1996	4	29	1999	7	5	6
1Xc	COM	-2	1	4	30	1999	8	25	2000	4	1	7
1Xd	COM	-1	1	8	26	2000	12	23	2001	4	2	7
1O	COM	0	0	12	24	2001	1	19	2002	4	2	9
1Oa	COM	4	2	1	20	2002	4	24	2004	5	5	9
1Ob	COM	6	2	4	25	2004	5	25	2006	5	7	9
1Oc	COM	9	12	5	26	2006	4	12	2018	8	7	9
1Od	COM	6	0	4	13	2018	7	29	2018	8	5	8
1Oe	COM	-3	0	7	30	2018	99	99	9999	4	3	3

PITF Problem Events:

- 1) 08/75-08/75 (ARC 08/75)
- 2) 10/82-09/84 (ARC 10/82-09/84)
- 3) 09/95-04/99 (ARC 09/95-03/96; ARC 04/99)
- 4) 04/18-07/18 (ARC 04/18-07/18)

0a) July 6, 1975 (independence) – Following a popular referendum on independence held in December 1974, the Chamber of Deputies voted and declared independence for the Comoros on July 6, 1975. The Chamber, elected in July 1972, transformed itself into a National Assembly and selected the leader of the majority *Oudzima* party, Ahmed Abdallah, as prime minister on July 24.

0b) August 4, 1975 (coup) –

Adverse Regime Change: August 1975

On August 3, 1975, twenty-eight days after its declaration of independence, a coalition of six political parties known as the United National Front overthrew the Abdallah government, with the aid of foreign mercenaries. A National Executive Council was established on August 10, led by Prince Said Mohammed Jaffar. On January 3, 1976, the Council selected Ali Soilih to replace Jaffar. The government of Ali Soilih was deposed by a coup on May 12, 1978, and replaced by a Political-Military Directorate.

0c) October 1, 1978 (new constitution) – A federal constitution was approved by popular referendum on October 1, 1978. The initial presidential election was held on October 22 with Ahmed Abdallah elected unopposed after Mohammed Ahmed withdrew in his favor. Elections to the Federal Assembly were held in December 1978 with all candidates running as independents.

Adverse Regime Change: October 1982 – September 1984

0d) October 24, 1982 (constitutional amendments) – Amendments to the 1978 constitution were adopted by the Federal Assembly and the island councils that increased the powers of the president, notably reducing island autonomy.

0e) September 30, 1984 (presidential election) – President Abdallah, the candidate of the re-constituted *Oudzima* party, ran unopposed in presidential elections held on September 30, 1984, marking his consolidation of a one-party state.

1X) Date of Change to Factional-Democratic: March 21, 1990 (presidential election)

Brief Explanation of Change To:

After numerous failed coup attempts, President Soilih was ousted in May 1978 by a group of 50 mercenaries under the command of French citizen, Colonel Bob Denard. With the support of Denard, Abdallah returned to power and established a one-party state. President Abdallah ruled the Comoros in an autocratic manner until November 1989 when he was killed by six members of his own Presidential Guard. This assassination was reportedly carried out under the orders of Col. Denard, who was subsequently deported to South Africa. Said Mohamed Djohar was sworn in for a six-year term on March 20 the first free presidential elections in Comoros since independence in 1975. Djohar was a former President of the Supreme Court and had served as interim President since the assassination of President Ahmed Abdallah Abderrahman in November 1989.

Identify Main Factions:

The chronic instability that has come to define politics in the Comoros since independence is driven by deep personal, clan and inter-island rivalries. Following the return to multiparty politics, as many as 24 parties were participating in legislative elections. The fluidity and volatility of politic competition was exploited by a French national, Col. Denard, who became a power broker in the contentious politics dominated by the rival groups on the main island of Grande Comore. Much of the rivalry was related to competing perspectives on the nature of Comoros' relationship with its former colonial power, France.

- *Union comorienne pour le progrès (Udzima)* — ruling and sole legal party under President Abdallah; it supported Said Mohamed Djohar in the 1990 presidential election but withdrew its support soon after (November 1991).
- *Union nationale pour la démocratie aux Comores (UNDC)* — party led by Mohammed Taki Abdoukarim, who returned from exile and lost the 1990 presidential election to Djohar. Taki was an “Islamic traditionalist” who favored closer ties to France.
- *Supporters of independent, nationalist President Djohar.*
- *Political interests on the “other islands” of Anjouan and Moheli* — political intrigues on Grande Comore led to increasing demands for secession by the other islands; Anjouan had even sought a return to its former status as a French overseas territory.

Changes within Factional Period:

1Xa) September 16, 1995 (failed coup attempt) –

Adverse Regime Change (collapse of central authority): September 1995 – March 1996

Foreign mercenaries led by Col. Denard and disaffected Comorian troops overthrew the elected government of President Djohar. French troops intervened and toppled the coup leaders; however, rival governments were named by President Djohar, who remained in exile, and Prime Minister Caabi el Yachroutou, who declared himself “interim president.” French forces

pressured reconciliation between the rivals and the scheduling of new presidential elections for March 1996.

1Xb) March 25, 1996 (restricted presidential elections/inauguration) – Taki Abdoukarim, candidate of the UNDC, was elected president on March 16, 1996. The top two voter-getters in the election both enjoyed French support and easily defeated 13 other candidates; former President Djohar was barred from the election. Taki emerged as the winner in the run off election with nearly 75% of the vote and was inaugurated on March 25. The islands of Anjouan and Moheli declared their intent to secede in August 1997, prompting President Taki to order the army to intervene. The forceful intervention failed. President Taki died unexpectedly on November 6, 1998, and Majiddine Ben Said Massonde was appointed Interim President.

1Xc) April 30, 1999 (coup) –

Adverse Regime Change: April 1999

Army Chief of Staff Col. Assoumani Azzali leads April 30, 1999, bloodless coup that dissolved constitution and government; Col. Assoumani claimed that popular dissent against an autonomy agreement with the breakaway islands of Anjouan and Moheli was threatening to plunge the country into chaos. The promised transition to new elections based on the Antananarivo (autonomy) agreement does not materialize.

1Xd) August 26, 2000 (agreement reached) – After a series of talks held in Fomboni (the capital of the Comoran island of Moheli), on August 26, 2000, the Comoran military government and leaders of the secessionist island of Anjouan reached agreement on the foundation of a new decentralised Comoran state. The Fomboni declaration was codified and signed on February 17, 2001. It called for the promulgation of a new constitution by January 1, 2002, followed by the formation of a transitional government charged with implementing the new decentralized regime.

1O) Date of Change from Factional-Autocratic: December 24, 2001 (new constitution)

Brief Explanation of Change From:

A constitutional referendum was held on Dec. 23, 2001. The constitution was approved; it provided for the creation of a new federation, the Comoros Union, and granted greater autonomy to the island administrations of Grande Comore, Anjouan, and Moheli. The constitution also provided for a rotating presidency (Union Presidents would rotate among the three islands; Grande Comore, then, Anjouan, and Moheli) and general elections to be held before the end of March 2002.

Changes within Democratic-Consolidation Period:

1Oa) January 20, 2002 (executive-guided transitional government) – The military ruler, Col. Assoumani, signed a decree forming a new government of national unity, composed of members of the current government, the opposition, and the authority of the autonomous island of Anjouan. Assoumani was elected president of the Comoros Union in an April 2002 election that was boycotted by the opposition. In May 2002, Abdou Soule Elbak was elected president of the island of Grande Comore, setting up rival federal and union administrations on the island.

1Ob) April 25, 2004 (legislative elections) – Elections to the Federal Assembly were held on April 18 and April 25. Supporters of the island administrations gained a majority of seats in the union legislature, dealing a defeat to Union President Assoumani and increasing legislative independence.

1Oc) May 26, 2006 (presidential inauguration) – Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi was elected Union President in May 14, 2006, elections on the island of Anjouan, which was slated to gain the rotating presidency following Grande Comore. Union President Assoumani, who had originally gained power in a 1999 military coup, transferred executive office to the newly elected Union President on May 26, 2006.

1Od) April 13, 2018 (president suspends judicial review) – On April 12, 2018, President Azali Assoumani suspended the Constitutional Court due to its "incompetence."

Adverse Regime Change: April 2018 – July 2018

On April 12, 2018, President Azali Assoumani suspended the Constitutional Court due to its "incompetence." A constitutional referendum, boycotted by the opposition and held amid a crackdown on dissent and a general strike, was approved on July 30, 2018; the provisions ended Comoros power-sharing arrangement symbolized by the rotating presidency among its three main islands, effectively removed presidential term limits, granted the president authority to remove political constraints, and replaced a clause on secularism with a statement confirming Islam as the "religion of state."

1Oe) July 30, 2018 (power-sharing agreement abrogated) – President Azali Assoumani pushed through constitutional changes by referendum on July 30, 2018, despite broad opposition; the vote was boycotted by the opposition and held amid a crackdown on dissent and a general strike. The provisions ended Comoros power-sharing arrangement among its three main islands and declared the Comoros to be an Islamic State.