

CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

Polity5 regime codes:

fac	scode	polity	pers	Bmon	bday	byear	emon	eday	eyear	exec	exconst	polcomp
1X	CON	3	3	8	15	1960	8	15	1963	7	4	6
1O	CON	-88	0	8	16	1963	12	8	1963	-88	-88	-88
1Oa	CON	-7	15	12	9	1963	2	5	1979	3	3	1
1Ob	CON	-8	12	2	6	1979	3	10	1991	3	2	1
1Oc	CON	-88	1	3	11	1991	3	15	1992	-88	-88	-88
2X	CON	5	6	3	16	1992	10	15	1997	8	5	6
2O	CON	-6	4	10	16	1997	9	1	2001	4	1	2
2Oa	CON	-5	1	9	2	2001	8	9	2002	5	1	3
2Ob	CON	-4	16	8	10	2002	99	99	9999	5	2	3

PITF Problem Events:

- 1) 08/63-12/63 (ARC 08/63-12/63)
- 2) 06/97-12/99 (REV 06/97-12/99; ARC 10/97)

1X) Date of Change to Factional-Democratic: August 15, 1960 (independence)

Brief Explanation of Change To:

Congo was a semi-autonomous republic prior to gaining independence from France on August 15, 1960. Abbe Fulbert Youlou, a member of the Lari ethnic group, was originally elected president in November 1959. President Youlou was re-elected on March 26, 1961, running unopposed; his candidacy was supported by all main parties. The apparent unanimous support for the president belied deep divisions in society over economic policy and the country's future course. On April 13, 1963, legislation was enacted to establish a *laissez-faire*, one-party system. Opposition mounted, especially among labor unions, and on August 8, 1963, a ban on all party meetings was imposed until the new one-party system was formally established.

Identify Main Factions:

The core division in the Congo is regional in nature between the ethnic tribes of the densely populated south and the smaller tribes of the sparsely populated north. However, tribal divisions within each region have also been politicized by the political elite within this country and have contributed to the social instability of the Congo. Politics were sharply divided by opposing views on the establishment of a one-party system: one group favored a guided *laissez-faire* system and the other favored a centrally-planned economy.

1O) Date of Change from Factional-Democratic: August 16, 1963 (military coup)

Brief Explanation of Change From:

Opposition to the Youlou one-party initiative culminated in Youlou's forced resignation on August 15, 1963, and the establishment of a provisional government under Prime Minister Alphonse Massamba-Debat.

Adverse Regime Change: August 1963 – December 1963

Fragile democracy is weakened by ethnic and labor tensions. The military forced President Youlou to resign on 15 August 1963 and an interim government is established to oversee a popular referendum that approves a new constitution creating a one-party Marxist-Leninist state.

Changes within Autocratic-Consolidation Period:

10a) December 9, 1963 (new constitution) – A new constitution establishing a one-party, presidential state was approved in a national referendum on Dec. 8, 1963. Alphonse Massamba-Débat was elected president as the sole candidate, representing the newly formed National Movement of the Revolution. Pascal Lissouba was appointed prime minister.

10b) February 6, 1979 (new leader) – Criticism of the Congolese Workers' Party by President Joachim Yhombi-Opango led to withdrawal of party support and his resignation on February 5, 1979. The party Presidium then turned over executive power to Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso, who had been in control of the security apparatus since 1974 and was considered a staunchly pro-Soviet Marxist.

10c) March 11, 1991 (transitional government) – Due to increasing popular pressure following the collapse of global socialism, President Sassou-Nguesso convened a national conference of delegates representing both the ruling CWP and opposition groups on February 25, 1991, and charged them with charting the country's future course. On March 11, the conference declared itself sovereign; the announcement was not challenged by the president. Finally, on April 18, 1991, the conference enacted a "fundamental law" suspending the 1979 constitution and calling for multiparty elections within 15 months. André Milongo was named transitional prime minister and an interim legislature, the Higher Council of the Republic, was established. President Sassou-Nguesso retained his post.

2X) Date of Change to Factional-Democratic: March 16, 1992 (new constitution)

Brief Explanation of Change To:

A new constitution establishing a multiparty electoral democracy was approved on March 15, 1992, in a national referendum. National Assembly elections were held in June and July 1992; no party gained a majority of seats. Presidential elections were held in August 1992 and Pascal Lissouba emerged as the victor in a run off with Bernard Kolelas (both Sassou-Nguesso and Milongo were defeated in the first round). President Lissouba's attempt to form a minority government led by UPADS failed in November 1992. A power-sharing agreement was brokered and a government of "national unity" including the three main parties was formed on December 25, 1992; however, serious contention over new legislative elections held in May 1993 emphatically ended the "unity."

Revolutionary War: June 1997 – December 1999

Civil war erupts in June amid heavy pre-election tension when President Lissouba's army attacks the residence of former dictator Sassou-Nguesso. Rebels, backed by Angolan troops, take Brazzaville by force. Fighting breaks out again in September 1998 and continues through September 1999. Pointe Noire Peace Agreement ends fighting in December 1999.

Identify Main Factions:

- *Pan-African Union for Social Democracy* — Party led by President Pascal Lissouba; the president's regional base is found in the southern areas of Niari, Lekoumou and Bouenza, where his support comes primarily from Nibolek and Bembe followers (private militias: "Zoulous" and

“Aubevillois”). While Lissouba originally sought to establish a trans-ethnic coalition in his administration, most Congolese citizens viewed this effort with suspicion.

- *Congolese Labor Party* — former hegemonic party led by Denis Sassou-Nguesso; the former president derives his core support from the Mbochi people of northern Congo (private militia: “Cobras”).

- *Union for Democratic Renewal* — party coalition led by Bernard Kolelas; its political base is also found in the southern half of the country, largely among the Lari people and the tribes of the central Pool region (private militia: “Ninjas”). Kolelas’ political influence is not as strong as his two rivals. More recently, Frederic Bitsangou, alias Pastor Ntoumi, has emerged as a rival leader in the Pool region.

- Lesser factions:

Union for Democracy and the Republic — led by former Prime Minister Andre Milongo.

2O) Date of Change from Factional-Democratic: October 16, 1997 (coup)

Brief Explanation of Change From:

On October 15, 1997, “Cobra” militia loyal to former dictator Sassou-Nguesso took control of the capital, assisted by an air strike by Angolan jets. The rebels also captured Pointe-Noire, backed by a column of Angolan tanks and some 1,000 Angolan troops.

Adverse Regime Change: October 1997

Multiparty democracy ends when Sassou-Nguesso ousts President Lissouba after five months of intense fighting.

Changes within Autocratic-Reform Period:

2Oa) September 2, 2001 (new constitution) – On September 2, the National Transition Council adopted a new constitution, which established a new, elected legislature; the constitution was then approved in a national referendum (boycotted by the opposition) on January 20, 2002.

2Ob) August 10, 2002 (new legislature) – Following legislative elections held in May 2002, a new National Assembly that includes members of some important opposition parties is opened.