

# FREEDOM IN THE WORLD

The Annual Survey  
of Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties

2001-2002

F R E E D O M   H O U S E

# Freedom in the World

# FREEDOM HOUSE

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The findings of the *Comparative Survey of Freedom* and the Map of Freedom include events up to January 1, 2002.

Freedom in the World  
The Annual Survey of  
Political Rights and Civil Liberties  
**2001-2002**

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# Foreword

*Freedom in the World* is an institutional effort by Freedom House to monitor the progress and decline of political rights and civil liberties in 192 nations and 17 related and disputed territories. These year-end reviews of freedom began in 1955, when they were called the *Balance Sheet of Freedom* and, still later, *the Annual Survey of the Progress of Freedom*. This program was expanded in the early 1970s, and has appeared in a more developed context as a yearbook since 1978.

Since 1989, the survey project has been a year-long effort produced by our regional experts, consultants, and human rights specialists. The survey derives its information from a wide range of sources. Most valued of these are the many human rights activists, journalists, editors, and political figures around the world who keep us informed of the human rights situation in their countries.

The survey team is grateful to the considerable advice and input of our *Freedom in the World* advisory board, consisting of Prof. David Becker, Prof. Daniel Brumberg, Dr. Larry Diamond, Prof. Charles Gati, Prof. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, Thomas Lansner, Dr. Seymour Martin Lipset, Prof. Alexander Motyl, Dr. Joshua Muravchik, Dr. Daniel Pipes, and Prof. Arthur Waldron.

Throughout the year, Freedom House personnel regularly conduct fact-finding missions to gain more in-depth knowledge of the vast political transformations affecting our world. During these investigations, we make every effort to meet a cross-section of political parties and associations, human rights monitors, religious figures, representatives of both the private sector and trade union movement, academics, and journalists.

During the past year, Freedom House staff and survey team members traveled to Argentina, Algeria, Belarus, Benin, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, East Timor, Egypt, France, Haiti, Hungary, India, Israel, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Poland, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Thailand, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Yugoslavia. The survey project team also consults a vast array of published source materials, ranging from the reports of other human rights organizations to often rare, regional newspapers and magazines.

Among those responsible for the production of *Freedom in the World* are Linda Stern, copy editor; Mark Wolkenfeld, production coordinator; and Trish Fox, proofreader. The cover was designed by Anne Green.

Principal support for *Freedom in the World* has been generously provided by the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation and the Smith Richardson Foundation.

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#### 4 *Freedom in the World—2001-2002*

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# The 2001-2002 Freedom House Survey of Freedom

## The Democracy Gap    Adrian Karatnycky

### THE THREAT OF MASS TERRORISM

As the year 2001 drew to a close, the international community confronted a widespread terrorist threat emanating from a fanatical global revolutionary movement that claimed its origins in an extremist interpretation of Islam. While one terror base, the Taliban in Afghanistan, was in the process of being eliminated, the international community faced a troubling future in which dispersed political extremists and movements sought to export terror to stable states and to topple politically brittle or weak Middle Eastern states in their effort to foment an international Islamist revolution,

While turmoil beset parts of the Islamic world and threatened the tranquility of the advanced democracies, the year saw modest trends in the further consolidation of young democracies and the deepening of democratic practices in a wide variety of settings. Democracy and market systems appeared resilient in the face of terrorist and extremist challenges. They remained so because of the strength they and their leaders derive from the sense of ownership citizens have in their governments.

At the same time, Islamist terrorism and the popularity of extremist ideas among segments of the international Muslim community posed a serious threat to the spread of political freedom in the Islamic world. This year's survey shows a dramatic gap between the levels of freedom and democracy in the Islamic countries—particularly in their Arabic core—and in the rest of the world.

### THE STATE OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY: 2001

As 2001 drew to a close, the world reached a new watermark in the number and proportion of democratically elected governments, with The Gambia reentering the ranks of electoral democracies. In all, 121 of the world's 192 governments (63 percent) are electoral democracies. While some electoral democracies have poor human rights records, such democracies afford considerable space for political opposition movements; provide opposition parties and viewpoints access to the media; and meet the minimum standard of a relatively fair vote count in conditions of ballot secrecy.

In all, according to this year's *Freedom in the World* survey, there are 85 "Free" countries, in which basic political rights and civil liberties are recognized (representing 2.5 billion people and 40.79 percent of the global population). There are 59 "Partly Free" countries, in which there is limited respect for political rights and civil liberties. These states also suffer from an environment of corruption, weak rule of law, ethnic and religious strife, and often a setting in which a single political party enjoys dominance despite the facade of limited pluralism. Approximately 23.86 percent of the world's population, 1.46 billion persons, lives in such Partly Free societies. There are 2.17 billion people (35.35 percent of the global population) living in 48 "Not Free"

## Freedom in the World—2001-2002

The population of the world as estimated in mid-2001 is 6,130.7 million persons, who reside in 192 sovereign states. The level of political rights and civil liberties as shown comparatively by the Freedom House Survey is:

Free: 2,500.7 million (40.79 percent of the world's population) live in 85 of the states.

Partly Free: 1,462.9 million (23.86 percent of the world's population) live in 59 of the states.

Not Free: 2,167.1 million (35.35 percent of the world's population) live in 48 of the states.

### A Record of the Survey (population in millions)

SURVEY DATE	FREE	PARTLY FREE	NOT FREE	WORLD POPULATION
January '81	1,613.0 (35.90%)	970.9 (21.60%)	1,911.9 (42.50%)	4,495.8
January '83	1,665.4 (36.32%)	918.8 (20.04%)	2,000.2 (43.64%)	4,584.1
January '85	1,671.4 (34.85%)	1,117.4 (23.30%)	2,007.0 (41.85%)	4,795.8
January '87	1,842.5 (37.10%)	1,171.5 (23.60%)	1,949.9 (39.30%)	4,963.9
January '89	1,992.8 (38.86%)	1,027.9 (20.05%)	2,107.3 (41.09%)	5,128.0
January '90	2,034.4 (38.87%)	1,143.7 (21.85%)	2,055.9 (39.28%)	5,234.0
January '91	2,088.2 (39.23%)	1,485.7 (27.91%)	1,748.7 (32.86%)	5,322.6
January '92 (a)	1,359.3 (25.29%)	2,306.6 (42.92%)	1,708.2 (31.79%)	5,374.2
January '93	1,352.2 (24.83%)	2,403.3 (44.11%)	1,690.4 (31.06%)	5,446.0
January '94	1,046.2 (19.00%)	2,224.4 (40.41%)	2,234.6 (40.59%)	5,505.2
January '95	1,119.7 (19.97%)	2,243.4 (40.01%)	2,243.9 (40.02%)	5,607.0
January '96	1,114.5 (19.55%)	2,365.8 (41.49%)	2,221.2 (38.96%)	5,701.5
January '97	1,250.3 (21.67%)	2,260.1 (39.16%)	2,260.6 (39.17%)	5,771.0
January '98	1,266.0 (21.71%)	2,281.9 (39.12%)	2,284.6 (39.17%)	5,832.5
January '99 (b)	2,354.0 (39.84%)	1,570.6 (26.59%)	1,984.1 (33.58%)	5,908.7
January 2000	2,324.9 (38.90%)	1,529.0 (25.58%)	2,122.4 (35.51%)	5,976.3
January 2001	2,465.2 (40.69%)	1,435.8 (23.70%)	2,157.5 (35.61%)	6,058.5
January 2002	2,500.7 (40.79%)	1,462.9 (23.86%)	2,167.1 (35.35%)	6,130.7

(a) The large shift in the population figure between 1991 and 1992 is due to India's change from Free to Partly Free.

(b) The large shift in the population figure between 1998 and 1999 is due to India's change from Partly Free to Free.

countries, where basic political rights are absent and basic civil liberties are widely and systematically denied.

### COUNTRY TRENDS

The year's trends yielded mixed results, with 16 countries registering significant gains in freedom and 17 registering setbacks for political rights and civil liberties.

Among the countries making important gains in freedom was Peru, which reentered the ranks of Free countries after open democratic elections that saw the victory of Alejandro Toledo. Peru's democratic gains came after a period of terrorism, instability, and corrupt authoritarian rule by former President Alberto Fujimori. The Gambia's status improved from Not Free to Partly Free after the government lifted a controversial decree barring opponents from political activity in advance of nationwide elections. Mauritania registered gains and saw its status improve from Not Free to Partly Free as a consequence of local and national parliamentary elections. Additional advances for freedom were registered in Albania, Bahrain, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, East Timor, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, and Yugoslavia.

Among 17 states suffering significant setbacks to freedom was Trinidad and Tobago, which declined from Free to Partly Free as the country's parliamentary system broke down amid a disputed national election and growing corruption. Argentina slipped



from Free to Partly Free due to the resignation of an elected president, growing evidence of a lack of professionalism in the judiciary, and significant increases in public insecurity, including common crime, police misconduct, and organized civil disobedience arising from a mounting economic crisis. Liberia saw its status decline to Not Free as a result of persistent repression of political opponents. Under the authoritarian leadership of President Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe entered the ranks of Not Free countries amid widespread violence against the opposition, civil society, and the independent media, and as the government acted to reduce the independence of the judiciary. Additional substantial declines in freedom occurred in Belize, Benin, the Central African Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Haiti, Jamaica, Jordan, Macedonia, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, and Yemen.

At the end of 2001, there were 121 electoral democracies among the world's 192 states (63 percent). The 1987-88 survey had found that just 66 of 164 countries (40 percent) were electoral democracies. In short, the number of new democratically elected governments has increased by 55 over the space of 14 years, an average of nearly 4 per year. This gradual, sustained expansion of electoral democracy has helped to create a framework for improvements in basic human rights worldwide.

#### REGIONAL PATTERNS

Democracy and freedom are the dominant trends in Western and East-Central Europe, in the Americas, and increasingly in the Asia-Pacific region. In the former Soviet Union, the picture remains mixed, with progress toward freedom stalled and a number of countries consolidating into dictatorships. In Africa, too, Free societies and electoral democracies remain a distinct minority. There are no true democracies or Free countries within the Arab world, and there is a low proportion of Free and democratic Muslim states.

Of the 53 countries in Africa, 9 are Free (17 percent), 25 are Partly Free (47 percent), and 19 are Not Free (36 percent). Only 20 African countries (38 percent) are electoral democracies. Generally, the region continued to be the most dynamic part of the world, but there was little evidence of forward momentum toward greater openness. This year, 7 African states registered gains for freedom, while 9 suffered significant setbacks.

In Asia, 18 of the region's 39 countries are Free (46 percent), 10 are Partly Free (26 percent), and 11 are Not Free (28 percent). Despite the looming presence of Communist China and the rhetoric of "Asian values," 24 (62 percent) of the region's polities are electoral democracies.

In East-Central Europe and the former U.S.S.R., there is now evidence of a deepening chasm. In Central Europe and parts of Eastern Europe, including the Baltic states,

#### The Global Trend

	Free	Partly Free	Not Free
1991-1992	76	65	42
1996-1997	79	59	53
2001-2002	85	59	48

#### Tracking Democracy

	Number of Democracies
1991-1992	91
1996-1997	118
2001-2002	121

democracy and freedom prevail; in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), however, progress toward the emergence of open societies has stalled or failed. Overall, 19 of the 27 post-Communist countries of East-Central Europe and the CIS are electoral democracies (70 percent). In addition, 11 of the region's states are Free (41 percent), 10 are Partly Free (37 percent), and 6 are Not Free (22 percent). Of the 12 non-Baltic former Soviet republics, 6 countries are Partly Free, 6 are Not Free, and none are Free. Stagnation and reversals for freedom characterized virtually all the non-Baltic Soviet states.

Western Europe remains the preserve of Free countries and democracies, with all 24 states both free and democratic.

Among the 35 countries in the Americas, 32 are electoral democracies (91 percent). In addition, 22 states are rated as Free (63 percent), 11 are Partly Free (31 percent), and 2—Cuba and Haiti—are Not Free (6 percent).

In the 14 Middle Eastern countries (excluding those in North Africa), the roots of democracy and freedom are weakest. In this region there is only one Free country, Israel (7 percent); there are three Partly Free states—Jordan, Kuwait, and Turkey (21 percent)—and ten countries that are Not Free (71 percent). Israel and Turkey are the region's only electoral democracies (14 percent).

#### FREEDOM AND THE ISLAMIC WORLD: THE DEMOCRACY GAP

Since the early 1970s, when the third major historical wave of democratization began, the Islamic world—and, in particular, its Arabic core—has seen little significant evidence of improvements in political openness, respect for human rights, and transparency. Indeed, the democracy gap between the Islamic world and the rest of the world is dramatic. Of the 192 countries in the world today, 121 are electoral democracies; but in countries with an Islamic majority, only 11 of 47 have democratically elected governments, or 23 percent. In the non-Islamic world, there are 110 electoral democracies out of 145 states, over 75 percent. This means that a non-Islamic state is nearly three times more likely to be democratic than an Islamic state. There are no electoral democracies among the 16 Arabic states of the Middle East and North Africa.

While presidential and parliamentary democracies and constitutional monarchies are the norm in almost four out of five of the world's non-Islamic states, in countries with a majority Islamic population there are ten presidential-parliamentary democracies and one parliamentary democracy. At the same time, within the Islamic world there are nine countries with authoritarian presidencies, there are seven with dominant party states in which opposition parties are nominal, there are six with presidential-parliamentary systems with features of authoritarian rule, there are nine traditional monar-

#### The 10 Worst-Rated Countries

**Afghanistan**  
**Burma**  
**Cuba**  
**Iraq**  
**North Korea**  
**Libya**  
**Saudi Arabia**  
**Sudan**  
**Syria**  
**Turkmenistan**

#### The 2 Worst-Rated Disputed Territories

**Chechnya (Russia)**  
**Tibet (China)**

chies, there are three one-party states, there is one military-ruled state, and until November there was one fundamentalist theocracy, Afghanistan under the rule of the Taliban.

### THE FREEDOM GAP

There is an even more dramatic freedom gap between majority Islamic countries and the rest of the world. In countries in which there is an Islamic majority, there is just 1 Free country, Mali, while 18 are rated Partly Free and 28 are Not Free. By contrast, among the non-Islamic countries, 84 are Free, 41 are Partly Free, and 20 are Not Free.

Twenty years ago, there was also one Free country among states with a majority Islamic population, while there were 20 that were Partly Free and 18 Not Free. By contrast, at the close of 1981, the rest of the world registered 50 Free countries (the majority of them in Europe and North America), 31 Partly Free countries, and 42 Not Free countries.

This means that over a 20-year period—which also saw the emergence of 30 new states—the number of Free countries in the non-Islamic world increased by 34, the number of Partly Free states grew by 10, while the number of Not Free countries declined by 22. Over this 20-year time frame, diametrical trends were taking place in the Islamic world. The number of Free countries remained stuck at 1 and the number of Partly Free countries declined by 2, while the number of Not Free countries increased by 10. In other words, while the countries of Latin America, Africa, East-Central Europe, and South and East Asia experienced significant gains for democracy and freedom over the last 20 years, the countries of the Islamic world experienced an equally significant increase in repressive regimes.

These opposite trends have contributed to a growing gap between the Islamic world and the rest of humanity. Indeed, while some posit a clash of civilizations, such a clash is not between the Islamic world and the Judeo-Christian civilization; rather, it is on the one hand between the Islamic world and its Middle Eastern core, and on the other between the nondemocratic Islamic world (in particular its repressive Arabic core) and the rest of the world.

This dichotomy persists in every region in which Islam has a presence. A look at the political map of Africa is revealing. It shows, for example, that among the majority Islamic countries of the African continent, only 1 of the 20 countries is rated Free, 10 are Partly Free, and 9 are Not Free. By contrast, among the non-Islamic countries of Africa, 8 are Free, 14 are Partly Free, and 11 are Not Free. Similarly, 7 of the 20 Muslim African countries are democracies, while 13 of 33 non-Muslim African states have democratically elected governments.

In the non-Islamic countries of East Central Europe and the former USSR, there are 11 Free countries, 9 Partly Free countries, and 1 Not Free country, while among the majority Islamic states in this category, 1 country is rated Partly Free and 5 are Not Free.

A similar dichotomy is revealed in Asia, where there are 18 Free, 7 Partly Free, and 7 Not Free countries among the non-Islamic countries, while among the Asian countries with a majority Islamic population, none is rated Free, 3 are Partly Free, and 4 are Not Free.

The weakness of democratic culture and free market beliefs in many of the majority Islamic states, particularly in the Arabic states, as well as the weak democratic dis-

course within a large part of Islamic civilization contributes to political conflict in multi-denominational settings. In countries like Lebanon, large portions of the Islamic population have been drawn to the appeal and patronage of antidemocratic movements. In Nigeria, a clash has erupted between fundamentalist Islamic forces seeking to impose their version of *sharia* (Islamic prescriptions related to lifestyle and law) in states where Muslims predominate and pursue policies that violate basic rights, in particular the rights of religious minorities and women. In the Philippines, Islamist ideas have raised tensions on the island of Mindanao and posed a serious threat to security. Similarly, Islamism has provoked a war of genocide against the predominantly Christian and animist African population of southern Sudan. In 2001, a new insurgency by the Islamic-Albanian minority contributed to the deterioration of civil liberties in the democratic state of Macedonia. In Indonesia, Islamic fundamentalism has in recent years fed attacks on predominantly Christian Chinese minorities and threatened the country's democratic transition.

While a number of the more repressive Arabic states—Egypt and Saudi Arabia, most notably—have successfully suppressed Islamist political movements, they have at the same time tolerated the spread of radical fundamentalist ideas to other countries. Moreover, such states have permitted—some say encouraged—the proliferation of anti-Western and anti-U.S. views within their media and by Islamic clerics.

In other states, the Islamist threat has proved real. In Algeria, Islamists nearly captured state power, and when they were thwarted in a military coup, proceeded to launch a decade-long war of terror that has claimed more than 100,000 lives. In Kuwait, which has seen a limited devolution of power to an elected parliament, fundamentalists have captured substantial numbers of seats and are seeking to impose their version of *sharia* on Kuwaiti society.

The significant threat posed by Islamism in many predominantly Muslim societies and the absence of democratic practices in many Islamic majority states should not obscure the considerable democratic ferment in the Islamic world. Democratic polities are now found in Albania, Bangladesh, Djibouti, The Gambia, Indonesia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Turkey.

Notably, none of these Islamic democracies has a majority Arab population, and all are found in the Islamic periphery in South and East Asia, on the border of Europe and the Caucasus, and in Northern and Central Africa. Out of the non-Arabic Islamic countries, 11 of 30 countries are electoral democracies, while none of the 17 majority Arabic countries has a democratically elected government. Among the majority Arabic countries, 1, Tunisia, has an authoritarian presidential system; two—Libya and Iraq—are one-party dictatorships; 1, Lebanon, is a presidential-parliamentary system under the foreign influence of Syria; and 4 are states with a dominant ruling party that faces a thwarted and severely circumscribed political opposition (Algeria, Egypt, Syria, and Yemen). The 9 remaining states are monarchies.

Still, recent history shows that Islam is not inherently incompatible with democratic values. Indeed, if we take into account the large Muslim populations of such countries as India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Turkey, and the Islamic populations of North America and Western Europe, the majority of the world's Muslims live under democratically constituted governments.

As significantly, over the last three years, democracy has been restored or has emerged in Albania, Indonesia, and Nigeria. In Islamic Iran, there has been considerable democratic foment, and it is clear, the public is eager to supplant the political domi-

nance of the country's fundamentalist clergy. The Islamic plurality in Bosnia has respected basic democratic norms, and in majority Islamic Kosovo, local elections have confirmed the electoral victory of moderate, pro-democratic secular forces.

#### FACTORS INHIBITING DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

There are, of course, many factors that have contributed to the weakness of democracy and freedom in large parts of the Muslim world. Islam has spread to many of the less developed parts of the world, where education and prosperity have also lagged behind.

Another factor contributing to the democracy gap has been the cultural burden imposed by an interpretation of Islamic faith and tradition that relegates women to a second-class status as worshippers and members of society. The severe limitations placed on women in such countries as Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, and other Persian Gulf states, are grave impediments to their participation in civic life.

A third factor has been the Islamic tradition that merges religion and the state. As Bernard Lewis has written, "In Muslim theory, church and state are not separate or separable institutions... Such familiar pairs of words as lay and ecclesiastical, sacred and profane, spiritual and temporal, and the like have no equivalent in classical Arabic or in other Islamic languages, since the dichotomy they express, deeply rooted in Christendom, was unknown in Islam until comparatively modern times." This is not to say that the distinction does not exist in practice. Indeed, of the 47 Islamic polities, only 2, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, united clerical leadership with the political leadership of the state.

Another factor has been the corrosive power of oil and natural gas reserves. The income derived from these commodities has conferred vast riches on a narrow ruling elite. For decades, such revenue has also meant that many Islamic societies have not needed to focus on building the types of viable entrepreneurial and wealth-creating economic systems that less resource rich countries have employed to build prosperous societies. Instead, they used oil revenues to provide large subventions to their populations, creating a unique form of public welfare that reinforces idleness and suppresses initiative. With oil dividends declining, many Arabic and other oil-rich Islamic states will need to confront harsh choices and take measures that empower individual initiative, build self-sustaining middle classes, and in so doing create a basis for democratic civic life.

Finally, there is the historical legacy. Many of the Arabic states remain narrowly held monarchies, with few features of broader consultation and democratization. The ostentatious economic oligarchies that the monarchies have spawned have created significant resentment within these states and contributed to the appeal of fundamentalist movements.

Many of the remaining Arabic states—Egypt, Iraq, Libya, and Syria—are the heirs to the statist authoritarianism of Arab socialist and secular Ba'athist regimes, whose worldviews and systems of mass mobilization derive from such totalitarian models as fascism and communism. These states have suppressed democratic and fundamentalist Islamist movements alike, and they have not undergone the political reforms that occurred in most of the Communist world.

While it is clear that all these factors have contributed to a singular lack of progress toward democracy and civic activism in most of the Arab world, it is also worth noting that important, though halting and inconsistent, inroads toward democratic reform have been made in several Arabic countries. In Algeria, despite the disruptive influence of

Islamist terror, the public has voted in large numbers—albeit in flawed elections—to signal its disapproval of terror and violence as a path to power.

In Jordan, the monarch has moved prudently to devolve some power to local governments and has established a parliament with limited powers. While there is some space for political parties, civic groups, and unions, the last year saw chaotic protests by radical opponents of a normalization of relations with Israel that resulted in a temporary ban on demonstrations.

Morocco, too, has seen limited relaxation of political restrictions; the king declared in December 2000 his commitment to the establishment of a constitutional democratic monarchy.

In Bahrain, a national referendum in which both men and women voted, overwhelmingly ratified wide-ranging political reforms that may move the country toward constitutional monarchy. These reforms have been accompanied by the return of opposition figures from exile, the rehiring of those dismissed from state jobs for political reasons, and the creation of a commission to investigate allegations of torture and past human rights violations.

Yemen's limited progress toward democratic reform has been set back by President Ali Abdullah Saleh's efforts to increase executive power and extend his term of office, while marginalizing opposition parties.

At the same time, Kuwait's effort to devolve power has come amid a surge of support for fundamentalists, who seek to reduce the already limited rights of women.

In many settings, substantial movement toward democratic practice is inhibited by the presence of fanatical Islamist political forces, which seek to use political space and the ballot to attain power in order to establish authoritarian rule.

At the same time, the fear of Islamism has been used by authoritarian governments in Azerbaijan, Egypt, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan to suppress legitimate secular democratic forces.

The reality in much of the Islamic world is that democratic secular voices are opposed not only by tyrannical regimes, but also by powerful extremist Islamic political forces, some of them supported by the power of the mosque, which often promotes antidemocratic and anti-Western viewpoints.

The lack of progress for political rights and civil liberties in much of the Islamic world should not suggest that the Islamic world is incapable of rapid momentum toward democratic change. If one examined the political map of the world at the beginning of the 1950s, one might have observed the singular absence of democratic governance among countries with Catholic majorities. At that time, authoritarian governments predominated on the Iberian peninsula, in East-Central Europe, in the Philippines, and in most of Latin America. By the 1960s, the attitudes of Catholic clergy and the Catholic hierarchy had begun to shift and the Church was increasingly taking up the causes of the downtrodden and those victimized by oligarchies and tyrannies. These trends reached an apogee under the leadership of Pope John Paul II, who clearly articulated and reinforced trends supporting such values as human rights, freedom of association, the dignity of the worker, and trade union rights.

All this suggests that religion is not an immutable factor in political change. Rather, religious leaders and clergy frequently seek to be responsive to public sentiments. When public sentiment shifts toward democracy, for example, religious leaders tend to be swept up in the popular mood, even as they seek to put forward transcendent values. This is possible

because the great religious traditions are rich in references to the dignity of the individual and are malleable enough to support the project of democratic reform.

Similarly, someone looking at the European political landscape in the late 1980s might have pointed to the fact that the Orthodox Christian states seemed resistant to democratic practice. Now, significant reform has been achieved in such protestant states as Bulgaria, Serbia, and Yugoslavia, and democratically elected governments have become the norm in Russia and Ukraine.

It is not to be discounted that similar trends toward democratic change could occur in the coming decades in the Islamic world. Indeed, in one sense, the Arabic countries share one important characteristic with the vast majority of liberal democracies: they are mono-ethnic states with a majority ethnic group representing more than two-thirds of the population.

#### FREEDOM AND ETHNICITY

Just as there are important regional variations in basic freedoms and political systems, there are also noteworthy distinctions between mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic countries with regard to freedom and democracy. Indeed, democracy is, as a rule, significantly more successful in mono-ethnic societies (that is, societies in which there is a single dominant majority-ethnic group representing more than two-thirds of the population) than in ethnically divided and multiethnic states.

When this year's survey data are examined through the prism of ethnic composition, they offer some revealing findings. For example, of Free countries, 63 (74 percent) have a dominant ethnic majority representing more than two-thirds of the population, while 22 (26 percent) do not. Among Partly Free countries, 24 (41 percent) are mono-ethnic, while 35 (59 percent) are multiethnic or ethnically divided. Additionally, among the Not Free states, there are 27 (56 percent) that are mono-ethnic, while 21 (44 percent) are not. In short, a state with a dominant ethnic group is some three times more likely to be Free than is a multiethnic state.

Similar patterns can be found among the democracies. Of the world's 121 electoral democracies, 79 (65 percent) have a dominant ethnic group and 42 (35 percent) do not. Of the 71 countries that do not have a democratic government, 35 (49 percent) are mono-ethnic and 36 (51 percent) are not.

One reason for this outcome is that in ethnically divided and multiethnic societies, political parties tend to form around ethnic allegiances. This is particularly the case in multiethnic states where ethnic groups are not heterogeneously dispersed throughout the country, but live in specific geographic regions. Many African states fall into this pattern. At the same time, as a rule, in societies where there is a single dominant ethnic group, political mobilization along primarily ethnic lines is less likely and politics tend to divide along the lines of economic and class-based interests. This is the record of the nation-states in much of Western and Central Europe and in most countries in the Americas.

At the same time, it must be said that there are numerous examples of successful multiethnic societies, many of which have a strong tradition of decentralized power, federalism, and protection of ethnic and minority rights, and a strong and vibrant market system open to the participation of a broad range of religious and ethnic communities.

#### WORST OF THE WORST

There are 48 states that are rated Not Free and in which a broad range of freedoms are

systematically denied. Of these, 28 have majority Islamic populations. Among the Not Free countries, 10 states have been given the survey's lowest rating of 7 for political rights and 7 for civil liberties. These worst-rated countries represent a narrow range of systems and cultures. Two—Cuba and North Korea—are one-party Marxist-Leninist regimes. Seven are majority Islamic countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and Turkmenistan). The remaining worst-rated state is Burma, a tightly controlled military dictatorship.

There are two worst-rated territories: Tibet (under Chinese jurisdiction), and Chechnya, where an indigenous-Islamic population is engaged in a brutal guerrilla war for independence from Russia.

#### TERROR AND FREEDOM

The end of the Cold War and the more than quarter-century-long third wave of democratic expansion contributed to the reduction in perceptible threats to peace and security. Analysts of global conflicts have also pointed to additional positive security-related trends: the absolute decline in major conflicts since the beginning of the 1990s and the virtual disappearance of interstate conflict.

Now the world faces the emergence of mass terrorism associated with a universalist revolutionary ideology that seeks to create a *khilafah*, a transnational caliphate, or Islamic regime, governed on the basis of a rigorous and narrow-minded interpretation of Islam. This ideology, which repudiates democracy as an alien Western concept, will pose serious challenges inside established democracies, for new democracies, in countries seeking to reform, and among the world's tyrannies.

In established democracies, efforts to combat terrorism will necessarily require greater intrusiveness by the state in the lives of its citizens, and in particular in the activities of recent immigrants, foreign students, and short-term residents. Yet the deep roots of an independent judiciary in established democracies are likely to ensure that a proper balance between liberty and security is maintained.

In new democracies, weak political institutions will be faced with the challenge of intelligently coping with terrorist threats in the absence of entrenched traditions of respect for civil liberties. In settings just emerging from tyranny, the appeal of authoritarian quick fixes may find added resonance among electorates.

At the same time, there is already ample evidence that the war against terrorism may give already authoritarian regimes a pretext for political repression against opposition groups, whether or not credible links exist to terrorist and extremist movements.

The monstrous terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, which claimed thousands of lives in the United States, are without question a watershed event in international affairs. In the coming years, key foreign policy issues and geopolitical alignments will be seen through the prism of that cataclysm and the comprehensive war on terrorism triggered by the murderous attack on America.

Yet the resurgence of mass terror on U.S. soil seems at immense odds with the great trends of the last decade: the spread of democracy and the decline in major conflicts. With the impressive expansion of democratic regimes in Latin America, the countries of the former Soviet bloc, and parts of Asia and Africa, many envisioned an era of greater international cooperation. Likewise, many saw in the collapse of Communist ideology the disappearance of transnational ideological rivals to democracy and the free market. Clearly, the promise of democracy has not been destroyed by the events of September 11.



Indeed, the triumph of the values of democracy and human rights may well be contributing to the irrational fury of revolutionary millenarians, who seek in a series of dramatic acts of evil to reverse history and supplant the natural human instinct for autonomy and dignity with an esoteric ideology of neo-totalitarian control masked in the language of religion.

#### THE STRUGGLE WITH TERROR

In this context, it would be wrong for the leaders of the democratic community of nations to conclude that the project of promoting the expansion of democracy must be abandoned or suspended in the face of the terrorist and Islamist threat.

Clearly, the proposition that democratic elections are an instant solution to the problems of all struggling societies is inappropriate. There are some societies so deformed and brutalized by decades of repression and terror that the call for immediate elections could lead to the electoral victory of demagogic forces eager to impose their own new forms of tyranny.

However, the project of providing to peoples living in closed societies the benefits of open access to information through uncensored radio and satellite television broadcasting and through initiatives that provide access to books on democracy and economic freedom must be intensified.

In addition, support should be given to countries that are seeking to move away from statism in their economic life and to afford their citizens the opportunity to exercise initiative in economic pursuits.

Finally, the international community should expand its commitments to support pro-democratic civic organizations and civil society in repressive settings.

Such initiatives must not be seen as somehow at odds with the antiterrorist agenda. Rather they should be seen as the mechanisms by which reliable allies of the democratic world and committed opponents of terrorism and ideological extremism are empowered.

As the battle against terrorism and extremism takes shape, it would be wrong to disregard the fundamental progress made over the last quarter century toward more open and democratic systems. For it is the moral appeal of democratic values and the preponderance of strategic power and economic resources in the emerging global community of democratic states that are the most compelling reasons for confidence that the scourge of terrorism will be defeated.

#### WHY THE FUTURE IS WITH FREEDOM

Despite the vexing challenges posed by mass terrorism, there are convincing reasons to hope that the countries that embody the values of freedom and democracy can prevail. This above all is made clear by the overwhelming advantage that free societies enjoy in terms of their share of the world's resources. Free countries account today for \$26.8 trillion of the world's annual gross domestic product (GDP), which represents 86 percent of global economic activity. By contrast, Partly Free countries accounted for \$2.3 trillion in output (7 percent) and Not Free countries produced \$2.2 trillion in economic output, representing 7 percent of the globe's GDP.

These vast material and financial resources are a confirmation of the crucial role played by political freedom and the rule of law in spurring economic progress. Moreover, this vast reserve of the democratic world's economic power suggests that free

countries can prevail in the project of eradicating mass terrorism, of defeating fanatical political movements, and of further expanding the ranks of free and democratic societies.

The prodigious reservoirs of economic power, of technological advantage, and of military potential that belong to the democratic world suggest that there is a greater urgency than ever in building an effective, coordinated international community of democracies, in which the United States plays the leading role. In the current perilous environment, such a cohesive alliance of states can work in tandem to promote more open political and economic systems, while ensuring much-needed foreign aid and investment targeting countries that respect the rule of law and are moving along the democratic path.

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# Freedom in the Age of Terrorism

The following two essays take up critical issues raised by the events of September 11, 2001, and after. Clearly, global terrorism has had a major impact on human freedom around the world. For democratic states, terrorism poses a major challenge as states seek ways to provide security for their citizens, while at the same time protecting the broad array of civil liberties that are basic to free societies. Terrorism also presents serious problems for societies that are in transition from autocracy to some form of democratic or quasi-democratic order. Terrorists can create chaos and make societies ungovernable. On occasion, terrorist acts can provide an excuse for authoritarian rulers to maintain repressive policies or to institute even more brutal regimes.

In *Freedom in the World: 2001-2002*, two authorities on various aspects of the terrorist phenomenon set forth their views on critical aspects of the issue. Daniel Brumberg looks at the Middle East, analyzing the roots of authoritarianism that have contributed in important ways to the rise of Islamic extremism. Brumberg believes that relatively moderate Arab governments have boxed themselves in by creating conditions that, should they embrace democracy, would likely lead to the triumph of Islamic parties that are hostile to democratic rule. Brumberg's essay is a sobering reading for those who believe that democratization represents the golden key that will unlock the solution to the problem of Islamic extremism. John C. Harrison takes up a much different problem: the balancing act between security and civil liberties in a post-September 11 United States. Harrison reminds us that any serious fight against terrorism on the domestic front will entail some loss of civil liberties. The challenge, he says, is to ensure that any reduction in liberty be justified and that, in assessing domestic political conditions, we keep in mind that some changes have accompanied every wartime situation the United States has experienced.

# The Limits of Political Liberalization in the Middle East

Daniel Brumberg

## INTRODUCTION

On October 14, 2001, barely a month after the catastrophes of September 11, Egypt's semi-official press launched a celebration of President Hosni Mubarak's twentieth year in office. The most striking thing about the language used to fete this auspicious occasion was not so much its obsequiousness as its strange antiquity, for the lavish praise that rolled off the presses was fit for a seventeenth-century French monarch. "Your excellency the President," one writer proclaimed, "the people that give you back love in exchange for your love... pledges its support to you... Live for Egypt and Egypt will live through you."<sup>1</sup> Not to be outdone, the pro-regime *Uktober* declared, "God has permitted you [Mubarak] to write pages full of sacrifice, and anyone who is believed beloved by God is also beloved by the people. Victory will remain at the right hand of anyone whom God supports."<sup>2</sup>

It would be easy to dismiss such praise as the predictable fawning of a state-employed intelligentsia, rather than as a sign of the overall sad state of Egypt's politics. Surely, most Egyptians would argue, their country does not resemble a "truly" autocratic Arab regime such as Syria. There, for more than 30 years, the habitual declarations of "Long live Hafez al-Assad" sustained a bankrupt cult of personality whose homages were endlessly repeated but rarely believed.<sup>3</sup> Egyptian politics had certainly not reached this cynical point! After all, Egypt has a cabinet and prime minister, political parties and elections, a reasonably open press, and a judiciary that, despite the heavy hand of the state, has maintained a modicum of independence. By contrast, in February 2001 the Syrian regime arrested secular liberal intellectuals for daring to informally gather in private homes to debate the question of democracy.<sup>4</sup> Could anyone ever imagine such a scenario in Egypt?

Perhaps not. However, when rumors surfaced that President Mubarak had chosen his son Gamal to succeed him, even the proudest of Egyptians wondered if their leader was about to emulate the late Hafez al-Assad, a Levantine autocrat who, despite his commitment to "Baathist socialism," had gone the kingly route by selecting his 31-year-old son Bashar to succeed him. To dispel any such ideas, in June 2000 the Egyptian government arrested Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, together with some 27 of his colleagues who worked for, or were associated with, the Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development, an independent research institute that had intended to monitor the 2000 elections. Accused of many misdeeds, Ibrahim's real crime was that he had offended Mubarak by hinting that Egypt was creating its own version of a presidential monarchy.<sup>5</sup>

While Ibrahim's imprisonment had a chilling effect, Egypt has in fact not gone down the Syrian road. Rather, it has maintained the eclectic blend of autocracy and openness, and centralized rule and hobbled pluralism, that has been the hallmark of many

Arab states. The repressive bureaucratic police state, distinctive variations of which can be found in Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Syria, is an important part of the Arab political landscape. However, such states are outnumbered and out-populated by Arab states whose political systems might be called "liberalized autocracies." These multidimensional, mixed regimes survive not despite, but rather because of, their fettered political openness. By allowing for a measure of political competition and debate whose ultimate boundaries are defined and enforced by the state, they defy the simple logic of full-fledged autocracies, while falling short of the complex requirements of competitive democracy.

Although this essay illuminates the endurance of liberalized autocracies in Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Kuwait, it does not assume that these countries will remain forever stuck in a political purgatory. After all, many of today's fledgling (or struggling) democracies began as *dictablandas* or "white dictatorships." In Russia and Brazil, *glasnost* and *abertura*, respectively, were initiated by regimes as a survival strategy, not as a path to democracy. That said, what distinguishes the Middle East from a good part of the global community is the persistence, durability, and even effectiveness of mixed regimes and the survival strategies that abet them.

What explains the success of liberalized autocracy? Moreover, is there reason to believe that Arab leaders can break with this well-trodden path, one whose political and social horizons have narrowed over the past decade? While there are some glimmers of hope in Morocco, Jordan, Bahrain, and even conflict-ravaged Algeria, it is unlikely that mixed regimes will make a transition to democracy any time soon. This assessment is based on a sociological analysis that attributes the durability of liberalized autocracy not to any unchanging cultural or religious factors, but rather to a well-institutionalized matrix of social, organizational, and ideological forces. In particular, this essay focuses on three issues: first, the constraints and dilemmas created by the patron state; second, the tendency of Arab control systems and the survival strategies that accompany them to produce a weak political society, one that gives *both* regime reformists and moderate oppositions little leverage; three, the persistent challenge of mainstream Islamists. Because they advocate illiberal agendas that threaten the interests of powerful military, ethnic, and professional elites, the engagement of mainstream Islamists in the political process has reinforced the leverage of regime hardliners. Under such conditions, there is little room for forging regime-opposition accommodations or pacts that might facilitate a transition from controlled openings to competitive democracy. Moreover, as the economic stakes have risen, growing pressures for market reforms have exacerbated this polarizing dynamic, thus making it even more difficult for rival political leaders to renegotiate the rules of the game.

That said, the endurance of mixed systems cannot be attributed merely to the wily strategies of ruling autocrats. It is a central contention of this essay that the leaders of Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, and even Egypt have secured a measure of grudging if implicit acceptance from opposition groups. Indeed, *both* secular and mainstream Islamists have forged an implicit power-sharing bargain whose main contours are as follows: governments have given secularists and Islamists the chance to participate in parliaments and key professional associations in return for their tacit commitment not to challenge the hegemony of the ruling party or of the royal family. This implicit power-sharing model may be expanded in the next few years to include Morocco, Bahrain, and quite possibly Qatar.

While such arrangements have secured a measure of pluralism and stability, it is

not clear how long they can be sustained without exacting long-term costs. Because mixed systems do not address the central failure of Arab political systems to create a robust political society in which competing political parties link up with organized constituencies, they have not narrowed the widening gap between regimes and Islamist oppositions. Hence the great dilemma, namely, that the more time goes by, the more substantive democracy is both urgently needed and yet increasingly risky, particularly for regimes that have done little to renegotiate the institutional and ideological parameters of political society. It will take courageous leadership to find a way out of this box, something that appears to be lacking—even among the "new generation" of Arab leaders who have taken the reigns of power in Morocco and Jordan. Outside the Arab world, and in the Islamic Republic of Iran, such leadership has dared to defy a legacy of autocracy. Yet, the important lessons suggested by Iran's recent contentious history have largely been ignored by Arab political activists, particularly those who espouse the notion of an "Islamic democracy."

#### THE LOGIC OF REGIME-OPPOSITION PACTS

Well-institutionalized autocracies are unlikely to commit political suicide. Faced by a crisis of authority, they may try to regain legitimacy by opening up the political field in a measured and controlled manner. Such tactical openings are unlikely to occur, and even less likely to expand, unless ruling elites secure some guarantee from the opposition that further liberalization will not end with the ruling elite's political—much less physical—demise. Hence the logic of political pacts. By giving regime soft-liners and moderate oppositionists sufficient political leverage to overcome the radical forces in their respective camps, pacts make a move from controlled liberalization to competitive democracy more likely.

Some political scientists hold that pacts require a purely rational cost-benefit calculation, rather than a normative system that values democracy for its own sake. In countries that have paid a heavy price for years of regime-opposition conflict, it is argued, democracy can serve as a useful device for creating social peace. Hence the notion that one can have "democracy without democrats." However, even scholars who advocate this "proceduralist" view of democracy admit that pacts cannot be forged or, most of all, sustained, absent certain social, institutional, and even ideological conditions.<sup>6</sup> Some autocracies create the institutional and normative legacies that facilitate regime-opposition accommodations, while others bequeath legacies that narrow or even preclude the space for pacts. Unfortunately, Arab political systems have emerged out of an institutional-social-ideological legacy that has hindered the negotiation of democratic political pacts in a number of ways.

#### FROM RULING BARGAIN TO LIBERALIZED AUTOCRACY

While the autocracies of the Arab world are far from uniform, they are all "patron states" in that their ruling establishments provide subordinate groups economic and social resources in return for the acquiescence of those groups to the hegemony of a ruling party or monarchy. The rentier economies of the Persian Gulf secured this "ruling bargain" by using direct oil rents, whereas populist authoritarian regimes in Egypt, Algeria, and Syria have depended on large public sectors whose import-substituting industries and white-collar bureaucracies offered guaranteed employment and other social benefits in return for the subordination of key opposition elites and groups to autocracy.

During the late eighties, this ruling bargain began to unravel. The reasons for this development were similar to those that had undermined an analogous autocratic pact in Eastern Europe: A profound economic crisis born of the intrinsic inefficiencies of state-led development, a sharp drop in oil income or indirect oil rents, and, after 1990, a rapid fall in the strategic rents from Washington and especially Moscow, all conspired to undermine the ability of Arab autocracies to buy political support.<sup>7</sup> As in the former Soviet Union, the response of many (but not all) reformists was to initiate a mix of Arab variations on *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat led the way in the seventies, while his successor, President Mubarak, perfected the system. Some political parties were allowed to operate, but not to develop grassroots constituencies that might challenge the ruling parties' permanent, even if "elected," majority in the parliament. The press and professional syndicates obtained a measure of pluralism sufficient to allow the regime to play off Islamists and Arab nationalists against liberals, socialists, women's groups, and others, but insufficient to allow any of these groups to force the ruling authority from power through elections and/or mass mobilization via civil society. In the mid-nineties, this amalgam of political liberalization and limited democratization became the norm in Morocco, Jordan, Lebanon, and Kuwait. In 1997, after some five years of civil war, Algeria too opted for a mixed system.

#### MIXED SYSTEMS: SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND THE PARADOX OF SUCCESS

It is tempting to attribute the durability of mixed systems, or the absence of further transitions, to the organizational skills and occasional ruthlessness of ruling elites. However, if one day President Mubarak or King Abdullah II of Jordan lifted the control mechanisms and survival strategies that they or their predecessors had carefully crafted, it is unlikely that a stable democracy would break out. Indeed, mixed systems endure because from the perspective both of rulers and of some mainstream opposition groups, these systems provide a second-best alternative to the black hole of full or uncontrolled democratization.

Why have ruling elites, as well as key social groups that are in theory part of the opposition, concluded that the status quo of controlled political liberalization and minimal democracy is preferable to full democratization? The answer lies in the social, economic, and political legacies of the patron state, and especially in the negative consequences that have ensued from the survival strategies and control mechanisms that rulers have used to deal with these legacies. Four points deserve attention: (1) the dependence of the middle classes on state power; (2) the endurance of patrimonialist authority;<sup>8</sup> (3) the weakness of political society and fragmentation of civil society; and (4) the growing influence of mainstream Islamists. These four factors have helped to mold a rough consensus among ruling autocrats and the non-Islamist opposition regarding the advantages of mixed political systems.

#### DEPENDENT MIDDLE CLASSES

The patron state substituted a relationship of taxation and representation with a relationship of government jobs and minimal (or fake) representation. Through this ruling bargain, the very classes that we often expect to push for democracy, namely the professionals and businessmen of the Arab world, emerged in a subordinate and dependent position to the state. From the vantage point of these groups, their corporate survival hinged on the maintenance of a strong state, at least in the economic and social

realms. Thus in Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, and Morocco, key wings of the intelligentsia have remained wedded to the notion of a strong state. Moreover, even "private" businessmen, many of whom developed privileged linkages to the state, tended to view democracy as a threat to their economic interests. To this day, it is usually only those business groups that have not succumbed to the enticement of state contracts who assail corruption, the lack of transparency, and the absence of democracy. As a result, in Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Kuwait, many businessmen and the organizations that represent them are implicit or sometimes keen defenders of mixed systems.<sup>9</sup>

#### PATRIMONIALISM AND THE ABSENCE OF LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

The legitimacy of the patronage state rested on two supports, the first of which—economic benefits—was slim indeed. Once economic benefits began to run out, particularly in the wake of declining oil prices in the nineties, some Arab states began to rely more heavily on the other implicit or explicit support—Islamic legitimacy. That principle had always been around, in the sense that most Arab education systems have long emphasized a traditional or patrimonialist vision of authority that calls for respecting the leader and subordinating individuals' rights to those of the community. Recourse to religious symbolism in Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan reinforced this vision. Moreover, some of these regimes tolerated and in some cases encouraged Islamist political activism in efforts to deflect calls from liberals and leftists for greater pluralism or democracy. Lost in this manipulative game was any effort by the state to promote the values of liberal democracy.<sup>10</sup>

#### SURVIVAL STRATEGIES AND WEAK POLITICAL SOCIETIES

The failure to promote liberal democratic values, combined with the tolerance or encouragement of Islamists, eventually had the ironic if unintended effect of weakening non-Islamist voices in ways that made for a zero-sum standoff between the state and its Islamist opposition more likely. During the early nineties this polarizing dynamic was evident in Jordan, Kuwait, and Egypt, where Islamists constituted the only coherent parliamentary opposition blocks. Having paid a high cost for such policies, some Arab regimes shifted ground by encouraging both modern and traditional alternatives to the Islamists. Thus, in Jordan the government promoted the powerful tribes as well as nascent women's associations.<sup>11</sup> In Egypt, Mubarak's government promoted independent nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in a bid to counter the Islamists' electoral gains in the ruling councils of the university faculty clubs and some corporatist associations such as the Syndicate of Lawyers and the Syndicate of Doctors. Such shifts, however, were never meant to create a genuinely liberal alternative. Rather, they constituted a key part of an evolving survival strategy, one of whose central goals was to give ruling autocrats maximum room for maneuvering in their efforts to play one group off against the other. This is why survival strategies have worked best in those states that have inherited a measure of ideological and institutional pluralism such as Morocco, Egypt, Kuwait, and Jordan. By contrast, where autocracies failed to allow for even a hint of competition, as in Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, leaders have not had the tools with which to initiate survival strategies and the mixed regimes that sustain such strategies.

Ironically, while such strategies seek to both manipulate and limit the influence of Islamists, they have unwittingly enhanced the Islamists' reach in ways that have ob-



structed a further transition to democracy. This is so because such strategies seek, in the final analysis, to block the growth of political society. This point cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Political control in mixed systems is normally exercised through corporatist and patron-client links, and when the need arises, through the heavy hand of the military or the security establishment. However, such systems function so long as the regime retains space to play one group off against the other. For this purpose, it is vital that the regime prevent the emergence of an independent political society, that is, a sphere in which distinctly political organizations—political parties in particular—develop mass constituencies independently of the state. Note that "political society" must be distinguished from "civil society." Many Arab states do not lack the latter. For example, it is estimated that Morocco has some 50,000 NGOs, and Egypt about half that many. Yet, as many American and international aid organizations have come to realize, civil society groups cannot replace robust political parties. Indeed, in the absence of parties, the proliferation of NGOs can become the unwitting handmaidens of the divide-and-rule strategies pursued by mixed regimes. Thus, while the governments of Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, and Kuwait have tolerated and even promoted the notion of civil society, they have not been keen on the idea of promoting mass political parties. Parties exist, but they are usually little more than instruments of controlled competition.<sup>12</sup>

The encouragement of civic groups in the absence of an effective political society has exacerbated the dilemmas facing mixed regimes. When civic groups try to substitute for parties, they also take on ideological and political roles that undermine their capacity to articulate the professional or social interests of their members. The resulting organizational and ideological fragmentation of civil society in Jordan, Morocco, and Egypt has undercut the influence of human rights organizations, women's groups, and other key bodies that might otherwise play a part in promoting competitive democracy. Moreover, while this debilitating process has accelerated, there has been little comparable fragmentation in the mainstream Islamist camp. This is because with the exception of Tunisia, no Arab state has tried to completely remove Islamists from the political arena. Because they claim to represent religion, and because they operate through mosques and thus have a comparative advantage over their secular competitors, Islamists have been the first to extend their reach into civil society, or into those political parties that have roots in society. Thus, over the last five years Islamists in Morocco, Yemen, Jordan, Kuwait, and Egypt have, to varying degrees, extended their reach by winning positions in the ruling councils of professional syndicates, or by creating political parties or informal groupings that speak in the name of religion. This has resulted in a civil sphere that is both fragmented and increasingly illiberal. As one scholar notes, "The emergence of independent sites of social and political expression within an authoritarian setting is not the same as the emergence of a civil society, at least not in its liberal conception."<sup>13</sup>

The longer this situation has endured, the more Arab leaders have concluded that there is no safe way to exit the circle of autocracy. It is of course true that many of these same leaders helped to build the very box of autocracy that eventually trapped them. However, that paradoxical fact does not change the reality that by the close of the twentieth century, even the most well-meaning reformers discovered that the past had come back to haunt them. Thus while Morocco's new king, Mohammad VI, at first promised a "new concept of authority," he soon fell back on the familiar defense of

mixed regimes, namely "that each country has to have its own specific features of democracy."<sup>14</sup>

#### THE CHALLENGE OF MAINSTREAM ISLAMISM

The durability of mixed systems is partly a consequence of the growing influence of political Islam. By "political Islam," or "Islamism," I am not referring to radical groups that use violence against the state, against non-Muslim minorities (such as Copts in Egypt or Berbers in Algeria), or against secular Muslims. With the possible exception of Algeria (where Islamist terrorists continue to control sections of the country), revolutionary Islamic groups have been largely contained by the state, although at great cost in terms of human and civil rights. The more complicated challenge for Arab regimes has been *mainstream* Islamist groups, that is, precisely those that abjure violence and promise to play by the rules. These groups are as apt to instrumentally use Islam as the regimes with which they contend. Indeed, mainstream Islamists echo the cultural relativism of ruling regimes when they assert that Islam has its own particular "democratic requisites" that set it apart from "Western-style" democracy. Yet while Islamists advocate the principle of *asala*, or cultural authenticity, most of their ideas, including the supposed natural link between Islam and politics, as well as the notion of a comprehensive or total Islamic ideology, were actually influenced by Western notions of mobilizing ideologies developed by nationalist or Marxist ideologues.<sup>15</sup>

That said, contemporary Islamist ideology is not solely a product of the manipulations of Islamist politicians seeking to confront the West by echoing its autocratic ideologies. It is also a consequence of a profound sense of alienation and anomie provoked by rapid modernization and globalization. This debilitating process has helped to shape a profoundly illiberal—if mainstream—Islamism, one that is often openly hostile to Western values, and one that calls for subordinating the rights of the individual to those of the state or the collective.<sup>16</sup> As for liberal Islamism, it exists, but for the most part only as a limited intellectual current. The assertion that an "Islamic *perestroika* has... sprung from the crumbling edifices"<sup>17</sup> of the Muslim world's autocracies is thus overly optimistic. While Islamic liberalism has secured popular support in Iran, Indonesia, and perhaps Turkey, it has not sunk roots in an organized constituency anywhere in the Arab world.

The ubiquity of mainstream illiberal Islamism has had two related consequences. To begin with, from the vantage point of ruling elites, Islamism's growing social and political power has fed the perception that not only will substantive democratization undermine the ruling elite's political and social power, it will also produce a cultural revolution that rulers will have little chance of surviving politically, if not physically. Islamist oppositions, by design or default, undermine the leverage of regime soft-liners who, under less threatening conditions, might back further democratization. Second, Islamists advocate ideologies and programs that encourage groups that might otherwise support pluralist democracy to embrace autocrats, or to subscribe to the limits that autocrats impose on mixed political systems. After all, despite the Islamists' familiar assertion that their community, or *umma*, is intrinsically unified merely because the majority of its members are Muslims, most Islamic polities are ideologically, ethnically, and even religiously heterogenous. They not only contain significant ethnic minorities (Berbers in Algeria and Morocco; Kurds in Iraq, Turkey, and Syria), but they also have important Christian minorities, such as Copts in Egypt, and non-Sunni Muslim minori-

ties such as Shiites in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Moreover, sociologically speaking, "minorities" in the Arab world include groups such as women's associations, traditional or Islamic mystical-Sufi orders, and even nominal or secular Muslims.<sup>18</sup> (In fact, in many Arab states such non-Islamist groups collectively constitute a kind of silent majority, one that is numerically superior but organizationally inferior because it lacks the organic means for mobilization available to Islamists.) Because all of these groups fear the consequences of a majoritarian system that might exclude them—a fear enhanced by the very fact that many Sunni Islamists in Algeria, Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco, and Jordan have embraced democracy as a means of advancing their illiberal agenda—non-Islamist professional or traditional groups are often either grudging or willing allies of military or bureaucratic elites that impose limits on democratization.

This does not mean that non-Islamist democratic activists are hypocrites. In Algeria, secular Muslim intellectuals, Berbers, and women's groups genuinely dislike and often complain about the military's influence over politics. Yet they do not completely contest such dominance by actively pushing for a return to the kind of uncontrolled liberalization that had opened the door to illiberal Islamists in 1991. Similarly, in response to the challenge of illiberal Islamism in the universities and professional syndicates, some prominent leftist professionals and intellectuals in Egypt have taken refuge in state-controlled institutions such as the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies. Further afield, in Kuwait, many Shiite politicians and intellectuals fear the growing power of Sunni Islamism and thus look to the state for a measure of protection.<sup>19</sup> In short, mixed systems are not merely imposed from above: Instead, they have secured a base of ambivalent support in crucial elements of the wider, non-Islamist society.

#### ISLAMISTS AND IMPLICIT POWER SHARING

While it may sound counterintuitive, it is not merely non-Islamist groups that, over time, have implicitly supported mixed systems. Mainstream Islamists in Algeria, Jordan, and Kuwait have done so as well, in large measure because they have concluded that the benefits of political accommodation outweigh the costs. Still, this pragmatic shift did not come about without some resistance. During the late eighties and early to mid-nineties, Islamists in Jordan, Kuwait, and Egypt participated in elections knowing full well that despite their growing popularity, their respective regimes would never allow them to win enough seats to control legislatures. Parliaments were designed to rubber-stamp the wishes of the dominant party or of the monarch, a fact of political life that no regime was willing to change. Whether by passing new elections that undermined Islamist mobilization (Jordan), or by using a well-oiled political machine in combination with limits on party activity and outright fraud (Egypt), or by excluding women from voting while naming nonelected cabinet members to the parliament (as in Kuwait, where most of the 15-member cabinet is made up of members of the royal Sabah family), Arab regimes ensured that their oppositions would see, but never enter, the Promised Land of real political power.<sup>20</sup>

At first, mainstream Islamists in Algeria, Jordan, and Kuwait did everything they could to challenge or disparage such frustrating limits. However, by the mid to late-nineties many Islamist politicians began to evince a readiness to live within the limits imposed by the leaders of mixed systems. This development can partly be attributed to the experience of Algeria. In December 1991, following the country's first competitive national elections, the Islamic Salvation Front, or FIS, was poised to win control of the

legislature. Prior to the poll, the FIS's leaders had done much to stoke the fears of the military and other key groups that once the Islamists secured a majority, they would quickly move to create an Islamic state. Faced, as one liberal Algerian writer told me, "by a choice between Ah Belhadj and General Nezzar," the intelligentsia, women's groups, and other key factions backed the military's January 1992 coup. The cancellation of elections set the stage for a bloody civil war that took some 150,000 lives. By 1997, however, the military had gained the upper hand. Feeling secure, it held elections in which two Islamist parties, the *Mouvement de la Societe pour la Paix* (MSP) and An-Nahda, together took about 28 percent of the seats in parliament. While these two parties were handpicked by the regime, and while it was widely assumed that the elections were not completely free and fair, many party leaders in both the regime and the opposition held that an implicit (if unbalanced) power-sharing arrangement provided a better alternative than a process of unfettered competition that might re-ignite a civil war in which all sides would be losers.<sup>21</sup>

Algeria's experience has apparently taught different regimes different lessons. Egypt, for example, has spurned power sharing by banning all formal Islamists parties and, in the October 2000 elections, by using intimidation and vote rigging to ensure that independent Islamists would not win anywhere close to the number of parliamentary seats that Algeria's Islamists obtained in 1997.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, while in 1990 the president of the recently united Republic of Yemen forged an alliance with Islamists, Ali Abdullah Saleh has since then developed a penchant for hoarding power. Indeed, since the 1997 parliamentary elections, President Saleh has moved against all challengers, whether they be Islamists from the north or Secular Yemenis from the south.<sup>23</sup>

Elsewhere, however, Islamists have concluded that a kind of informal power sharing with the regime and the secularists might offer long-term advantages. Thus while Islamist candidates in Kuwait and Jordan have lost ground since their electoral victories of the early and mid-nineties, and while in contrast to their Algerian counterparts, they do not serve in governmental cabinets, they have maintained a sizeable presence in their respective parliaments, as well as a dominant position in many professional syndicates.<sup>24</sup> As for Morocco, although Islamists were barely represented in the 1997 elections, Morocco's new king probably knows that most urban youth attach little credibility to the seven political parties that currently constitute the "democratic coalition." As a result, it is likely that in the run-up to the 2002 general elections, King Mohammad VI will follow the Algerian example by striking an implicit bargain with the most significant Islamist party, *Al-Adl Wal-Ihssan* (Justice and Charity). The terms of such a bargain will be similar to those that exist in Jordan and Algeria: Justice and Charity will be allowed to run, provided that it follows the path of all Moroccan parties by accepting the regime's effective allocation of a particular percentage of seats *prior* to elections, and by recognizing that the 1996 constitution explicitly gives the king ultimate and total authority over parliament.<sup>25</sup>

In no case have such implicit power-sharing arrangements been secured through the negotiation of a formal political pact that explicitly apportions seats to different ideological, ethnic, or social groups. Lebanon is the only state in the Arab world that has a "consociational democracy" that by dint of tradition and, since the 1994 Taif accord, explicit agreement, divides power in this formal manner. Still, in Jordan, Algeria, and Kuwait, a rough consensus exists over the legitimacy of power-sharing arrangements that place most power in the hands of monarchs or ruling parties. Morocco may

move in this direction, and recent reforms in Qatar and Bahrain may be setting the stage for a similar politics of accommodation.

Yet even if implicit power sharing becomes the prevailing trend, there should be no illusions as to the limitations and drawbacks of regime-opposition ententes. Such arrangements may create a modicum of stability and even confined pluralism. However, because they are based on a fragile accommodation of competing and even antagonistic visions of authority, they cannot create a sustainable basis for legitimacy. For example, secularists and Islamists in Algeria may find ways to get along, but if each fundamentally believes that accommodation is merely a long-term tactic by which to outflank or exclude the other, there can be no real or lasting democratic bargain. Hence the paradox that while survival strategies are designed to circumvent a potentially deadly zero-sum standoff between regimes and oppositions, over time not only do such strategies circumvent the question of legitimacy, but they can also allow for the expansion of Islamist power in ways that reinforce the perception of rulers that a full transition to competitive democracy is dangerous if not deadly. Survival strategies survive at the cost of narrowing the options for reformers who, in theory, may very well wish to move from mixed regimes to full democratization.

#### CONCLUSION: BEYOND HOBbled PLURALISM

In many respects, the atrocities of September 11 brought the above contradictions to the fore. Arab liberals who had long struggled to maintain a measure of integrity and autonomy in mixed systems suddenly found themselves squeezed between regimes that had tolerated or manipulated Islamist parties (or ideas) to contain calls for competitive democracy and a "war on terrorism" being waged through an alliance between the United States and the very regimes that had played such manipulative games. Many Western and even some Arab observers held that the long-term costs of this state of affairs were evident in the growth of a xenophobic and at times openly anti-Semitic ideology that was disseminated in both the opposition and semi-official presses, as well as in the educational systems of some Arab states. The most prescient of these observers also understood what this essay has tried to show; namely, that the obstacles to further democratization in the Arab world are not primarily cultural. The main issue is the state, and the kinds of policies and ideologies it adopts. States shape cultures and values in ways that are not easily abandoned—even after the most well-meaning of political leaders decide that the time has finally come to shift ground.

Such a shift cannot be imposed from outside without being discredited. It is up to Arab democrats to convince their leaders and the wider populace to transcend a hobbled pluralism that sometimes has inadvertently advanced illiberal Islamism. It is not enough to warn governments—as Kuwait's Sheikh Saud al-Sabah has courageously done—that their countries have "been kidnaped by groups that say that they are Islamic, while in point of fact they . . . want to climb over the regime's shoulders and dominate the political process in the name of Islam."<sup>26</sup> What is needed is a new vision of authority, one that makes the state responsible for creating the laws and institutions that give all citizens the right to freely and peacefully adhere to their principles, customs, and religious beliefs, whether those be Islamic, feminist, liberal secularist, or Berber. Only then will Arab states be in a position to move beyond mixed systems towards real competitive democracy.

This lesson might be best applied by those states that are only now embarking on

the process of political liberalization. The two most obvious candidates are Qatar and Bahrain. In 1999 and 2000, respectively, the monarchs of both countries initiated political openings. Bahrain is in fact due to hold parliamentary elections in October 2002, while Qatar will probably hold parliamentary elections to replace its 35-member Consultative Council in 2003. It is not surprising, however, that the ruling monarchs in both countries have thus far opposed the creation of formal political parties. Although it is too early to reach any definitive conclusions, quite possibly the strategic goal of reformists in Qatar and Bahrain is to promote mixed systems as alternatives to competitive democratization.<sup>27</sup> Given the size and wealth of both countries, this strategy may well succeed. However, if it does, ten or twenty years from now success will exact its own costs. A new generation of reformists may then emerge wishing that they were not haunted by a legacy of survival strategies that encourage a controlled form of pluralism rather than a genuine liberalism that is neither Western nor Islamic but is in fact universal.

Iran's reformists also have their regrets, although these are of a somewhat different kind than those of their Arab analogues. In contrast to the Arab, and indeed the wider Islamic, world, Iran was the only Islamic polity to experience a social revolution. Although declared "Islamic" by its founding fathers, that revolution was in no sense purely Islamic. Instead it was based on an amalgam of ideas and values taken as much from the West as from Islamic-Shiite Iran. The dissonant vision was reflected in a coalition of two forces: the clerical right, which claimed that Iran should be ruled strictly by a clerical elite that had the requisite intellectual tools to divine the "true" meaning of the Koran and the Islamic left, which argued that clerical rule had to be linked with, if not subordinated to, a form of populist democracy in which the "masses" expressed their opinions via elections and through the authority of the parliament.<sup>28</sup> The contradictions between these two visions were at first obscured by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's charisma. In the wake of his death in 1989, however, these two camps began to go their opposite ways. This divorce was brought about in part by the clerical right's decision to ban many prominent Islamic leftists from participating in the 1992 parliamentary elections. Accused of lacking the requisite "Islamic" credentials, some Islamic leftists began to rethink fundamental questions, such as the relationship between mosque and state.

One of these revisionists was none other than Mohammad Khatami, who was forced by hardliners to resign his position as Minister of Islamic Guidance in 1993. In the wake of this event, Khatami began to quietly advocate the notion that the very success of the Islamic Republic of Iran now hinged on getting the state out of the business of imposing Islamic dogma. Directed at Iran's disaffected youth, in 1997 this inspiring message eventually carried Khatami in to the presidency. His election was followed in 2000 by parliamentary elections that gave the reformists a clear majority. Nevertheless, to their dismay, Khatami and his allies could not overcome the well-institutionalized power of a clerical elite for whom any talk of distancing mosque and state was tantamount to heresy. Forced to reckon with an institutional and ideological legacy that he had helped to sustain, Khatami tried to appease Ah Khamenei and his allies in the clerical establishment by moderating his calls for political change. By the time of Khatami's reelection in June 2001, the reform movement had been battered by a clerical elite that would not countenance calls for even the most modest of political reforms. Although an accommodation between reformists and conservative clerics may eventually emerge, a major social explosion cannot be ruled out.

While Iran's experience has much to teach the Arab world, the prevailing discourse of most Arab Islamists suggests that such lessons have not been learned, much less recognized. Iran's experience shows that if the state is the ultimate and sole arbiter of what is "truly" Islamic, there can be no religious or political freedom. As Abdolkarim Soroush, one of Iran's leading philosophers (and a former Islamic leftist) has suggested, while Islam and democracy are surely compatible, they are different things and can only be conflated at great peril.<sup>29</sup> Even the most well-meaning quest to join the two by creating an "Islamic democracy" inevitably puts power in the hands of those who wish to limit democracy in the name of Islam. After all, the leaders of Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait have always argued that democracy is acceptable so long as it is rooted in a supposedly common religious or cultural "authenticity." The problem is that the substance of such authenticity can only be defined by the state itself. Arab Islamists who are serious about democracy must grasp what many of their brothers and sisters in Iran now know: While competitive democracies cannot determine the content of a society's religious authenticity, they can create a framework by which free men and women seek out that content for themselves.

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#### NOTES

1. Samir Ragab, *Al-Gumhuriya*, October 14, 2001. See *MEMRI*, The Middle East Media Research Institute, January 17, 2002.
2. "Am Jadid, Lil Tanmiya wa-al Al-Silam" (A New Year for Development and Peace), *Uktober*, October 14, 2001, page 1, lead editorial.
3. Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination, Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).
4. Bassam Haddad, "Business As Usual in Syria?" *MERIP Press Information Note* 68, September 7, 2001.
5. See <http://www.democracy-egypt.org>. Ibrahim was convicted of receiving funding without authorization, disseminating false information abroad, and appropriating money by fraudulent means. His previous efforts to organize a nationwide team of Egyptian election observers also played a role in the regime's efforts to muzzle him.
6. By "proceduralist," I mean an approach to democracy that emphasizes technical issues such as rules and procedures rather than a normative view of democracy which focuses attention on the values or cultural traditions that animate democracy.
7. Daniel Brumberg, "Comparative Reform Strategies in the Arab World" in Rex Brynen and Bahgat Korany (eds.), *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press, 1995), pp. 229-59.

8. By "patrimonialism," I mean a system of rule in which the leader, be he a president or a monarch, bases his authority on the implicit or explicit assumption that the institutions and resources of the state are the patrimony of the leader and his allies in the royal family, or in the oligarchy that constitutes the ruling elite. In monarchies, patrimonialism is explicit; the king rules by virtue of having inherited the throne from a royal lineage. In "neo-patrimonialist" regimes, the traditional bases of the ruler's authority are implicit, since outwardly the regime rules through modern institutions such as elections, the presidency, and parliament. Egypt is a neo-patrimonialist state, Jordan a patrimonialist state. For purposes of this essay I use the term "patrimonialist" in the broader sense of the term to cover both cases.

9. Malak Zaalouk, *Power, Class, and Foreign Capital in Egypt : The Rise of the New Bourgeoisie* (London: Zed Books, 1989).

10. Hisham Sharabi, *Neopatriarchy : A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

11. See Russell Lucas, "Institutions and Regime Survival Strategies: Collective Action and Path Dependence in Jordan," Ph.D. Dissertation, June 1998, Department of Government, Georgetown University.

12. Mustafa Kamil al-Sayyid, Salah Salim Zarnuqah, et al. (eds.), *Al-Ahزاب Wa-al-Tanmiyah fi Al-Watan Al-Arabi* (Political Parties and Development in the Arab World) (Al-Qahirah: Markaz Buhuth wa-Dirasat al-Duwal al-Namiyah; Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1997).

13. Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, "Beyond Democratization: Political Change in the Arab World," *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 17, no. 3 (September 1994) p. 507.

14. Lisa Anderson, "Arab Democracy: Dismal Prospects," *World Policy Journal*, Fall 2002, pp. 55-60. Quote from page 58; originally cited in Roxanne Roberts, "Morocco's King of Hearts," *Washington Post*, June 21, 2000.

15. Abdou Filali-Ansary, "Muslims and Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 10.3 (1999), pp. 18-32. Also see Fatima Mernissi, *Islam and Democracy, Fear of the Modern World*, translated by Mary Jo Lakeland, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1992.) Also see Khaled Abou El Fadl, "Islam and the Theology of Power," *Middle East Report* 221, Winter 2001. Published at: [http://merip.org/mer/mer221/221\\_abu\\_el\\_fadl.html](http://merip.org/mer/mer221/221_abu_el_fadl.html) (accessed February 22, 2002). Fadl gets to the main point when he observes, "In many ways the apologetic response [of contemporary Islamists] was fundamentally centered on power. Its main purpose was not to integrate particular values within Islamic culture, but to empower Islam against its civilizational rival. Muslim apologetics tended to be opportunistic and rather unprincipled, and, in fact, they lent support to the tendency among many intellectuals and activists to give precedence to the logic of pragmatism over any other competing demands. Invoking the logic of necessity or public interest to justify courses of action, at the expense of moral imperatives, became common practice. Effectively, apologists got into the habit of paying homage to the presumed superiority of the Islamic tradition, but marginalized this idealistic image in everyday life."

16. Thus in Kuwait, the *mainstream* Islamic Constitutional Party (ICI), an organization which is represented by independent Islamists in the parliament, has readily advanced



xenophobia by promoting a kind of hate literature. In a publication put out (and widely distributed) by one of the ICI's main allies — the Society for Social Reform— it is argued that the "goal of globalization...is to melt away all doctrines, thoughts and ideas so nothing remains other than repressive, Jewish, Western, materialist thought." See *Al-Awlami Fi Mizan al-Islam* (Globalization in the Scales of Islam), (Kuwait: *Jami'a al-Islah Al-Ijtima'i*, 2001), p. 11.

17. Leonard Binder, *Islamic Liberalism: A Critique of Development Ideologies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

18. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, *Sects, Ethnicity, and Minority Groups in the Arab World (Al-Milal wa Al-Nihal wa Al-Ararak: Humoom Al-Aqaliyat fi Al-Watan Al-Arabi)* (Cairo: Ibn Khaldoun Center for Developmental Studies, Second Edition, 1994). There is no doubt that one reason why Islamists and Arab nationalists refused to support Ibrahim was the attention he gave to the issue of minorities in the Arab world.

19. These observations on Kuwait and Algeria are based in part on my visits to these countries in January 2000 and February 2002, respectively.

20. Marsh Pnpstein-Posusney, "Behind the Ballot Box: Electoral Engineering in the Arab World," *Middle East Report*, Winter 1998, published in <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer209/marsh.htm>

21. For a critical analysis of Algeria's elections since 1995, see Hugh Roberts, "Algeria's Contested Elections," *Middle East Report*, Winter 1998, published on the Web at: <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer2009/alglec.html>. The two semi-official parties, *Rassemblement National Pour la Democratie* (RND) and the National Liberation Front (FLN) took 57 percent of the seats. It is worth noting that Algeria's 1996 constitution bans parties based on religion. The two parties mentioned above skirted that ban by removing the word Islam from their names.

22. Only a handful of independents with ties to the Islamists won seats in Egypt's 2000 parliamentary elections. The National Democratic Party controls 89 percent of the parliament's 444 seats.

23. Stephen Day, "Power-Sharing and Hegemony: A Case Study of The United Republic of Yemen," *Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Government, Georgetown University, July 2001*.

24. Jordan's Islamists boycotted the October 1997 elections. Prior to that they had won 20 out of the 80 seats in the 1993 election. In Kuwait's July 1999 elections, Islamists took 20 out of the 50 seats. After Kuwait's 1993 elections and Kuwait's 1999 poll, Islamists in both countries no longer commanded the largest opposition blocks in their respective parliaments. In the case of Jordan this was not due to their declining influence, but rather to a new election law that favored voting by tribal over religious affiliation.

25. See Abdeslam M. Maghraoui, "Monarchy and Political Reform in Morocco," *Journal of Democracy*, 12.1 (2001) 73-86.

26. See interview with al-Sabah in London *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, October 13, 2001, Report

on an interview with Shaykh Sa'ud Nasir al-Sabah, former Kuwaiti information and oil minister, by Ammar al-Jundi; place and date not given: "Shaykh Sa'ud Nasir al-Sabah to *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*: 'Islamist Groups' Have Kidnaped Kuwait." Translated in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, NES-2001-1016, published October 13, 2001. Article Id: GMP20011016000133

27. Thus in November 2001 Bahrain prosecuted a journalist (Hafedh ash-Shaykh Saleh) on charges of "undermining national unity." Such actions are typical of mixed systems, whose constitutions grant freedom of expression so long as it does not endanger "national" or "Islamic" values or interests, both of which are in the final analysis defined by regimes themselves. For a short synopsis of recent events in the two countries, see "Political Reform in the Gulf Stirring in Qatar and Bahrain," *IISS Strategic Comments*, Volume 7, Issue 1, January 2201.

28. Brumberg, *Reinventing Khomeini: The Struggle for Reform in Iran* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

29. Ibid., 202-13. For more on Soroush see *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush, Translated, Edited, and with a Critical Introduction by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

# War, Terrorism, and Civil Liberties

**John C. Harrison**

Wars have costs. That is, goods must be traded for victory or the chance of victory. To the extent that wars are financed through taxation or borrowing, the cost is distributed among all the goods that money can buy. Often, however, war demands more specific sacrifices, including the sacrifice of the precious good of civil liberty.

War is familiar enough, even to liberal democracies, that most of its costs for liberty are familiar too. Dissent from government policy may obstruct the war effort, and may even be designed to do so; so suppression of dissent becomes more palatable during war. Students of the U.S. Constitution are quite familiar with this tendency, in part because some of the Supreme Court's leading cases on free speech and the press came from World War I. During that war, Congress passed and the administration of President Woodrow Wilson vigorously enforced the Espionage Acts, which banned interference with the war, including criticism of the government. Other familiar costs include greater government secrecy, which interferes with democratic accountability, and a tendency to be even more hostile than usual to marginal groups that may be sympathetic to, or worse yet connected with, the enemy.

War on terrorism, though, is less familiar, at least to Americans. Its costs, and in particular its costs in civil liberty, are therefore also less familiar. Right now, the United States faces threats from people who are highly sophisticated organizationally and technologically, some of who are prepared to die to accomplish their objective. These opponents are able to inflict massive loss of life and vast destruction of property. The costs of allowing them to succeed and the benefits of stopping them are thus enormous. That means that the costs that must reasonably be borne in order to stop them are substantial.

Some of those costs will come in the form of lost liberty. The extent of our liberty depends on the cost of supplying it, and when that cost changes substantially, we can expect that there will be less liberty. With respect to terrorism, the cost of liberty is to a significant extent the risk of terrorism: In some ways more liberty means more terrorism. As the harm from terrorism increases, and along with it the risk that terrorism imposes, liberty will cost more and we can expect to have less of it. This is so, not because liberty has become any less precious or because governments have become any less responsive to the people's demand for it, but because it has become more expensive.

There are at least two particular ways in which the change in risk, and hence the change in cost and benefit, are reflected in the law. First, a sufficiently substantial risk of terrorism, such as the United States may well now face, can lead the government to depart from familiar features of its main tool for dealing with most dangers, the criminal law. This constitutes a move away from deterrence, which is how criminal law mainly influences behavior, and toward prevention of especially dangerous actions through means other than deterrence.

The second issue that arises out of the changed risk profile the United States now confronts is the use of military commissions to try suspected terrorists. That issue is basically about the structure of government and not about the content of the law. The

use of military commissions, like the move away from deterrence, reflects a changed configuration of risk and a resulting change in the trade-off between liberty and safety.

### 1.

There is a fundamental difference between governmental measures to combat terrorism, especially the kind of terrorism the United States now confronts, and ordinary criminal law. Criminal law is largely about deterrence, but counter-terrorism measures are mainly about prevention through means other than deterrence.

In discussing trade-offs concerning serious risks, it is commonplace to observe that people do not take all the precautions they could against even death itself. For example, they climb up on ladders to perform routine household tasks that could be performed some less dangerous way. In similar fashion, ordinary legal rules do not represent all the precautions that could be taken even against homicide. They allow people access to all sorts of dangerous instruments, such as baseball bats.

Some risk of murder is worth running because the cost of eliminating the risk altogether is so high. Criminal punishment for murder goes a long way toward reducing that risk in a pretty cost-effective way, but it is far from perfect. If it were, punishment would never actually happen. Sometimes deterrence fails, and punishment must then be carried out.

Modern terrorism, however, presents different problems. First, the damage that can be inflicted by technologically sophisticated and well-financed terrorists is immense. Preventing 3,000 murders justifies much more severe steps than preventing only one. Second, some terrorists are especially difficult to deter because they will willingly undergo imprisonment and actually welcome death. Suicide bombers are the classic example: A successful operation puts the terrorist beyond earthly punishment. In this respect a war on terrorism, even when waged through the institutions of civilian law enforcement, resembles a real war. In war, the main object is not to deter the enemy but to defeat his forces and, if necessary, physically control his territory.

In preventing rather than deterring terrorism through the ordinary tools available to them, governments generally follow two main strategies. Both are aimed at precursors to acts of terror, and both seek to make those terrorist acts impossible. One involves physical control of access to instrumentalities and targets of terror attacks. It seems desirable these days to make it very difficult for potential terrorists to obtain the kind of explosives that can be hidden in one's shoe, and also to make it very difficult for people with explosives in their shoes to enter public places such as airplanes. The other strategy seeks to keep attacks from happening by identifying the people who are planning to commit them, and putting those people in prison before they can do any serious damage.

Implementations of the first strategy have long been familiar to air travelers and those who visit government buildings in the United States. For years now, in order to get on an airplane or walk into a congressional office building, it has been necessary to pass through a metal detector. Anyone who tries to walk around the detector will be restrained, and any object identified as dangerous by the applicable rules will be confiscated. Physical control of access to especially attractive targets has long been in place. So has physical control of especially dangerous instrumentalities. Fewer of us are likely to have encountered those controls first hand, because few of us even attempt to obtain, say, plutonium. However, even people who have never tried to get into a nuclear fuel storage facility generally know that doing so is difficult, and that the difficulty does not arise simply from the deterrent effect of laws that make it a crime to do so without authorization.

Recent events already have led to more of this, and may well lead to yet more. Access to the U.S. Capitol is already more difficult than it had been, and security at sports events is tighter than ever. In addition, we can be sure that, for example, measures to further restrict access to potential weapons of mass destruction have certainly been put into place.

Although we may not immediately characterize them as such, strategies of physical control are a sacrifice of liberty in a quite fundamental sense. Doing what you like, and in particular going where you want to, *is* liberty. That people generally accept these limitations demonstrates not that there is no serious loss, but that the gain being sought is significantly large, and the connection to prevention of terrorism sufficiently clear.

Physical prevention has weaknesses, one of which comes from the limits of imagination. In order to keep terror from happening it is necessary to have some idea about how it may happen, and sufficiently creative terrorists can get around preventive measures by devising means and identifying targets that had not occurred to anyone before. For that reason among others, putting terrorists in jail before they strike—the second strategy used to prevent terrorist acts—has a lot to be said for it. Without drastic increases in the government's powers of detention, jailing terrorists can be done only through criminal conviction. It is thus sound antiterror policy to identify acts that terrorists, and they alone, engage in, to make those acts crimes, and to detect and punish them.

Sophisticated terrorism generally requires organization and preparation, and so the natural strategy here is to emphasize the traditional legal tools that attack dangerous organizations and preparation for crime. That means first of all the law of conspiracy, which is aimed simultaneously at organization and preparation, and related crimes. It is noteworthy that Congress's first major legislation after September 11 made very few changes in federal criminal law, but did create new conspiracy offenses. That legislation added a conspiracy component to each of several terror crimes, so that they covered not only the offense and attempts to commit it, but also conspiracies to do so.

Conspiracy prosecutions are a powerful and dangerous tool. In the wrong hands, they are a threat. More interesting, however, is the idea that in the right hands they are also a threat. Indeed, a law of conspiracy that is designed and administered so as to strike at sophisticated criminal organizations is also likely to strike at the innocent and the relatively innocent, not out of lack of concern for them, but despite that concern. The virtue of an effective law of conspiracy is also its vice.

A criminal conspiracy is an agreement to engage in criminal activity, normally combined with some overt step furthering the crime. Given good law enforcement investigative capabilities (which of course pose their own threat to liberty), conspiracy prosecutions are quite well suited to a strategy of prevention. It is difficult to carry out a major act of terror without substantial planning and coordination, and that planning and coordination almost always will constitute a conspiracy. Terrorists generally have to conspire before they act, and the more frightful the act they plan, the longer in advance they have to plan. Moreover, the vast bulk of innocent people do not do anything that even resembles terrorist conspiracy.

Not everyone, however, is part of that vast bulk. Some innocent people may well engage in the kind of action that easily could be mistaken for a crime of coordination. Friends, family, and other associates of criminals regularly provide them with places to stay, material support, and other forms of assistance. Sometimes the associates are quite unaware of what is going on; sometimes they have their suspicions but keep those suspicions to themselves; sometimes they are pretty sure that something unlawful is afoot; and some-

times they actively desire to help with the crime. An associate who actively desires to help, and possibly one at a lower level of culpability, is a pretty plausible target of a preventive strategy. Those who genuinely do not know about the criminal plan are not.

Terrorists who plan carefully will plan with the law in mind, just as organized criminals do. Both groups know about the law of conspiracy, and in particular that it is about agreements to act. Hence they create as little evidence as possible of such agreements. Heads of criminal operations order murders by indirection. In turn, governments know that their most dangerous enemies are very careful, and they adjust their rules and procedures in response. A criminal agreement can be proved with evidence far short of signatures on the dotted line, and criminal conduct can be defined in a way that captures disguised coordination. An example of the latter is a provision in the USA Patriot Act, passed by the U.S. Congress, that creates the new offense of knowingly harboring or concealing terrorists. Even someone who does that may not really be a truly dangerous part of the conspiracy, but then again the harbinger might well be the sort of person who should be incarcerated for preventive purposes. In times like the present, legislatures, prosecutors, judges, and juries are likely to err on the side of caution. They will do that not because of any bad motive, but because the stakes are so high.

One approach, then, is for legislators to make behavior that appears to be marginal a crime, realizing that some behavior that then appears to be criminal will in fact be innocent but accepting that as the price of security. Another way of incapacitating terrorists through the criminal law is to make more or less everything a crime and then prosecute those people, but only those people, whom the executive believes to be dangerous.

While establishing a legal code under which everything is a crime may seem like a bizarre step, there are very respectable legal scholars who believe that something close to that is true in the United States. Those commentators maintain that while breathing is not yet illegal, an enormous number of essentially unobjectionable business transactions are federal mail fraud, and more generally that an enormous number of essentially unobjectionable actions violate some federal statute. As a result, they argue, the actual rules as to what is forbidden and what is permitted come not from the statutes but from the prosecutorial policies of the Department of Justice.

This claim actually seems quite plausible, and to the extent that this is not yet true, Congress could fairly easily go a long way toward making it so. For example, Congress could make the already burdensome and labyrinthine rules concerning financial transactions so complex and demanding that everyone who transfers or spends money will have committed an offense. (It is possible that the banking law as modified by the USA Patriot Act already does that; the law is too intricate for a lawyer to answer that question without days of study, which suggests just how serious the possibility is.)

Even prosecutors who are sincerely trying to incapacitate only terrorists will make mistakes in deciding whom to prosecute. Indeed, given the stakes, we can say fairly confidently that an attorney general who prosecuted only terrorists would not be serving the country well. Suppose that after prosecuting everyone who was absolutely, positively a terrorist, the Justice Department had a list of ten people, each of who had a 90 percent likelihood of being extremely dangerous. Someone who is 90 percent likely to attempt a mass murder should be in jail, yet if those ten are all prosecuted and incarcerated, it is more likely than not that at least one innocent person will be locked up.

It is always true that some innocent people will be convicted if the standard for conviction is less than absolute certainty (and if the standard is absolute certainty, then

probably no one will be convicted at all). When the aim of the criminal law is deterrence, the rate of convicting the innocent can be fairly low. Deterrence requires that the rate of convicting the guilty be substantial, but it need not be overwhelmingly high, especially if Penalties are sufficiently severe that they will deter even when discounted by a relatively low likelihood of punishment. Thus a system oriented toward deterrence can be one in which it is better that ten guilty people go free than that one innocent person be punished. Prevention through incapacitation does not work that way, at least not if the harm to be prevented is grave enough. If the benefits of jailing terrorists are enormous, they will justify jailing more nonterrorists.

Moreover, substantive criminal laws and prosecution policies that are aimed at preventing terrorism will inflict a second kind of injury on liberty. Not only will people who engage in innocent conduct go to jail, but people will be deterred from engaging in the kind of innocent conduct that could send them to jail. (Deterrence is unavoidable, whether or not it is the main purpose of a criminal prohibition.) Again, preventing terrorism, rather than just deterring it, entails much loss of liberty. It does so, not because of the dangerous tendencies of governments, but because of the inevitability of error even by governments that are acting in good faith.

## 2.

Talk is cheap, and the explicit protections of liberty found in written constitutions often turn out to be mere parchment barriers, as the American framers often put it. The most reliable, and maybe the only really effective, constitutional rules are those that determine the structure of government. Those rules are in general very hard to depart from, and they have predictable consequences that designers of constitutions can rely on. American political and constitutional history has been shaped far more by the four-year presidential term than by many other more weighty provisions.

Structural protections of civil liberty are therefore of fundamental importance, and recent events have brought to the fore the most basic of those protections: prosecution of crime before an independent judiciary. A first reading of the Constitution suggests that it provides for this quite straightforwardly. Article III grants the judicial power to courts staffed by life-tenured judges, and if anything is the exercise of judicial power, it is the trial of crimes. Such trials, Article III goes on to say, shall be by jury. Juries, coming from the body of the people and blending back into it when they are done, achieve independence through short rather than long tenure, but they too are independent.

Many countries have found their ordinary judicial structure ill-suited to prosecuting terrorists and have resorted to extraordinary measures. Not long after the September 11 attacks, President George W. Bush issued an executive order providing for the trial of terrorists before military commissions. Such commissions need not follow the procedures used in ordinary U.S. federal courts, many of which are dictated by the Constitution, and their judges and juries, members of the military hierarchy, would be the opposite of independent.

As is so often the case in the United States, debate on this possibility has intertwined arguments about desirable policy and arguments about the Constitution. From the standpoint of policy, trying accused terrorists before military commissions reflects a re-weighing of the risk calculation that underlies the ordinary criminal structure and procedure. Military tribunals differ from civilian courts in three main ways. First, they

are composed of military personnel. Second, their existence and the contents of their proceedings can be kept secret from the world at large. Finally, some of the evidence presented to them can be kept secret from the defendants and their counsel.

If the purpose of a criminal justice system is to convict the guilty and acquit the innocent at a reasonable cost, those three features have advantages and disadvantages. Whether they are on balance a good idea depends on the risks associated with those advantages and disadvantages, and the important consideration about terrorism is, as we have seen, that it changes the risk situation.

Military personnel are in an obvious way more closely affiliated with the executive and the legislature than are life-tenured judges and amateur jurors. As a result, they are more likely to respond to the institutional imperatives of the two elected branches as well as the current demands of the voters who do the electing. In times of crisis, those demands may focus more on convicting and punishing someone than on convicting and punishing the right people. However, while that disadvantage is plain enough, one specific virtue of military judges and jurors is that they are more *independent* than civilians in an important way. Because it is easier for the government to protect them, and perhaps because they are in the business of being at personal risk, they are less likely to be intimidated by terrorists. Remember that while politicians and their constituents may be clamoring for the conviction of the innocent, terrorist friends of the terrorist accused will be clamoring for the acquittal of the guilty.

Secrecy, as against the public and the defendant, has advantages that are once again easy to see. Trials of terrorists, including members of terrorist organizations who are not actually guilty of the crimes charged, are magnets for terrorism. Making all the government's evidence available to the defendant runs the risk of exposing intelligence sources and methods, with a variety of negative consequences, including the ultimate negative consequence of death for some informants.

Secrecy also has costs. Criminal proceedings that the public does not know about are a favorite tool of tyrannies, and even largely benevolent governments will be tempted to limit their public accountability by limiting the public knowledge on which it depends. While the public may be confident that the U.S. government is very unlikely to use that secrecy simply to have its enemies shot, the cover of confidentiality can be used for less appalling but still ignoble purposes.

In this context too, the costs of attractive antiterror tools must be paid even when the government is not trying to do anything nefarious. Very likely the president would be happy for the public to know that major terrorists were on trial and would be happy to make public the evidence showing their guilt. Indeed, he would be especially happy for foreign governments and their citizens to see that evidence. As for secrecy from the defendant, a government that is trying to convict the guilty but only the guilty will recognize such secrecy as a handicap. In particular the courts, who are especially charged with that function whether they be military or civilian, will realize that they cannot do their job optimally when the participant with the strongest incentive to challenge the government's evidence is not properly able to do so. Adversary legal systems rest in large part on the power of that incentive. Military commissions have value, but as always that value comes at a price.

In the American legal system, questions of policy often cannot be considered without taking into account constitutional limitations. Military commissions raise hard questions under the Constitution. They have no natural place in the American constitutional



structure. As executive agencies, they should not be exercising judicial power, and the trial of crimes is a central aspect of judicial power. Yet the Supreme Court has approved them in certain circumstances. Whether that approval has much to do with the latest proposed use is an open question.

Although the Court's leading case on this subject, *Ex parte Quirin*, is not easy to interpret, it has a teaching that emerges with a little careful thought. *Quirin* approved the military commission that tried eight members of the German military who landed secretly in the United States, buried their uniforms, and went on a mission of sabotage in civilian dress. The case holds that the ordinary civilian courts, including the Supreme Court itself, have no jurisdiction to interfere with such tribunals. It is best understood in contrast with the precedent on which the German petitioners chiefly relied, *Ex parte Milligan*, which was decided shortly after the Civil War. Milligan, an American citizen resident in Indiana, was alleged to have conspired with Confederate agents. He was charged with treason, tried before a military commission, convicted, and sentenced to be executed. The Supreme Court found that the military commission had no jurisdiction because it could not try a civilian for an ordinary criminal offense when the regular courts were functioning and perfectly capable of conducting trials for treason.

*Quirin* distinguished *Milligan* on the ground that Milligan was not a belligerent, not a member of the enemy forces. Military commissions, *Quirin* explained, are an exercise, not of the normal civil power to keep the peace and punish criminals, but of the power to make war. As such, military commissions apply the law of war, and the offenses they punish are war crimes. *Quirin* and the other German defendants were charged, not with conspiracy to destroy government property or some other civilian criminal offense, but with conducting military operations out of uniform—spying. A few years after that war was over, the Court for similar reasons approved the trial by military commission of General Yamashita of the Japanese Imperial forces. He too was accused of a war crime, that of permitting his troops to inflict atrocities on civilians. Yamashita was not charged with murder for ordering the combat deaths of American soldiers, although of course he had done that too. Those orders were acts of lawful belligerency. They were acts, but not crimes, of war.

This focus on the war power and the law of war fits military commissions into the American constitutional structure, although still a little uncomfortably. In ordinary circumstances the law of war is part of the relationship between belligerents. That relationship has its own rules, the most basic of which is that the use of force is permitted when otherwise it would be forbidden. In addition, *Quirin* and similar cases assume that there is a structural difference. The power to make war includes the power to hold the other side to the law of war.

While the Constitution has no direct indication of this, so that the fit is indeed somewhat uncomfortable, in most wars that discomfort can be limited because the jurisdiction of military commissions is itself intrinsically limited. From the standpoint of the side that is applying the law of war, the limitation derives from the fact that war crimes are themselves an exception to an exception, and hence can be committed only when the primary exception applies. The primary exception, the reason General Yamashita was not guilty of murder, is the rule that excepts acts of lawful belligerence from the ordinary criminal and private law. It is a defense to a charge of murder, or to a civil action for wrongful death, that the defendant and the victim were soldiers and the victim's death was consistent with the rules of civilized warfare. Only deaths not con-

sistent with those rules, for example one inflicted by a soldier out of uniform in enemy territory, fall outside the primary exception and are war crimes.

So under *Quirin*, to convene a military commission is to accord to the enemy the status of a belligerent. Only someone who is at war can violate the law of war, and military commissions apply the law of war, not the civilian law. Ordinary criminals do not have the privileges of belligerents, and the U.S. government is not about to accord them those privileges. The price of subjecting criminals to the law of war and trying them with military commissions would be too high.

A similarly self-limiting logic applies from the standpoint of the side to which the law of war is to be applied. A political organization that plans to use force, whether a state or a great robber band that has taken up politics, ordinarily must decide whether to take on the status of a belligerent. If it does not, its use of force almost always will be subject to criminal prosecution, which is a cost. Prosecution, however, will take place in civilian courts with their many protections for defendants, which is a benefit. Conversely, if the organization decides to act as a belligerent, it receives the benefit of the privilege to use force under the law of war. At the same time, it bears the cost that its members' war crimes, the exception to the exception concerning the use of force, may be prosecuted before military commissions that are not as protective of defendants as civilian courts. The presence of costs and benefits on both sides means that the choice has consequences.

So goes the normal logic of belligerency and the law of war. Some political organizations that use force, however, do not fit in so neatly. Terrorist organizations that are not states and have no ambition to become states, organizations such as Al Qaeda perhaps, have different incentives. In order to take advantage of the privilege of waging lawful war, a political organization must use force through something resembling a conventional military. Military forces must have a command structure, must distinguish themselves from civilians through distinctive dress, must carry their arms openly, and must limit themselves to lawful military targets. This means that they may not attack civilians. Deviations from those norms, like spying, sabotage while in disguise, and attacks on civilians, are war crimes.

Terrorist organizations are distinct from normal military forces in that they have no interest in openly attacking military targets. Their central strategy is one of disguised attack on nonmilitary targets (or unlawful attack on military targets). To put the point more starkly, everything they plan to do would be a war crime if they were subject to the law of war. To them, the privilege of lawful war is valueless, and they have no incentive to purchase it by subjecting themselves to the law of war and in particular to military commissions. They would rather just be criminals.

It is natural to think that no sensible legal system would allow terrorists, of all people, to play a game like this, in which they demand the protection of the rule of law while engaging in what amounts to unlawful warfare. Yet ordinary criminals are entitled to the rule of law, depraved and dangerous though they may be. One reason the U.S. government usually may not make its war on crime literal is that to do so would relax the other side of the law of war's self-limiting logic: Normally, in order to subject a group to the law of war it is necessary to concede to them the privilege to engage in lawful combat.

Groups like Al Qaeda thus do not fit well into the structure that the Supreme Court has found implicit in the Constitution, a structure that sharply separates belligerency with its benefits and burdens from crime with its benefits and burdens. One possible answer is that an organization that does not claim the privilege of warfare must be treated

like a criminal band, even if it is an especially dangerous criminal band and the benefits of applying the law of war are substantial. The main argument in favor of this position is that without the sharp delineation between belligerency and crime, the government will be able to treat any criminal, or at least any dangerous criminal, as an enemy, and thereby subvert the structure of government and the liberty it protects.

While that may be the correct answer under the U.S. Constitution, it is not clearly so. It may be possible to maintain the necessary line between law enforcement and war without relying on the ordinary line between statelike belligerents and criminals. Several substitutes for that line have been proposed. Some may not be promising, but at least one is.

President Bush's executive order authorizes trial by military commission only for persons who are not citizens of the United States. While it is true that the Constitution is more generous to citizens than to noncitizens, it is unlikely that the distinction matters in this context. For one thing, the fundamental objection to military commissions that are not legitimate exercises of the war power is that they depart from the Constitution's structural allocation of authority. They are an attempt by the executive to exercise the judicial power. Unlike the provisions that explicitly protect individual rights, the structural parts of the Constitution make no distinction between citizens and aliens. Congress may not try aliens for offenses before one of its subcommittees any more than the courts may adopt statutes so long as they apply only to noncitizens. Moreover, there is an individual-rights provision that is thought substantially to overlap with the structural separation of executive and judicial power, the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. That clause secures due process of law to all persons, not just citizens, and the fact that it extends to all persons, and in particular aliens, is a well-established feature of constitutional law.

Another possible line involves not people but places. Perhaps military commissions operating outside the United States may exercise authority that only an ordinary court (an Article III court) could exercise in American territory. There is something to this suggestion, but I think not nearly enough to support a broad role for military commissions in trying accused terrorists. Despite indications to the contrary in the Constitution's text, it is now generally accepted that the federal separation of powers does not operate in its normal form in all places. It does not even operate in American territories that are not states, such as Puerto Rico. For many years Congress has provided those territories with courts staffed by judges who do not enjoy the life tenure conferred by Article III of the Constitution.

More to the point here is the long-standing historical practice under which military courts resolve civil disputes and punish crimes in places outside the United States that have been occupied by American forces. The logic of this practice is straightforward enough: Military occupation displaces ordinary civil government, and so it becomes the obligation of the occupiers to perform the basic functions of government, including establishing justice. While sometimes important, this practice does not mean that the federal executive may exercise judicial power as long as the instrumentalities through which it does so operate outside the United States. Rather, it means that when American armed forces administer foreign territory, they may perform judicial functions. Few if any terrorists are likely to operate in American-occupied places (of which there are virtually none right now). They operate in the United States and in foreign countries that are not subject to American military jurisdiction, and do not come within this exception.

Military commissions such as those contemplated by President Bush's order nev-

ertheless may be consistent with the Constitution, because the law of war's scope may not be limited to those who accept and seek to abide by it. Instead, the law of war and hence the war power under the Constitution may extend to some violent organizations that neither seek its privileges nor concede its limitations. Whether it does so is a difficult question about which the Constitution itself offers hardly any guidance and constitutional practice offers precious little. Despite that, the basic rationale of the law of war itself may provide a signpost.

To make out that signpost, we need to think about the principle that the legitimate uses of force in war are much broader than in ordinary civilian law enforcement. While reasonable and even deadly force may be used to make an arrest, simply killing suspected criminals is not permissible. In similar fashion, while the FBI may demand that a fugitive come out with his hands up, it may not demand an unconditional surrender. Suspects who surrender keep all their rights.

Why does that make sense? One leading reason is that war is part of the relations between states, and states pose a special threat to one another precisely because they are political organizations that use force to accomplish their ends. As political organizations, states are concerned not simply with the material gain of their members or leaders, but with the basic rules that structure all interactions; they are about power. That can make their interests antagonistic to those of another state in a fundamental sense. The fact that states use force to sustain their claims means that their clashes of interest are especially dangerous. Combined, these factors make governments special. People who use force for private gain are dangerous but usually not in a basic sense, and non-violent political organizations operate within the structures set by governments.

Many readers will find the natural analogy between states and terrorist organizations somewhat, but only somewhat, persuasive. The sticking point, I think, is a reluctance to come to the conclusion that all terrorists, considered as such, are at war with the states they target and therefore may be subjected to warlike force. Granted that the Red Brigades or the Weather Underground were dangerous, would it have been permissible for law enforcement agencies simply to bomb the places where their members gathered, accepting innocent deaths as the kind of unintended damage that may be inflicted when a legitimate military target is attacked? Many will say no.

If there is a difference between the Weather Underground and Al Qaeda as it is currently known to the public, that difference is one of degree and not kind. Legal rules routinely make such distinctions, and when so much is at stake, it is certainly plausible to say that an especially dangerous political organization in its use of force should be treated like a state for purposes of the war power. To see the value of this argument, we need only counter the hypothetical military attack on the Weather Underground with the very real attacks on Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. If those were justified as such (and not on the rationale that Al Qaeda was indistinguishable from the government of Afghanistan), then at some point military measures may properly be used against terrorism. In turn, if that is so, then probably military commissions may be used to try members of such organizations.

Taking the *Quirin* case as the leading authority assumes that any exception to the ordinary rules of constitutional structure comes from the war power. That is the power with which the United States deals with enemy belligerents and those who are constitutionally in the same category, as members of some terrorist organizations may be. President Bush's executive order, however, is not necessarily limited to war crimes.

That may be because it is not clear whether the acts of terror on September 11 were war crimes even if their perpetrators are legally capable of waging war and hence legally capable of committing a war crime.

Neither *Quirin* nor the war power on which it rests supports trying terrorists for offenses that are not war crimes. Yet the president's order appears to leave open that possibility, and the policy arguments offered in favor of military tribunals, mainly having to do with their greater security and reduced vulnerability to manipulation by defense counsel, certainly are not limited to war crimes. This possibility is important enough to justify some speculation about a possible role for military commissions that goes beyond that contemplated in war crimes cases like *Quirin* and *Yamashita*.

In the post-Civil War case of *Ex Parte Milligan*, the Court's majority assumed that the U.S. Constitution contemplates martial law. The Court did not elaborate much on this because it concluded that Milligan's trial was not pursuant to martial law as the majority conceived it, so it did not have to say much about when martial law applies. The justices seemed to assume that when civil order has broken down so that the ordinary courts are incapable of performing their functions, military rule and military justice may be permissible. That possibility was irrelevant to Milligan's situation, as his alleged crimes and trial took place in Indiana, where, as the Court explained, the state government remained loyal, the authority of the United States was not in practice challenged, and the ordinary civil courts continued to function.

From these hints, one could assemble another implicit exception to the Constitution's structure, one that allows the armed forces, which is to say the executive, to provide justice and punish crimes when order has so collapsed that the normal courts cannot operate. Indeed, an inability of the regular courts to maintain order because they are resisted by force too great for them triggers the president's power to restore tranquility with the army and the militia under statutes that date back to the first Washington administration. (Those statutes are sometimes colloquially known as the Riot Act.)

As understood in *Milligan*, that exception operates in space, as does the exception for military occupation; indeed, the two resemble one another in that martial law is like a military occupation of the homeland itself. Perhaps the exception also operates in the abstract space of the relations between a government and organizations that threaten it, so that martial law may be established between the United States and terrorist groups. This possibility, although intriguing, is so speculative that we can say little about it other than to identify it. Because *Quirin* is an actual Supreme Court precedent and any other theory for the use of military commissions is much less firmly grounded, it seems likely that if such commissions are convened the administration will do its best to justify them as an exercise of the ordinary war power.

To say that it is permissible to try members of terrorist organizations for violations of the law of war, just as it is permissible to try soldiers for violations of the law of war, raises a somewhat technical legal issue that is interesting and important. *Quirin*, *Milligan*, and *Yamashita* are alike not only in the substantive issues they raise but in the procedural mechanism they employed, probably the most famous procedural mechanism in Anglo-American law: the writ of habeas corpus.

Habeas corpus is called the Great Writ for a reason. It is the procedure through which the division of the executive and judicial powers is brought to bear on the most fundamental of personal interests: natural liberty and life itself. Although American law now knows the writ mainly as a means by which federal courts exercise a form of

appellate review over state court criminal convictions, that function is an offshoot of a function that is more basic both historically and substantively. In its origins, and still today, a petition for a writ of habeas corpus is filed by an individual who is held in custody, deprived of natural liberty, by the executive and who wishes to challenge the legality of that custody in the courts.

Quirin and his fellows were being held by the army pending trial before a military commission. They sought judicial relief from that detention through habeas corpus, arguing that the military commission had no authority to try them; in lawyer's terms, that it had no jurisdiction. As the law of habeas corpus provides and as the Court made clear in *Quirin*, the only issue raised by the petition for habeas was that of the military's jurisdiction. Whether Quirin and the others were guilty or innocent was not before the Article in courts. The question they addressed, and that the Supreme Court decided adversely for Quirin and the others, was whether the question of guilt or innocence could be conclusively resolved by the military commission. Once its jurisdiction was affirmed and habeas relief denied, the military tribunal adjudicated the charges of spying.

Quirin and those tried with him were subject to the jurisdiction of a military tribunal because of their status as hostile belligerents. In converse fashion, Milligan was not subject to such jurisdiction because he was a civilian and not a belligerent, not a member of an armed force. Jurisdiction, which is adjudicated by the ordinary courts in habeas proceedings, thus depends on the defendant's status. In an ordinary war, there is a sharp distinction between being a belligerent and being a war criminal. There was no serious dispute about General Yamashita's status as an enemy soldier, but he denied that he had committed war crimes. In passing on the habeas petitions by Quirin and Yamashita, the federal courts were in part resolving a factful question that was quite unrelated to guilt and in those cases was easy, and indeed was conceded on all hands.

However, terrorists do not wear uniforms, so identifying someone as a member of a terrorist organization is not as easy as identifying an enemy soldier as such. What is even more important is that the government's reason to believe that someone is a member of a terrorist organization is quite likely to rest on the kind of highly sensitive information that military commissions are supposed to protect. (There is, moreover, the additional problem of deciding what it means to be a member of an organization that probably does not have membership cards or a mailing list.) Yet an accused terrorist held for trial before such a tribunal is entitled, through habeas, to have an ordinary court test the commission's jurisdiction by deciding the question of membership. Most likely, those proceedings would be treated as civil and not criminal under long-standing habeas principles, but even civil proceedings in civilian courts have more procedural demands, and in particular more publicity, than trials before military tribunals. Thus in order to establish military jurisdiction, the government may have to give the civilian courts the very information it is trying to keep out of them.

Constitutions are said not to be suicide pacts, and the U.S. Constitution limits even the Great Writ. Congress has power, in case of invasion or domestic violence, to suspend the writ. It rarely does so, and whether the recent terrorist attacks constitute an invasion is a nice question. The existence of that power, in addition to its practical implications for military commissions, is a reminder that some goods have to be bought with liberty.

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# Introduction to Country and Related Territory Reports

The *Freedom in the World 2001-2002* survey contains reports on 192 countries and 17 related and disputed territories. Each country report begins with a section containing basic political, economic, and social data arranged in the following categories: **polity**, **economy**, **population**, **purchasing power parities (PPP)**, **life expectancy**, **ethnic groups**, **capital**, **political rights** [numerical rating], **civil liberties** [numerical rating], and **status** [Free, Partly Free, or Not Free]. Each territory report begins with a section containing the same data, except for PPP and life expectancy figures.

The **polity** category contains an encapsulated description of the dominant centers of freely chosen or unelected political power in each country or territory. The following polity descriptions were used in this year's survey: *presidential*—the president enjoys predominant power beyond ceremonial functions, while the legislature, if there is one, enjoys limited or no independence from the executive; *parliamentary*—the government (i.e., prime minister, cabinet) is approved by the legislature, and the head of state, if there is one, enjoys a largely ceremonial role; *presidential-parliamentary*—the president enjoys predominant power beyond ceremonial functions, and the government is approved by the legislature; *traditional chiefs*—traditional chiefs wield significant political power; *traditional monarchy*—the country's monarch enjoys predominant power through hereditary rule (as opposed to a constitutional monarchy); *principality*—the country's monarch is a prince who may enjoy either predominant power or a largely ceremonial role (constitutional monarchy); *dominant party*—the ruling mass-based party or front dominates the government, while allowing other parties to organize and compete short of taking control of the government; *one party*—absolute rule is enjoyed by the one legal party in the country; *military*—the military enjoys predominant power, despite the possible existence of a head of state or legislature; *international protectorate*—an international governing body, such as the United Nations, administers the country. In addition, the term "democracy" may be added to those polities in which the most recent national elections met minimum standards for free and fair elections as judged by international observers.

Polities may be modified by one or more of the following descriptions: insurgency, military-dominated, military-influenced, clergy-dominated, dominant party, federal, transitional, post-conflict. While the preceding list of polities may be applied to most countries, exceptions do occur. In those rare cases where the polities listed above do not adequately reflect the current situation in a particular country, other polity descriptions have been used.

The reports contain a brief description of the **economy** of each country or territory. Non-industrial economies are called *traditional* or *pre-industrial*. Developed market economies and developing countries with a modern market sector have the designation *capitalist*. *Mixed capitalist* countries combine predominantly private enterprise with substantial government involvement in the economy for social welfare purposes. *Capitalist-statist* economies have both large market sectors and government-owned productive enterprises. *Mixed capitalist-statist* economies have the

characteristics of capitalist-statist economies, as well as major social welfare programs. *Statist* economies place virtually the entire economy under direct or indirect governmental control. *Mixed statist* economies are primarily government-controlled, but also have significant private enterprise. Economies in transition between statist and capitalist forms may have the word "transitional" included in their economy description.

The **population** and **life expectancy** figures were obtained from the *2001 World Population Data Sheet* of the Population Reference Bureau. Life expectancy figures for Andorra, Liechtenstein, and Monaco were not available. Population figures for territories were obtained from sources including the *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2002*, the *World Gazetteer*, and the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO).

The **purchasing power parities (PPP)** show per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in terms of international dollars in order to account for real buying power. These figures were obtained from the *2001 United Nations Development Program Human Development Report*. For some countries, especially tiny island nations, this information was not available.

Information about the **ethnic groups** in a country or territory is provided in order to assist with the understanding of certain issues, including minority rights, addressed by the survey. The primary sources used to obtain this information were *The World Almanac and Book of Facts 2002* and the *CIA World Factbook 2001*.

The **political rights** and **civil liberties** categories contain numerical ratings between 1 and 7 for each country or territory rated, with 1 representing the most free and 7 the least free. The **status** designation of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free, which is determined by the combination of the political rights and civil liberties ratings, indicates the general state of freedom in a country or territory. The ratings of countries or territories which have improved or declined since the previous survey are indicated by asterisks next to the ratings. Positive or negative trends which do not warrant a ratings change since the previous year may be indicated by upward or downward trend arrows, which are located next to the name of the country or territory. A brief explanation of ratings changes or trend arrows is provided for each country or territory as required. For a full description of the methods used to determine the survey's ratings, please see the chapter on the survey's methodology.

Following the section on political, economic, and social data, each country report is divided into two parts: an **overview**, and an analysis of **political rights and civil liberties**. The overview provides a brief historical background and a description of major current events. The political rights and civil liberties section summarizes each country or territory's degree of respect for the rights and liberties which Freedom House uses to evaluate freedom in the world.

The related and disputed territory reports follow the country reports. In most cases, they are comparatively brief and contain fewer categories of information than do the country essays.



## ↑ Afghanistan

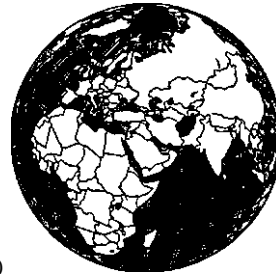
Polity: Transitional      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 26,800,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: na

Life Expectancy: 45

Ethnic Groups: Pashtun (38 percent), Tajik (25 percent),  
 Hazara (19 percent), Uzbek (6 percent), other (12 percent)

Capital: Kabul

Trend Arrow: Afghanistan received an upward trend arrow because of the installation of a broad-based interim government, an easing of repression, and reduced civil conflict.



### Overview:

Afghanistan's war-ravaged population had its first real prospects for peace in years in late 2001 after American-led military strikes and Afghan opposition forces routed the ultraconservative Taliban movement that had ruled the impoverished country for five years. It was not clear, however, whether the Taliban's overthrow would bring the stability needed to rebuild a country wracked by severe food shortages, three years of drought, and 22 years of civil conflict.

A broad-based, interim government that took office in December, led by Pashtun tribal leader Hamid Karzai, enjoyed the backing of the West and the United Nations, and the nominal support of Afghanistan's post-Taliban provincial governors. However, it had little real authority outside Kabul. Throughout the rugged countryside, military commanders, tribal leaders, rogue warlords, and petty bandits held sway. This patchwork of local control plus the onset of the harsh Afghan winter complicated efforts by international aid agencies to help the roughly one-third of Afghanistan's population that depends on food aid for its survival. Thousands of Afghans returned to their homes once the American bombing campaign ended, but at year's end upwards of 1.1 million civilians remained displaced within the country. Many had left their homes long before the latest crisis began, in search of food or to flee fighting.

Karzai, meanwhile, faced the daunting tasks of setting up working government institutions almost from scratch and maintaining an uneasy power-sharing arrangement between representatives of ethnic Pashtuns, who are Afghanistan's largest ethnic group, and minority Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras. Those groups dominated the Northern Alliance coalition that for years fought a losing campaign against the Pashtun-based Taliban until the United States and its allies intervened.

The United States launched the campaign, which featured daily aerial bombings and the aid of American, British, and Australian troops, to capture or kill Saudi militant Osama bin Laden, destroy the Afghanistan operations of his Al Qaeda terrorist network, and punish the Taliban for harboring him. Washington accused bin Laden of masterminding the September 11 terrorist attacks on New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Located at the crossroads of the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan has for centuries been caught in the middle of great power and regional rivalries. After besting Russia in a nineteenth-century contest for influence in

Afghanistan, Britain recognized the country as an independent monarchy in 1921. King Zahir Shah ruled from 1933 until being deposed in a 1973 coup. Afghanistan has been in continuous civil conflict since 1978, when a Communist coup set out to transform this highly traditional society. The Soviet Union invaded on Christmas Day in 1979 and installed a pro-Moscow Communist faction. Until they finally withdrew in 1989, more than 100,000 Soviet troops faced fierce resistance from U.S.-backed *mujahideen* (guerrilla fighters).

The ethnic-based mujahideen factions overthrew the Communist government in 1992, and then battled each other for control of Kabul, killing more than 25,000 civilians in the capital by 1995. Until the mid-1990s, the main forces were the Pashtun-based *Hizb-i-Islami* (Islamic Party) and the Tajik-dominated *Jamiat-i-Islami* (Islamic Association). The rural-based Pashtuns form a near majority in Afghanistan and have ruled for most of the past 250 years.

Drawn largely from students in Islamic schools, the Taliban militia entered the fray in 1995 and, in 1996, seized control of Kabul from a nominal government headed by the Jamiat's Burhanuddin Rabbani. Defeating or buying off mujahideen commanders, the Taliban soon controlled most of the mountainous country, except for parts of northern and central Afghanistan, which remained in the hands of the Northern Alliance. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were the Taliban's main supporters, while Iran, Russia, India, and Central Asian states backed the Northern Alliance.

By the time the American-led strikes began on October 7, 2001, the Taliban controlled roughly 95 percent of Afghanistan. After holding out for several weeks, the movement crumbled quickly throughout the country. The Taliban lost Kabul to Northern Alliance forces in November and then on December 7 surrendered the southern city of Kandahar, the movement's spiritual headquarters.

The UN-brokered deal that put Karzai in office sought to balance demands for power by victorious Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara military commanders with the reality that many Pashtuns would not trust a government headed by ethnic minorities. Karzai, 44, named 18 Northern Alliance officials to his 30-member cabinet. They included Northern Alliance military leader Mohammad Fahim as defense minister. Fahim had taken command of Northern Alliance troops in September after two men posing as Arab journalists had assassinated his predecessor, Ahmad Shah Masood, the storied anti-Soviet resistance leader. Karzai, moreover, is expected to be in office only until June 2002, when exiled monarch Zahir Shar, 87, will convene a *loya jirga*, a traditional council of tribal elders and other notables. That body will name a government that will rule for two years, pending elections.

As Karzai's government got down to work in Kabul, relief workers in the countryside struggled to meet the needs of thousands of displaced and refugee Afghans who were returning to their homes and the millions more who needed food aid. Relief workers blamed the severe food shortages on a three-year drought, the worst in decades, and the civil conflict.

At year's end, some 80,000 Afghan refugees had returned from Pakistan and Iran since late November, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The Geneva-based agency warned, however, that Afghanistan needs large amounts of humanitarian relief and reconstruction aid before any large-scale refugee returns would be possible. Even before the latest crisis began, Pakistan had hosted around 2 million Afghan refugees, and Iran another 1.5 million. Most had fled fighting, while many newer arrivals desperately sought food.

Adding to the difficulty of providing relief, fighting continued in parts of Afghanistan at year's end, while warlords were setting up numerous checkpoints to extort money from travelers. The first lightly armed British troops of a foreign security force for the capital began patrolling Kabul in December. U.S. and anti-Taliban forces, however, were still confronting pockets of resistance from some Taliban soldiers and the mainly Arab Al-Qaeda fighters, and were mounting cave-to-cave searches for bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar. Meanwhile, Pashtun chieftains with few ties to Karzai's government were carving out their own fiefs in much of southern and eastern Afghanistan.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** As 2001 ended, Afghanistan had only a nominal government in Kabul and most Afghans enjoyed few basic rights. With the Taliban routed, residents of the capital and other cities were able to go about their daily lives with far less harassment. Basing its rule on a strict interpretation of the *Sharia* (Islamic law) and the harsh Pashtun social code of rural Afghanistan, the Taliban had placed tight restrictions on nearly all aspects of social and religious life. At year's end, however, it was not clear whether rural Afghans had gained much in the way of enhanced security or freedom to live and work without being molested. The local military commanders, tribal leaders, and rogue warlords who replaced the Taliban in the countryside enjoyed virtually unlimited power.

Throughout Afghanistan, new rulers from Karzai on down to local strongmen faced the question of whether to bring to justice, take revenge upon, or simply ignore perpetrators of past abuses. During the civil war, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other international human rights groups recorded numerous cases where either the Taliban or an opposition group killed civilians or soldiers, often from particular ethnic groups, after wresting control of cities or towns. The London-based Amnesty International in December called for an inquiry into what it said was a "large-scale killing" of captured Taliban fighters and others at the Qala-i-Jhanghi fort outside Mazar-i-Sharif. In another recent incident, Taliban fighters reportedly massacred more than 100 Hazara Shiite civilians in January 2001 after recapturing Yakaolang district in central Bamiyan Province from the Shiite-based Hezb-e-Wahadat militia in December, according to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the United Nations.

During their rule, the Taliban also detained and tortured thousands of Tajiks, Hazaras, and members of other ethnic minorities, some of whom were killed or disappeared. The warring factions at times also deliberately or indiscriminately bombed or shelled homes, schools, and other civilian buildings.

Dealing with past abuses as well as protecting basic rights will be particularly tough in a country where courts are rudimentary and judges are easily pressured. Justice under the Taliban consisted of clerics with little legal training handing down rulings based on Pashtun customs and the Taliban's interpretation of the *Sharia*. Trials were brief and defendants had no legal counsel or rights of appeal. The situation was not much different in areas outside of Taliban control, although punishments were generally less severe. In a society where families of murder victims have the option of either carrying out court-imposed death sentences or granting clemency, the Taliban allowed victims' relatives to kill convicted murderers on several occasions. Taliban authorities at times bulldozed alleged sodomizers beneath walls, stoned adulterers to death, and amputated the hands of thieves.

The end of Taliban rule freed women in Kabul and other cities from harsh restrictions that had kept them largely shrouded, isolated, and, in many cases, impoverished. In their five years in power, the Taliban made all women wear *burqas*, head-to-toe coverings, outside their homes, and banned most from working. The Taliban also enforced the rural Islamic custom of *purdah*, which requires families to isolate women from men who are not blood relatives, even in the home, as well as the custom of *mehrem*, which requires women to be accompanied by male relatives when they leave their homes.

Rural Afghan women, particularly Pashtuns, have faced many of these restrictions for centuries. Late in the year, it was not clear to what extent these strictures were still being enforced outside Kabul. Under the Taliban, religious police from the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice routinely detained, flogged, beat, or otherwise punished women for violating Taliban decrees.

Moreover, the Taliban's ban on female employment, though enforced unevenly, reduced many women to begging in order to eat. The ban also caused a health care crisis. The Taliban allowed female doctors and nurses to return to work in 2000, though only to treat other women, following reports that many women had died after being unable to obtain medical assistance in the country's gender-segregated hospitals.

In a further sign of change, Afghanistan's new education minister, Rasoul Amin, told Reuters in late December that Karzai's government would reverse the Taliban's ban on schooling for most girls. Boys too had found it tough to attend school, in part because the majority of Afghan teachers are women and the Taliban had banned them from working. Under the Taliban, only about four out of ten boys and perhaps three out of ten girls attended school, according to the World Bank. In a move long on symbolism, Karzai named two women to his 30-member cabinet.

The Taliban's downfall also meant that Afghans generally were able to speak more freely and openly. They also were able to enjoy routine leisure activities banned by the Taliban, including listening to music, watching movies and television, and flying kites. In a country with few independent newspapers and radio stations, many Afghans get their news from foreign radio broadcasts. Afghanistan has fewer than ten regular publications, while several others appear sporadically, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on human rights in Afghanistan in 2000. During the U.S.-led military campaign, gunmen believed to be either bandits or Taliban fighters killed several foreign journalists.

For Muslim Afghans, the end of Taliban rule meant that they were no longer forced to adopt the movement's ultraconservative Islamic practices. Taliban militants had made men maintain beards of sufficient length, cover their heads, and pray five times daily. Many Muslim men whose beards were too short were jailed for short periods and forced to attend mandatory Islamic instruction. Roughly 85 percent of Afghanistan's population is Sunni Muslim, with Shiites making up most of the remainder. The Taliban drew international condemnation in 2001 for ordering Hindu Afghans to wear yellow pieces of cloth to identify themselves as non-Muslims. Taliban leaders insisted this was to protect Hindus from being punished for failing to adhere to Islamic religious practices. The Taliban were also denounced abroad after they demolished two giant, 2,000-year-old statues of Buddha in central Bamiyan Province.

Life for Afghans in rural areas formerly controlled by the Taliban may come to resemble that in traditional Northern Alliance strongholds. Villagers in these often remote parts of the country are able to go about their daily lives with little harassment,

and girls can attend school. They enjoy few real rights, however, with local authorities and strongmen ruling according to whim. Soldiers of the Northern Alliance and local strongmen occasionally kill, kidnap, detain, and torture opponents and civilians and rape women, according to the U.S. State Department report.

The UN estimates that Afghanistan is the most heavily land mined country in the world despite more than a decade of internationally assisted mine clearance. Farming has been severely hampered by the threat posed by mines, and by drought, limited resources, and poor irrigation systems, roads, and other infrastructure. Aviation and financial sanctions imposed by the UN in 1999 worsened economic conditions in a country already ravaged by two decades of war.

## Albania

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Political Rights: 3\*  
Civil Liberties: 4\*

Economy: Capitalist  
Status: Partly Free  
statist (transitional)

Population: 3,400,000

PPP: \$3,189

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Albanian (95 percent), Greek (3 percent), others, including Roma, Serb, and Bulgarian (2 percent)

Capital: Tirana

Ratings Change: Albania's political rights rating improved from 4 to 3, and its civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4, due to slow progress toward stabilization and improved parliamentary elections during the summer.



### Overview:

From World War II until 1990, former dictator Enver Hoxha's xenophobic Communist regime turned Albania into the most isolated country in Europe. In 1990, however, the Communist regime collapsed, and in March 1992, multiparty elections brought the Democratic Party (DP), led by Dr. Sali Berisha, to power. Berisha's government, however, was plagued by corruption, and Berisha quickly assumed autocratic ways of dealing with criticism. The collapse of several pyramid investment schemes in early 1997 caused much of Albania's population to lose their life savings and nearly resulted in civil war.

In the years since the civil unrest of 1997, during which Albania has been ruled by the Socialist Party (SP), the central government in Tirana has been unable to reimpose meaningful control over much of Berisha's stronghold in northern Albania.

Although a number of small parties run in elections, the most important political organizations are the DP and the SP. The differences between them, however, are more a matter of the personalities leading the parties than of serious programmatic or ideological differences between the two.

Albania's first parliamentary elections since 1997 were held over four rounds in June and July. Although the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) found the first round to be generally "free and fair," the subsequent three rounds

were increasingly problematic, as allegations of fraud in the electoral process increased. Berisha's DP announced a boycott of parliament in protest. The OSCE admitted that there were "serious flaws" in the election process but still said that the 2001 polls showed progress in comparison with the previous election held amidst the anarchy of 1997. Socialists now hold 73 out of 140 seats in parliament, as against 46 from the opposition Union for Victory coalition, led by the DP.

Albania's political scene remains significantly polarized. Splits appear on the horizon in both major parties. In the DP, party members disaffected with Berisha's erratic leadership have formed a splinter party, the New Democratic Party, which has become the third largest party in the country. Moreover, the dimensions of the SP's victory over Berisha's coalition suggest that Berisha's best days are behind him. For the SP, a power struggle between current Prime Minister Ilir Meta and party chairman Fatos Nano threatens to divide that party as well.

Continuing problems plaguing the country are organized crime, trafficking of drugs and women, and official corruption. Berisha's control of districts in northern Albania adjoining Kosovo means that the region has remained an area where such activities remain strong.

Prime Minister Ilir Meta's government has received significant international support. One example of such confidence was the European Union's invitation to Albania to begin negotiations with the EU on an Association and Stabilization Agreement. Meta's government was also given high marks for maintaining a moderate stance during the civil unrest in neighboring Macedonia.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

The Albanian constitution guarantees citizens freedom of association, freedom of movement, freedom of the press, and freedom of expression. On the whole, these rights are respected, but significant problems remain. Several political parties exist and compete for power. Albania also has several active trade unions, the most prominent of which are the Confederation of Trade Unions of Albania, with some 280,000 members, and the Confederation of Unions, which is affiliated with the SP. There were no significant reports of governmental harassment of either foreign or domestic nongovernmental organizations in 2001. Academic freedom, however, is considered limited.

The Albanian constitution provides for an independent judiciary. Overall, however, international observers still believe that the judiciary in Albania is inefficient and prone to corruption, and judges are often inexperienced and untrained. The combination of a weak economy and the growth of powerful organized crime syndicates makes judges susceptible to bribery and intimidation. Police corruption is also considered widespread. For instance, in 2000 alone more than 190 police officers were removed from their positions because of alleged incompetence, lack of discipline, or violations of the law. There are no reported political prisoners in the country.

In an important ruling on the balance of power between judicial and executive authorities, in May the parliament failed to produce a two-thirds majority needed to remove three judges from their positions. The judges had been accused of involvement in a scandal involving the release of a suspected drug dealer. Despite the nature of the accusations, the parliament's unwillingness to remove the judges was seen by some observers as a victory for constitutional procedure.

The Albanian constitution provides for freedom of religion and religious practice.

Although much of Albanian society became secularized during the Communist period, approximately 70 percent of the population is nominally Muslim, 20 percent is Roman Catholic, and 10 percent Orthodox Christian. The Albanian Evangelical Alliance, an association of more than 100 churches in the country, has complained that the government has been creating various administrative difficulties in the churches' attempts to get legally registered. The government still has not fully resolved the issue of restitution of church properties confiscated during the Communist period. Albania's small Greek Orthodox minority (approximately 3 percent of the population, concentrated in southern Albania) has intermittently been subjected to various forms of discrimination.

Freedom of the press is also generally respected, and there are few direct attacks on the media. Most media outlets, however, are directly linked to certain political or business groups, which compromises their reporting. The state television and radio network, Radio Televizë Shqiptare (RTSH), and the official state news agency, the Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), are both considered excessively progovernment.

Traditional patriarchal social mores pose significant problems for the position of women in Albania. Many segments of Albanian society, particularly in the mountains of northeastern Albania, still abide by a medieval moral code according to which women are considered chattel property and may be treated as such. There are frequent reports from these areas of the kidnapping of young women to serve as brides. The Albanian constitution, however, places no legal impediments to women's role in politics and society, although women are vastly underrepresented in most governmental institutions. The Albanian labor code mandates that women are entitled to equal pay for equal work, but data are lacking on whether this is respected in practice. The trafficking of women and girls for the purposes of prostitution remains a significant problem.

Widespread lawlessness plagues large parts of Albania. Since 1997, more than 100 policemen have been killed in a country with a population half the size of New York City. The weakness of state institutions has allowed international criminal syndicates to operate with relative ease in Albania, and international law enforcement officials claim that Albania has become an increasingly important transshipment point for drug smugglers moving opiates, hashish, and cannabis from southwest Asia to Western Europe and the United States. Northern Albania is especially unstable owing to a variety of factors, including the fact that it is Berisha's home base and that the Kosovo Liberation Army has a presence in the region, which effectively prevents legitimate state institutions from establishing their authority there.

Another problem is the persistence of blood feuds between different families and clans. Recent reports suggest up to 2,000 children are being kept inside their homes for fear of revenge killings by rival families engaged in blood feuds.

## Algeria

Polity: Dominant party (military-influenced) Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: **Statist** Status: Not Free  
 Population: 31,000,000  
 PPP: \$5,063  
 Life Expectancy: 69  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab Berber (99 percent),  
 other (1 percent)  
 Capital: Algiers



### Overview:

The nine-year-old insurgency by guerrillas fighting to establish an Islamic state in Algeria was overshadowed in 2001 by massive protests demanding democracy. The killing of a Berber youth by police in the northeastern Kabylie region in April set off months of demonstrations against violence, unemployment, corruption, and other social ills. Some 80 people died in the unrest, which extended throughout Kabylie and into Algiers, creating another headache for the beleaguered government of Abdelaziz Bouteflika and his military backers.

Still, violence related to the Islamist insurgency continued despite Bouteflika's two-year-old civil reconciliation plan designed to end the conflict. Fighting led to hundreds of deaths per month as Islamist extremists ambushed and massacred villagers, while government armed forces pursued a search-and-destroy policy against guerrillas.

After a violent liberation struggle convinced France to abandon 130 years of colonial rule, Algeria achieved independence in 1962. The National Liberation Front (FLN) ruled as a virtual one-party regime until the political system was reformed in 1989. Antigovernment sentiment stemming from corruption, housing shortages, unemployment, and other severe economic and social problems boosted the opposition Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) despite the party's avowed commitment to theocratic rule under *Sharia* (Islamic law). In 1992, the army canceled a second round of legislative elections in which the FIS had achieved a commanding lead and banned the party, setting off a civil conflict marked by often random violence that has claimed more than 100,000 lives.

A former foreign minister, Bouteflika was handpicked by the *pouvoir* (power), or ruling military establishment, to win fraudulent presidential elections in April 1999. Weeks after taking office, he introduced the Civil Concord Plan based on a 1997 truce between the military and the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), the outlawed military wing of the FIS. The plan included an amnesty for Islamist rebels who renounced violence, and won wide support in a September 1999 referendum. Up to 5,500 rebels took advantage of the amnesty, and the AIS formally disbanded in early 2000. However, the radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which has been blamed for most of the killings of the past nine years, rejected the amnesty and vowed to continue its struggle. Bouteflika promised a merciless campaign to eradicate remaining guerrilla factions. According to official figures, 2,000 people were killed in the fighting during 2000. Independent estimates put the figure at up to 9,000. At least 1,000 people were killed during the first half of 2001.



While radical Islamists are primarily responsible for the massacres of men, women, and children that have characterized the conflict, government-backed militias have also apparently committed mass killings. Human rights groups have charged government forces with thousands of disappearances, tortures, and other excesses against alleged militants and their suspected supporters. In February 2001, former army officer Habib Souaidia published a book in France describing systematic torture and killings of villagers by the army between 1995 and 1998. Souaidia explained that the military's tactics were meant both to eliminate villagers suspected of harboring militants and to discredit Islamists. On April 25, a Paris prosecutor decided to investigate former Algerian defense minister General Khaled Nezzar after Algerians residing in France filed a complaint alleging Nezzar's responsibility for tortures and extrajudicial killings between 1990 and 1993.

Bouteflika has achieved little in the way of economic or political reforms necessary to improve social conditions and to combat corruption. The military continues to dictate policy, and changes in official policy tend to reflect shifts in the balance of power among infighting military factions whose vested interests may be threatened by reform. Bouteflika has clashed with the *pouvoir* over his plans to privatize the state energy company and to deregulate the hydrocarbons sector; the generals control much of Algeria's oil wealth. Oil and gas account for up to 85 percent of government revenue. Unemployment is officially at 30 percent, though among Algerians under the age of 25 the figure is estimated at 80 percent. A corrupt legal system, which offers no guarantees of contract enforcement, and an archaic banking system make Algeria unattractive to foreign investors.

On April 18, the death of a Berber teenager in police custody in the northeastern Kabylie region sparked a week of massive riots in which some 50 protesters were killed by security forces. The killings led to even larger protests, with demonstrators calling for withdrawal of the security force responsible for the killings and for recognition of Berber language and cultural rights. The government response was delayed; on April 30, Bouteflika appeared in a televised speech promising an inquiry into the causes of the violence and accusing unnamed internal and external groups of inciting extremism. In a major blow to Bouteflika, the Kabylie-based Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) party withdrew from the government in protest of its handling of the situation.

What began as a protest against ethnic discrimination and abuse ballooned into a general antigovernment movement denouncing corruption, housing shortages, violence, political stagnation, unemployment, and repression. In May, 40 journalists led a march in Kabylie to show solidarity with Berbers and to protest new legal measures restricting the press. Some 5,000 women also marched to protest police brutality. In mid-June, hundreds of thousands marched on the presidential palace in Algiers demanding greater democracy. Four were killed in related violence, and the government banned demonstrations. Protests continued in Kabylie, and Bouteflika agreed in October to a constitutional amendment granting Tamazight, the Berber language, official recognition. The amendment will require a national referendum. In December, the government announced the creation of six working groups to examine Berber social conditions. Demonstrations continued into December. The final death toll was around 80.

Local journalists have excoriated Bouteflika for his handling of the Berber riots, as well as for the continuing violence, abounding socioeconomic problems, and mounting allegations of state-sponsored murder and torture. The president's popularity plummeted

from 65 percent in April 2000 to 42 percent in April 2001. And when floods killed more than 600 people in November, riots broke out in several towns over government negligence in maintaining housing and insufficient rescue efforts. Algerians also complain that Bouteflika spends too little time at home; he has made more than 40 trips abroad since taking office. Opponents accuse him of becoming increasingly autocratic and marginalizing parliament. He has replaced the president of the upper parliamentary chamber with a longtime supporter. But some observers suggest that Bouteflika may be using international diplomacy and Algeria's poor human rights record to wrest control from the *pouvoir*. Given his success in developing contacts with the international community, the ruling generals might think twice before ousting him. Moreover, recent charges of military abuses could give him the opportunity to purge military leaders.

Algeria pledged support for the U.S. campaign against terrorism in the wake of September 11. Algerian officials reportedly sent Washington a list of 350 Islamist extremists known to be living abroad who may have contacts with Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist network. Bouteflika visited the United States in November in hopes of encouraging stronger political and economic ties between the two countries.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Algerians' right to choose their government freely in democratic elections has never been honored. The country has effectively been under martial law since the cancellation of the 1992 polls. The April 1999 presidential elections were restricted to seven military-approved candidates. The ruling generals openly favored Bouteflika, making him the guaranteed winner well before the polls opened, and his six competitors withdrew from the race on the eve of elections, calling the process a "charade." Reports of irregularities included official intimidation of candidates' supporters, media favoritism of Bouteflika, padding of election rolls, and distribution of preprinted ballots. June 1997 legislative polls excluded the main Islamic opposition groups and were conducted under severe restrictions of free expression and association. The 1996 constitution expanded presidential powers and banned religion-based parties. The continuing state of emergency and an antiterror decree give the regime almost unlimited power.

Security forces and progovernment militias are responsible for extrajudicial execution, torture, arbitrary arrest, and detention without trial. Despite government claims that officials are routinely brought to justice for such abuses, the authorities have not made such cases public. There were credible reports of mistreatment and abuse of detainees arrested in connection with antigovernment riots in Kabylie during the summer. By the government's own admission, 4,880 people have disappeared since 1992 after having been abducted by security forces and state-armed militias, but no independent investigation into their cases has been initiated. Abandoning its policy of reacting to atrocities, the government has taken a proactive role in hunting down Islamist guerrillas; its forces killed hundreds of suspected militants during the year.

The GIA and other militants continue to ambush and brutally murder civilians. The Salafist Group for Preaching and Salvation (GSPC), an Islamic militant group active in Kabylie, carried out an attack in May which killed eight police officers. Observers said the attack was a response to the publicity given the Berber cause following riots beginning in April. Islamist militants killed 48 civilians in massacres during the first three weeks of Ramadan, which began on November 16.

In a drive to combat corruption, Bouteflika replaced most of the heads of the 187

lower courts and 37 higher-level courts in August 2000. Most were reassigned to new positions. Civil courts try cases involving civilians, though military courts have tried civilians for security and terrorism offenses. Regular criminal courts try individuals accused of security-related offenses. Authorities do not always respect due process rights, such as the right to counsel, and suspects are frequently detained for long periods without trial. Some lawyers refuse to represent individuals accused of security offenses out of fear of retribution from the security forces. Defense lawyers for members of the FIS have suffered harassment, death threats, and arrest. Estimates of the number of political prisoners are unreliable; some estimate the number to be several thousand, including suspected Islamist sympathizers and members of the FIS.

Press freedom is limited by government pressure, legal constraints, and the Islamist insurgency. Before a recent abatement in violence against journalists, about 70 had been killed by Islamists and hundreds had fled Algeria. The state of emergency restricts press freedom and punishes undefined threats to the state or to public order. A 1990 law requires speech to respect "individual dignity, the imperatives of foreign policy, and the national defense." Penal code reforms enacted in July 2001 provide for prison terms of 2 to 12 months and fines of \$700 to \$3,500 for defamation of the president, parliament, the courts, the military, and other public officials, as well as Islam and the prophet Mohammed. The new law also allows the public prosecutor to begin proceedings against an individual for defamation without the prior filing of a complaint. The government controls broadcast media. Foreign journalists are rarely granted visas to work in Algeria, and few foreign titles have permission to appear on Algerian newsstands. Two journalists with *La Voix de L'Oranie* were sentenced to six months' imprisonment in April for libel. In May, a journalist covering the riots in Tizi Ouzou, a capital of Kabylie, was assaulted by police.

Freedom of assembly is sharply limited. Official permission is required for public meetings, with the exception of legal opposition-party meetings. On November 8, 2001, authorities violently dispersed about 100 relatives of missing persons, who gathered to demonstrate peacefully in the eastern city of Constantine. According to Amnesty International, police beat four women with batons and insulted and threatened others. Emergency legislation restricts freedom of association. Nongovernmental organizations must have licenses, and the interior ministry may deny a license or dissolve any group regarded as a threat to public order. Membership in the FIS is illegal, and despite the 1999 peace agreement between the government and the FIS, the government has given no indication that the FIS will be allowed to return to public life.

Islam is the state religion, and the law limits the practice of other faiths. However, small Christian and Jewish communities practice without government interference. Radical Muslims have killed and issued public threats against perceived "infidels."

Berbers, who live mainly in Kabylie, have been targeted by Islamists for their liberal interpretation of Islam. The original inhabitants of north Africa, Berbers make up 30 percent of Algeria's population and have sought to maintain their cultural and linguistic identity in the face of the government's attempts at Arabization. A 1998 law made Arabic the official language of Algeria and marginalized Tamazight, the native Berber language. The law requires that all official business, national broadcast media, communications equipment, and medical prescriptions use Arabic. The lack of Berber language rights, along with high unemployment, corruption in the allocation of housing in Kabylie, and a general policy of *hogra*—meaning "exclusion" and "contempt"—by

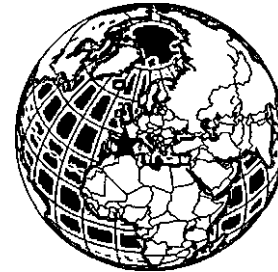
authorities, have created simmering resentment among Berbers that exploded when Guermah Massinissa, a Berber teenager, was shot to death in police custody in April. A commission set up to investigate the violence, which left 50 protesters dead in the first week, reported in July that paramilitary gendarmes used excessive force in suppressing the uprising. However, the report named no officials and failed to attribute responsibility to any high-level authorities. President Bouteflika appointed Prime Minister Ali Benflis to negotiate a settlement with Berber leaders, but the government's offer to recognize Tamazight as a national language was rejected by Berbers, who want their language classified as an official language equal in status to Arabic. Continuing protests in Kabylie were generally peaceful.

The 1984 Family Code, based on Sharia, discriminates against women in matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. Societal pressures keep many women from seeking help if they are battered or have been raped, and there are few facilities to provide safe haven for abused women. Women have been the particular targets of extreme Islamists, who sometimes kill them for such activities as working outside the home, going to beauty salons, playing sports, or studying music or art. After Bouteflika's judicial reforms in 2000, there are now 19 courts headed by women.

Workers have the right to establish trade unions and to strike. About two-thirds of workers belong to unions.

## Andorra

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 1
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 1
Population: 100,000	Status: Free
PPP: na	
Life Expectancy: na	
Ethnic Groups: Spanish (43 percent), Andorran (33 percent), Portuguese (11 percent), French (7 percent), other (6 percent)	
Capital: Andorra laVella	



### Overview:

Andorra held its general elections, in which Marc Fome Molne of the Liberal Party of Andorra (PLA) was reelected as the head of government, in March 2001. In the 1997 elections, the PLA held 18 of the 28 Consell General (parliament) seats. In the recent elections, the PLA acquired only 15 seats; the Social Democratic Party (PS), 6; the Democratic Party, 5; and the Unio Laurediana Party, 2.

For more than 700 years, Andorra was ruled jointly by the French state and the Spanish bishops of Seo de Urgel, until it acquired independence and adopted its first constitution in 1993. The constitution defines Andorra as a "parliamentary co-principality" in which the president of France and the bishop of Seo de Urgel serve as co-princes, heads of state with limited and largely symbolic power. Sovereignty rests with Andorra's citizens.

Andorra has no national currency, but circulates Spanish *pesetas* and French *francs*. By virtue of its association with Spain and France, it has also adopted the euro despite not being a member of the European Monetary Union. In 1991, Andorra established a customs union with the European Union (EU) that permits free movement of industrial goods. Andorra became a member of the United Nations in 1993 and a member of the Council of Europe in 1994.

With the creation of the EU internal market, Andorra has lost its privileged duty-free status. Tourism, the mainstay of Andorra's economy, accounts for about 80 percent of its gross domestic product. Because of banking secrecy laws and Andorra's tax haven status, the financial services sector is of growing importance to the economy.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Andorrans can change their government democratically. The recent elections chose members of the Consell General, which selects the head of government. Popular elections to the 28-member Consell are held every four years, with 14 members chosen by the national constituency and 14 chosen to represent the seven parishes, or administrative divisions.

The judiciary, based on the French and Spanish civil codes, is independent and efficient, and citizens enjoy full due process rights, including the right to free counsel for the indigent. Freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed in law and in practice. The domestic press consists of two daily and several weekly newspapers. Andorra has two radio stations, one state owned and one privately owned, and six television stations. Most French and Spanish stations can be received in Andorra.

There are no limitations on domestic or foreign travel, emigration, or repatriation. Andorra does not expel persons with valid claims of refugee status and cooperates with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and other humanitarian organizations in assisting refugees.

Freedom of religion is respected. Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion; however, the Church does not receive any subsidies from the government.

Workers may form trade unions, bargain collectively, and strike. According to the January report of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the only unions that exist are illegal. Only the police union, which is more like an association than a trade union, has been registered. No unions have been created by workers in the private sector.

Women enjoy the same legal, political, social, and professional rights as men, although they are underrepresented in government. Of the 28 members of the Consell General, only 4 are women. The Association of Andorran Women actively promotes women's issues through education and outreach.

## Angola

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (insurgency)

Economy: Statist

Population: 12,300,000

PPP: \$3,179

Life Expectancy: 38

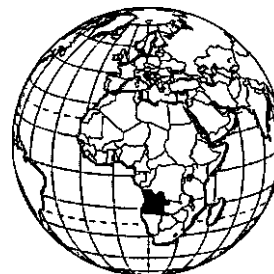
Ethnic Groups: Ovimbundu (37 percent), Kimbundu (25 percent), Bakongo (13 percent), mestico (2 percent), European (1 percent), other (22 percent)

Capital: Luanda

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 6

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

President José Eduardo dos Santos called for presidential elections to be held in 2002 despite continued fighting with Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). However, civil society groups oppose holding elections while the conflict is ongoing. Dos Santos said he would not stand for reelection, but this announcement had no immediate impact on the peace process. The Inter-Ecclesiastical Committee for Peace in Angola heads the initiative to end the war, but little progress was made in 2001. Savimbi sent letters to the Roman Catholic Church in Angola, welcoming its mediation role, and called for stepped-up efforts by Russia and the United States, apparently hoping for a more favorable attitude from a conservative U.S. government. Savimbi wants to renegotiate the 1994 Lusaka accord, brokered by the United Nations, while Dos Santos insists on its full implementation.

Angola has been at war since shortly after independence from Portugal in 1975. During the Cold War, the United States and South Africa backed the rebel UNITA movement while the former Soviet Union and Cuba supported the Marxist Dos Santos government. The conflict has claimed at least half a million lives and displaced a million people, who survive on food aid. An estimated seven million land mines are spread across the country. The UN Security Council voted in February 1999 to end the UN peacekeeping mission in Angola following the collapse of the peace process and the shooting down of two UN planes. Neither the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) nor UNITA has ever fully complied with the Lusaka Accords.

Rights abuses continued on both sides in the conflict in 2001. The government maintained the upper hand militarily, and UNITA stepped up its guerrilla activity, particularly along the government-held coast and near the capital. In one incident that drew international attention, UNITA fighters attacked a train and killed more than 250 people. The train had hit a land mine placed on the track, and passengers were gunned down as they fled the burning locomotive.

Fears that Angola's conflict could spread across the borders of Zambia and Namibia prompted the three countries in 2001 to set up a joint commission on border security. Angola has been using Namibian territory to launch raids against Angolan rebels, and Namibia has been using Angolan territory to pursue Namibian dissident forces.

Angola is Africa's second largest oil producer. Petroleum accounts for 90 percent

of government revenue, but corruption and the war have prevented the average Angolan from benefiting from the wealth. The government has used its oil revenue to procure weapons, while UNITA has used diamonds to fund its arms purchases. UNITA is under a diamonds, fuel, and arms embargo, and its leaders are restricted from travel; it is estimated by a UN panel to have made more than \$100 million from diamond sales in 2000. Despite the sanctions, a UN report in October 2001 said \$1 million worth of diamonds was being smuggled out of Angola daily and attributed one-quarter of the smuggling to UNITA.

De Beers, the world's largest diamond company, said in May 2001 that it was suspending investment and prospecting operations in Angola after talks with the government failed to define the terms under which De Beers would continue to operate in Angola. There were indications toward the end of the year that De Beers would return.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Angolans freely elected their own representatives for the only time in the September 1992 UN-supervised presidential and legislative elections. The vote was described by international observers as generally free and fair despite many irregularities. However, Savimbi rejected his defeat to Dos Santos in the first round of presidential voting and resumed the guerrilla war. The MPLA dominates the 220-member national assembly, although 70 UNITA members continue to occupy seats. More than 100 political parties exist in Angola, and so far they have shown no real movement towards cohesion.

Dos Santos in 1998 abolished the position of prime minister. Although the national assembly has little real power, it is not a rubber stamp. It has heated debates, and legislation proposed by the opposition is considered and sometimes passed. A parliamentary peace commission is based on a bill put forward by a UNITA deputy.

Local courts rule on civil matters and petty crime in some areas, but an overall lack of training and infrastructure inhibit judicial proceedings, which are also heavily influenced by the government. Many prisoners were detained for long periods in life threatening conditions while awaiting trial.

Serious human rights abuses by both government and UNITA security forces, including torture, abduction, rape, sexual slavery, and extrajudicial execution, continued in 2001. Both sides conduct forced recruitment of civilians, including minors. A separatist rebellion in the enclave of Cabinda, marked by low-scale guerrilla activity and temporary hostage taking of foreign nationals, continued in 2001.

In July, the government evicted about 13,000 families from the Luanda neighborhood of Boa Vista and moved them to tents outside the city. The government said the move was aimed at improving living conditions because of the threat of landslides, but the land had been earmarked for development by a government company. Journalists covering the eviction were roughed up.

Despite constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression, the media are subject to severe and sometimes violent measures. A draft press law, referred to as a "gag law" by journalists, died in 2000 following public debate. There are several independent weeklies and at least five independent radio stations. In response to government pressure, the Catholic-run Rldio Ecclesia in July 2001 replaced its news reports with music for two days and then followed up with an interview with a member of the opposition. Repression eased slightly in 2001 in the capital, Luanda, but continued unabated in provincial areas. In one incident, Alegria Gustavo, a national radio journalist in Huambo, was shot dead, allegedly by a provincial administrator, in July.

Religious freedom is generally respected. Despite legal protections, de facto societal discrimination against women remains strong, particularly in rural areas. There is a high incidence of spousal abuse. The war has contributed to violence against women, forced servitude, and sexual slavery. Women are most likely to become victims of land mines because they are usually the ones who forage for food and firewood. Women, however, do occupy cabinet positions and numerous national assembly seats.

Labor rights are guaranteed by the constitution, but only a few independent unions are functioning and those exist only in the cities. The government dominates the labor movement and restricts workers' rights, although there has been some improvement. The government and the Angolan Confederation of Unions agreed in February 2001 to a monthly minimum wage of \$60 following a series of strikes. The vast majority of rural agricultural workers remain outside the modern economic sector.

## 📍 Antigua and Barbuda

Polity: Dominant party      Political Rights: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist-      Civil Liberties: 2  
 statist                              Status: Partly Free

Population: 100,000

PPP: \$9,870

Life Expectancy: 70

Ethnic Groups: Black (89 percent), other, including British, Portuguese, Lebanese, and Syrian (11 percent)

Capital: St. John's

Trend Arrow: Antigua and Bermuda received an upward trend arrow due to improved government controls over money laundering.



### Overview:

In 2001, the government of Prime Minister Lester Bird made good on its promise to improve the regulation of Antigua and Barbuda's booming offshore financial center, and was awarded a stamp of approval from the United States. Two years earlier, Washington had warned U.S. banks that they needed to take special precautions when dealing with the two-island nation, an advisory that cost the offshore banking industry dearly. In June, Bird bowed to mounting pressure and agreed to appoint an independent commission to investigate corruption allegations against a medical health plan, a payback scandal that had already cost three government ministers their jobs, as well as resulting in the firing of the entire government board of the health plan.

Antigua and Barbuda is a member of the Commonwealth. The British monarchy is represented by a governor-general. The islands gained independence in 1981. Under the 1981 constitution, the political system is a parliamentary democracy, with a bicameral parliament consisting of a 17-member house of representatives elected for five years and an appointed senate. In the house, there are 16 seats for Antigua and 1 for Barbuda. Eleven senators are appointed by the prime minister, four by the parliamentary opposition leader, one by the Barbuda Council, and one by the governor-general.

Dominated by the Bird family and the Antigua Labour Party (ALP), rule has been



based more on power and the abuse of authority than on law. The constitution has been consistently disregarded. The Bird tenure has also been marked by scandals ranging from Antigua's role as a transshipment center for South American cocaine destined for the United States and Europe, to its involvement in arms smuggling for the Colombian cartels, to its importance as a money laundering center.

In 1994 Vere Bird, patriarch of the most prominent family, stepped down as prime minister in favor of his son Lester. In the run-up to the 1994 election, three opposition parties united to form the United Progressive Party (UPP). The UPP campaigned on a social-democratic platform emphasizing rule of law and good governance. In the election, the ALP won 11 of 17 parliamentary seats, down from 15 in 1989, while the UPP won 5, up from 1.

After taking office as prime minister, Lester Bird promised cleaner, more efficient government. However, his administration continued to be dogged by scandals. In 1995 Bird's brother, Ivor, was convicted of smuggling cocaine into the country, but received only a fine.

The country's thriving offshore banking industry was the target of international concerns about inadequate regulation and vetting that had led to a surge in questionable banking operations, a number with alleged links to Russian organized crime. In 1998, Antigua and Barbuda's offshore industry, serviced by some 50 loosely regulated banks, was rocked by public disclosure of what the U.S. Customs Service called the biggest non-narcotics money-laundering racket it had ever uncovered. A crackdown in 1999 on Russian-owned banks (six were closed down in 1998) highlighted the problems of banking secrecy and a local reluctance to cooperate with foreign law enforcement.

The March 1999 elections provided Bird with a strong vote of confidence for policies that have made the two-island nation one of the region's most prosperous. The ALP won 12 of the 17 parliamentary seats; the UPP, 4; and the Barbuda People's Movement retained its single seat. In 2000, Antigua began moving to rein in its offshore financial industry, following pressure for greater international cooperation from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) based in Paris. In recent years it had become increasingly apparent that Antigua's democratic institutions have been threatened by individuals who infiltrated government bodies as a means of weakening fledgling money laundering and offshore business controls. In 2001 the head of the Barbuda council complained that the Antigua government was using "big fist" tactics to dominate the small island.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Constitutionally, citizens are able to change their government by democratic means. However, the ruling party's long-standing monopoly on patronage and its power to provide access to economic opportunities make it difficult for opposition parties to attract membership and financial support. Political parties, labor unions, and civic organizations are free to organize. In 1999, an international observer group noted that the national voter registry included 52,348 names, out of a total population of some 69,000 people, a number that appeared inflated given that an estimated 40 percent of the population is below voting age. This anomaly was even more glaring given that the country's week-long registration period for new voters is restrictive and appears to disenfranchise potential participants in elections.

The judiciary, which is part of the eastern Caribbean legal system, is nominally independent, but subject to manipulation by the ruling party; it has been nearly power-

less to address corruption in the executive branch. There is an intra-island court of appeals for Antigua and five other former British colonies in the Lesser Antilles. In 2001, the Office of National Drug and Money Laundering Control Policy consolidated the country's financial investigations unit and those dealing with financial and drug intelligence under one roof.

The islands' security forces are composed of the police and the small Antigua and Barbuda Defence Forces. The police, organized, trained, and supervised according to British law enforcement practices, generally respect human rights; basic police reporting statistics, however, are confidential. Conditions at the country's eighteenth-century prison, which was recently privatized, are primitive, and the institution has been criticized for abusing its inmates. These credible reports have been met with a government willingness to both investigate the charges and to take administrative action. The government does permit visits to the prison by independent human rights groups.

The ALP government and the Bird family control the country's television, cable, and radio outlets. Opposition parties claim that they receive limited coverage from, and have little opportunity to express their views on, the government-controlled electronic media. Freedom of religion is respected.

Social discrimination and violence against women are problems; the governmental Directorate of Women's Affairs has sought to increase awareness about women's rights under the law. Child abuse is also a problem; despite the government's often expressed commitment to children's rights, it has done little to protect those rights in practice.

The Industrial Court mediates labor disputes, but public-sector unions tend to be under the sway of the ruling party. Demonstrators are occasionally subject to harassment by the police, who are politically tied to the ruling party.

## Argentina

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal) Political Rights: 3\*  
Civil Liberties: 3\*  
Status: Partly Free

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 37,500,000

PPP: \$12,277

Life Expectancy: 73

Ethnic Groups: White [mostly Spanish and Italian] (97 percent), other, including mestizo, Indian (3 percent)

Capital: Buenos Aires

**Ratings Change:** Argentina's political rights rating declined from 1 to 3, its civil liberties rating declined from 2 to 3, and its status changed from Free to Partly Free, due to the resignation of an elected president; an abject absence of professionalism in the judiciary, particularly in the Supreme Court, and significant increases in public insecurity, including common crime, police misconduct, and organized civil disturbances.



### Overview:

In December 2001, President Fernando De la Rúa resigned from office in the face of an imminent default on Argentina's

ballooning foreign debt, his government's inability to pull the country out of a three-year economic crisis, and a series of grave public disorders followed by heavy-handed police repression. His fall from public grace came as a consequence of having embarked upon a series of highly unpopular public spending cuts designed to restore Argentina to financial health, while leaving untouched one of the root causes of Argentina's economic meltdown—a massive debt to foreign banks that had eagerly lent money to both dictators and a corrupted political system. The hapless De la Rúa left office after little more than 18 months in office, a time plagued by his own failing health, the virtual collapse of his ruling coalition, broad public discontent with Argentina's traditional political leadership, and a corrupted judiciary inherited from his predecessor and favorite in Washington, D.C., Carlos Menem. A congressional report on rampant money laundering during Menem's rule also raised questions about the activities of senior officials in a government elected after candidate De la Rúa claimed Menem's ten-year reign had resulted in \$10 billion in public corruption. Even as Menem was placed under house arrest for his alleged role in a murky international arms trafficking scandal, the De la Rúa government seemed more interested in protecting its powerful patrons than redeeming anticorruption promises, and it backtracked on commitments to add teeth to anti-money-laundering legislation. In the October 2001 by-elections, the opposition Peronist party bested the ruling Alliance coalition in the congressional contests, and citizen anger resulted in an unprecedented 21 percent of the votes being spoiled or nulled. Citizen outrage was also in full throttle after a highly politicized Supreme Court dominated by Menem loyalists set aside prosecution of the former president on arms trafficking and other charges.

In December, De la Rúa ordered that limits on cash withdrawals from banks be established to stop a run on Argentina's banking system, but the move sparked widespread protests. Within days, massive spontaneous demonstrations by housewives from the middle class—the most important sector of the government coalition's base—were joined by the rioting and looting of supermarkets in poorer districts around the country, some of which, at least, appeared to have been organized by rivals within the opposition Peronists and by disaffected serving or former members of the Argentina's intelligence services. As the death toll reached 27, De la Rúa resigned, and was replaced by an interim president, who himself was forced to resign just a week later. On January 31, De la Rúa's former rival in the 1999 presidential contest, former Buenos Aires provincial governor Eduardo Duhalde, prepared to don the presidential sash the next day. Duhalde, however, was himself criticized for leaving the province with its biggest debt in history, as well as past friendships with drug traffickers and organized crime figures, and for presiding over a violent and corrupt police force.

The Argentine Republic was established after independence from Spain in 1816. Democratic rule was often interrupted by military coups. The end of Juan Peron's authoritarian rule in 1955 led to a series of right-wing military dictatorships as well as left-wing and nationalist violence. Argentina returned to elected civilian rule in 1983, after seven years of vicious and mostly clandestine repression of leftist guerrillas and other dissidents.

As amended in 1994, the 1853 constitution provides for a president elected for four years with the option of reelection to one term. Presidential candidates must win 45 percent of the vote to avoid a runoff. The legislature consists of a 257-member chamber of deputies elected for six years, with half the seats renewable every three years,

and a 72-member senate nominated by elected provincial legislatures for nine-year terms, with one-third of the seats renewable every three years. Two senators are directly elected in the newly autonomous Buenos Aires federal district.

As provincial governor, Menem, running an orthodox Peronist platform of nationalism and state intervention in the economy, won a six-year presidential term in 1989, amidst hyperinflation and food riots. Once inaugurated, Menem discarded statist Peronist traditions by implementing, mostly by decree, an economic liberalization program. He also won praise for firmly allying the country with U.S. foreign policy.

In the October 1987 elections, voter concerns about rampant corruption and unemployment resulted in Menem's Peronists being handed their first nationwide defeat. The Alliance, composed of the centrist Radical Party and the center-left Front for a Country in Solidarity, beat Menem's party, 46 percent to 36 percent. On November 29, 1998, Buenos Aires mayor and Radical Party leader Fernando de la Rúa won a contested primary to become the Alliance candidate in the 1999 presidential elections.

Menem's feud with the hapless Peronist Party presidential nominee, Buenos Aires Governor Eduardo Duhalde, sealed the latter's fate as Duhalde was beaten by De la Rúa 48.5 percent to 38 percent in national elections held in October 24, 1999. Upon taking office, De la Rúa sought to put the government's accounts in order, cut spending, raise taxes, and push forward with unpopular labor reforms. He also made a series of appointments and issued sweeping rules and regulations designed to rein in public corruption. In April 2000, De la Rúa dismissed a nine-member military tribunal after it claimed military, rather than civilian, courts had jurisdiction over cases in which military personnel had been accused of kidnapping, and in some cases killing, hundreds of babies born to detainees during the so-called dirty war of the 1970s and early 1980s.

In May 2000, the Alliance received a boost when its candidate, Anibal Ibarra, won the Buenos Aires mayoralty vacated by De la Rúa when he assumed the presidency in December. In October, De la Rúa twice reshuffled his cabinet, the second time after Vice President Carlos Alvarez announced his stunning decision to resign. Alvarez stepped down after the president's determination appeared to waiver on uncovering the truth about the reported buying of congressional votes in order to pass labor legislation. Government involvement, including members of De la Rúa's inner circle, was suspected in the vote buying. In December 2000, a judge who himself was under investigation for "illegal enrichment," dropped the charges against the 11 senators named in the scandal, saying he lacked sufficient evidence to proceed.

As the economic downturn began to endanger the government's own solvency, De la Rúa called upon Menem's former Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo, to restore credibility to the government's economic program and to stave off default on Argentina's \$128 billion in public sector debt. Record unemployment, reduced and delayed wages to federal and provincial workers, and the closing of public schools have created the kind of social mobilization and protests unseen for nearly a generation. In June 2001, supermarkets in Buenos Aires province were raided by local residents for food; similar activities in 1989 spelled an early end to Argentina's first democratically elected government, which had come to power following a period of harsh military rule. The disintegrating economy also created a climate of xenophobia, as foreign companies that participated in the purchase of privatized state companies were targeted by Argentine labor groups for protest.

Street crime has become one of the most important challenges now facing Argen-

tina. The depression-like state of the economy has been a major factor in the steady increase in the rate of violent crime experienced throughout the country. The long-running economic crisis—including a widening gap between rich and poor, generalized corruption of both Argentina's political class and its judiciary, and a historical lack of attention by the political community to law enforcement needs—have forged an unfavorable set of circumstances that has proven resistant to change. The fight against crime has been complicated by Menem's legacy of restoring to the security forces and intelligence agencies both former death squad activists and former members of a lethal military regime, whose presence has exacerbated a troublesome and long-standing problem of excessive violence and corruption on the part of the police. Drug trafficking, the existence of which has long been ignored by Argentina's political community, is also on the rise, and the political corruption and potential for violence it represents pose perhaps the single greatest threat to public safety in the country today. Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, attention focused on the "Triple Border" area Argentina shares with Brazil and Paraguay, a reputed way station for Middle Eastern terrorists. Inefficiency and corruption within Argentina's intelligence and police services have called into question their ability to deal with this threat.

Two positive events also occurred in 2001, although by the end of the year one of them had been reversed. Throughout the year a congressional commission, working in cooperation with members of the U.S. Senate, exposed the degree to which money laundering—sometimes aided and abetted by U.S. and other foreign banks—in Argentina had facilitated political and narcotics corruption, a charge that resulted in the dismissal of the powerful head of the Central Bank. In a decision hailed by international human rights groups, in November, a federal court struck down two laws promulgated in the 1980s and 1990s that exempted most Argentine military officers from trial for rights atrocities committed during the "dirty war." Also, the arrest of Menem—the first democratically elected president to be arrested during a period of constitutional rule—on charges stemming from illegal arms sales restored some confidence in the judiciary. Few Argentines believed that he would face the consequences of a decade in power tainted by scandal and public excess. The De la Rúa government first appeared to allow the judicial system to function without political interference; however, in late 2001 the Argentine press was rife with speculation that senior officials were quietly letting judicial authorities know that they would not object to the charges against Menem being dropped.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through elections. The by-elections held in October 2001 were free and fair, although there was concern about the unregulated role of money in election campaigns and the continued use of *listas sabanas* (sheet lists) in which multiple candidates are elected from a single constituency.

Constitutional guarantees regarding freedom of religion and the right to organize political parties, civic organizations, and labor unions are generally respected.

Former President Carlos Menem's authoritarian ways and manipulation of the judiciary resulted in the undermining of the country's separation of powers and the rule of law. In 1990, Menem pushed a bill through the Peronist-controlled senate that allowed him to stack the supreme court with an additional four members and to fill the judiciary with politically loyal judges. He used the supreme court to uphold decrees

removing the comptroller-general and other officials mandated to probe government wrongdoing. Overall, the judicial system is politicized, inefficient, and riddled with the corruption endemic to all branches of government. The politization of the judiciary and the tenure of scores of incompetent and—it is widely believed—corrupt judges remain grave problems.

The situation of human rights groups and journalists, the latter of which had been subject to more than 1,000 beatings, kidnappings, and death threats during Menem's rule, improved notably under President Fernando De la Rúa.

Labor is dominated by Peronist unions. Union influence, however, has diminished because of corruption scandals, internal divisions, and restrictions on public sector strikes decreed by Menem to pave the way for his privatization program. In 1998, a deadlocked congress approved a government-sponsored labor flexibility initiative after a congressional deputy who was allegedly filmed by state intelligence agents in a gay bordello operated by the agents changed positions on the measure and voted for it.

Public safety is a primary concern for Argentines, who just a generation ago enjoyed a country with one of the world's lowest rates of violent common crime. Within a decade, crime in Argentina has doubled, and, in Buenos Aires, tripled. Criminal court judges are frequent targets of anonymous threats. Police misconduct includes growing numbers of allegedly extrajudicial executions by law enforcement officers. In July, the cash-strapped government cut the salaries of already low paid Federal Police a second time in less than a year—at a time when the number of officers killed in the line of duty spiraled upward. The Buenos Aires provincial police have been heavily involved in drug trafficking, extortion, and vice. Arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment by police are rarely punished in civil courts owing to intimidation of witnesses and judges, particularly in Buenos Aires province. There the governor, Carlos Ruckauf, has pursued ironfisted anticrime policies, exhorting a police force already heavily criticized for excessive force to shoot at criminals' arms and legs without prior warning, "pumping them full of bullets." The torture of detainees in the province has become endemic, and in late 2001, international and local human rights groups sounded an alert over an alarming number of adolescents killed by the police.

In 2001, the armed forces—quietly encouraged by the Pentagon—pressed ahead with their plan to be once again permitted to participate in internal security, a role prohibited by two model laws passed in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of the military's legacy of dictatorship and "political" policing. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, several senior government officials added their voices to efforts the generals were making. However, in November, the senate voted to maintain the ban on armed forces participation in internal intelligence operations.

Prison conditions are generally substandard. In 2000, it was revealed that prisoners in a federal jail ran a workshop to strip stolen cars and paid wardens who smuggled drugs into the prison for them. Witnesses at a trial told how mutineers in a recent prison riot killed seven fellow inmates, cooked their bodies, and fed them to their hostages.

The investigation of a 1994 car bombing of a Jewish organization, in which more than 80 people died, has languished because of sloppy police work at the crime scene and the alleged complicity by members of the security forces with the terrorists. On September 24, 2001, seven years after the outrage, the trial of several suspects—most of them policemen—began in Buenos Aires, but a senior U.S. law enforcement official called the effort "a joke" and suggested that complicity in the attack went high into

Menem's inner circle. The 250,000-strong Jewish community is a frequent target of anti-Semitic vandalism. Neo-Nazi organizations and other anti-Semitic groups, frequently tied to remnants of the old-line security services, some of whom retain their posts, remain active. The Roman Catholic majority enjoys freedom of religious expression.

A study released by the United Nations Children's Fund in 2000 showed that child prostitution was a serious problem, exacerbated by a growing number of hungry children.

## Armenia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 statist (transitional)  
 Population: 3,800,000  
 PPP: \$2,215  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Armenian (93 percent), Azeri (3 percent), Russian (2 percent), Kurd and others (2 percent)  
 Capital: Yerevan



### Overview:

The politically charged trial of the defendants in the October 1999 shootings of several senior government officials in parliament finally got under way in early 2001. Despite widespread speculation as to whether the gunmen had acted on the orders of others, including President Robert Kocharian, and attempts by the political opposition to remove him from office, the president continued to consolidate his power throughout the year. The ailing economy showed few signs of recovery, while a final settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remained elusive.

The landlocked, predominantly Christian Transcaucasus republic of Armenia was ruled at various times by Macedonians, Romans, Persians, Mongols, Turks, and others. Following a brief period of independence from 1918 to 1920, the Russian region became a Soviet republic in 1922, while western Armenia was returned to Turkey. Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union in September 1991.

Prior to the 1995 parliamentary elections, nine political parties were banned, thereby ensuring the dominance of Levon Ter Petrosian's ruling Armenian National Movement's (ANM) coalition. In the 1996 presidential election, Petrosian defeated former Prime Minister Vazgen Manukian, who ran on a pro-market, anticorruption platform. In February 1998, Petrosian resigned following mass defections from the ANM and the resignation of key officials in protest against his gradualist approach in negotiations over control of Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian enclave in Azerbaijan. Prime Minister Robert Kocharian, who was appointed by Petrosian in 1997 and formerly served as president of Nagorno-Karabakh, was elected president in March with the support of the previously banned Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaktsutium.

Parliamentary elections in May 1999 resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Unity bloc, a new alliance of Defense Minister Vazgen Sarkisian's Republican Party

and former Soviet Armenian leader Karen Demirchian's People's Party, which campaigned on a populist platform of greater state involvement in the economy and increased social spending. In June, Sarkisian was named prime minister while Demirchian became speaker of parliament. The relationship between the politically influential Sarkisian and Demirchian on the one hand, and the relatively weaker Kocharian on the other, was marked by power struggles and policy differences.

Just five months after the parliamentary elections, the country was plunged into a political crisis when five gunmen stormed the parliament building on October 27 and assassinated Sarkisian, Demirchian, and several other senior government officials. On November 3, Kocharian appointed Aram Sarkisian, Vazgen Sarkisian's younger brother, as the new prime minister. By selecting the relatively unknown and inexperienced Aram Sarkisian, Kocharian hoped to assert greater political control while still maintaining some support from the pro-Vazgen Sarkisian parliament. However Aram Sarkisian soon proved to be a strong opponent of Kocharian's policies, and a period of growing tensions between the president and the prime minister ensued.

During the first few months following the parliamentary shootings, investigators alleged that several members of Kocharian's inner circle may have been behind the attacks. These accusations, as well as a claim by Chief Prosecutor Gagik Jahangirian that the killings were part of a coup d'etat, prompted some opposition figures to call for Kocharian's resignation. However, Kocharian gradually consolidated his power throughout the year to emerge as the most powerful figure in the country's leadership. On May 2, Kocharian dismissed Prime Minister Sarkisian and Defense Minister Vagharshak Harutiunian, whom he accused of engaging in political intrigues at the expense of addressing the country's economic problems. The decision to form a new government, in which the Unity bloc agreed to cooperate with Kocharian, was generally regarded as a tactical victory for the president. Republican Party leader Andranik Margarian was named the new prime minister, while presidential advisor Serge Sarkisian, who had been an early suspect in connection with the October shootings, was appointed to the important post of defense minister.

After more than a year of investigations, the trial of the five gunmen, plus eight others charged with complicity in the 1999 parliamentary attacks, began in February 2001. Although Kocharian had effectively been cleared of any connection with the killings the previous year, many in the country maintained that the gunmen had not acted alone, while speculating about the identities of the instigators of the shootings. A final verdict in the trial had not been reached at year's end.

As Kocharian's authority continued to grow, the increasingly fractured political opposition made several efforts to unseat him from power. In early September, three opposition parties failed in an attempt to impeach the president, whom they accused of sabotaging the inquiry into the 1999 parliament shootings, violating the constitution, and creating a political and economic crisis in the country. On two occasions in late September and October, thousands of people in Yerevan attended rallies organized by the recently formed Republic Party led by Aram Sarkisian, former prime minister and member of the Unity bloc's Republican Party. While the protestors demanded Kocharian's resignation, the president announced that he would remain in office and seek another term in 2003.

In the foreign policy sphere, Armenia pledged its support for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and formally granted overflight permission to U.S. aircraft in the



campaign the day after Washington began air strikes against the Taliban in early October. Despite a number of internationally led high-level meetings between the Armenian and Azerbaijani leadership, little progress was made during the year to reach a breakthrough on the long-standing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Throughout 2001, the economy continued to stagnate, with real unemployment at nearly 30 percent and more than half the population estimated to be living below the poverty line. In June, parliament approved a plan to privatize the country's remaining state-owned enterprises, including 40 percent within the following 12 months. At the same time, repeated attempts to privatize the national energy distribution network were delayed by reasons including domestic opposition to the sale of such strategic assets to foreign investors.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Armenians can change their government democratically, although the 1995 and 1999 parliamentary and 1996 presidential elections were characterized by serious irregularities. International observers reported some improvements regarding the 1999 parliamentary vote over previous elections, including the adoption of a new electoral code in February containing some recommendations by the international community, more balanced media coverage, and the return to the political arena of previously banned parties. However, they also cited serious problems with significant inaccuracies of voter lists, the presence of unauthorized persons in polling stations, and the lack of effective and impartial electoral commissions. The 1995 constitution provides for a weak legislature and a strong, directly elected president who appoints the prime minister. Most parties in Armenia are dominated by specific government officials or other powerful figures, suffer from significant internal dissent and division, or are weak and ineffective.

Self-censorship among journalists is common, particularly in reporting on Nagorno-Karabakh, national security, or corruption issues. While most newspapers are privately owned, the majority operate with limited resources and consequently are dependent on economic and political interest groups for their survival. A number of private television stations broadcast throughout the country, and most radio stations are privately owned.

Freedom of religion is somewhat respected in this overwhelmingly Christian country. The Armenian Apostolic Church, to which 90 percent of Armenians formally belong, has been granted official status as the national church and is not subject to certain restrictions imposed on other religious groups, including having to register with the State Council on Religious Affairs. Provisions in a law on religious organizations forbid proselytizing except by the Armenian Apostolic Church, and require religious organizations to have at least 200 members to register. The council continues to deny registration to Jehovah's Witnesses, who face persecution for refusing to serve in the military.

The government generally respects freedom of assembly and association, although the registration requirements are cumbersome and time consuming. While the constitution enshrines the right to form and join trade unions, in practice labor organizations are weak and relatively inactive.

The judiciary, which is subject to political pressure from the executive branch, is characterized by widespread violations of due process. Witnesses do not have the right to legal counsel while being questioned in police custody, and detainees may not file a complaint in court before trial regarding abuses suffered during criminal investigations.

In a positive move, parliament adopted legislation in April 2001 reducing the amount of time that suspects may be detained by the authorities before being charged, and requiring that defendants be granted pretrial bail for crimes with Penalties of less than three years in prison. Police frequently make arbitrary arrests without warrants, beat detainees during arrest and interrogation, and use torture to extract confessions.

While citizens have the right to own private property and establish businesses, an inefficient and often corrupt court system and unfair business competition hinder operations. Key industries remain in the hands of oligarchs and influential clans who received preferential treatment in the early stages of privatization. In June 2001, parliament passed anticorruption legislation that requires the disclosure of all income by officials of the executive and judicial branches. Domestic violence and trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of prostitution are believed to be serious problems.

## Australia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy (federal)  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 19,400,000  
 PPP: \$24,574  
 Life Expectancy: 79  
 Ethnic Groups: White (92 percent), Asian (7 percent), other, including aboriginal (1 percent)  
 Capital: Canberra

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Status: Free



**Overview:** Prime Minister John Howard's conservative coalition won a third three-year term in November 2001 after taking tough action against illegal immigration and global terrorism. Trailing badly in opinion polls, Howard's popularity soared after his government turned away a ship in August that had rescued hundreds of boat people and later sent troops to aid the United States' military campaign in Afghanistan. While Howard's hard line on illegal immigration resonated among many rural and working class Australians, critics noted that it had not deterred more refugees from arriving. They also said it risked straining Australia's relations with its Asian and Pacific neighbors.

Claimed by the British in 1770 and settled by convicts, Australia gained independence in January 1901 as a commonwealth of six states. The government in 1911 adopted the Northern Territory and Canberra, the capital, as territorial units. Since World War

II, political power has alternated between the left-leaning Labor Party and the conservative coalition of the Liberal Party and the smaller, rural-based National Party. Under Bob Hawke and then Paul Keating, Labor governments in the 1980s and early 1990s won five consecutive elections and helped transform a commodities-dependent, protected economy into a more open and competitive one. They privatized many firms, slashed tariffs, and deregulated financial markets. Keating in particular also promoted Australia as a multicultural society, sought to make amends for past wrongs to its Ab-

original minority, and encouraged his countrymen to see their economic futures as linked primarily to Asia rather than Europe and the United States.

Amid high unemployment and an economic slowdown, Howard led the Liberal-National coalition to victory at the 1996 parliamentary elections. In its first term, Howard's government aggressively promoted small- and medium-sized business interests, satisfied demands of farmers and miners by amending legislation to limit Aboriginal land claims, and tried to restrict trade union power. In a defining act, the government supported a stevedoring company's dismissal in 1998 of some 1,400 dock workers in one of Australia's largest labor disputes in decades. A court ultimately ordered the workers reinstated.

After winning reelection in October 1998, Howard's government carried out its main campaign pledge in July 1999 by introducing a goods and services tax (GST), which it partly offset with income and corporate tax cuts. Small-business owners, who tend to be Liberal-National supporters, complained of the cost and time needed to collect the new tax. Howard also angered mainstream Aboriginal leaders in 2000 by rejecting their long-standing demands for an official apology and some form of reparation for past abuses against Aborigines. These abuses include the forced removal of some 100,000 Aboriginal children from their parents under an official assimilation policy between 1910 and the early 1970s. At the same time, Howard ordered the Northern Territory to exempt juveniles from a 1997 mandatory sentencing law that critics said disproportionately affected Aborigines.

With Labor needing a national swing of less than one percent to unseat the coalition in the November 10, 2001 elections, the Liberal Party won 68 seats and the National Party 13 against 65 seats for Labor. Minor-party candidates and independents took the remaining four seats in the 150-seat lower house.

Howard, 62, won reelection by deftly turning illegal immigration and the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States into pressing national security issues. Support for the coalition increased after it sent a small contingent of troops to assist U.S. military forces in Afghanistan, pushed through parliament tough new laws against illegal immigrants, most of whom are Muslims, and began turning back boatloads of migrants and asylum seekers. That policy began in August, when the government turned away a ship carrying 433 people rescued from a sinking Indonesian ferry. Labor leader Kim Beazley largely supported Howard's security policies while promising to boost spending on schools, universities, and hospitals and reform the highly unpopular GST.

The election came amid a fall in the unemployment rate to 6.7 percent in October from 7.1 percent in September. Gross domestic product grew at an annualized rate of 4.0 percent through the third quarter of 2001 after growing by 3.3 percent in 2000.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Australians can change their government through elections and enjoy a full range of basic rights. The 1900 constitution set up a directly elected bicameral parliament that currently consists of a 76-member senate and a 150-member house of representatives. In a November 1999 referendum, voters rejected a proposal to replace the queen of England as head of state with a president elected by parliament. Polls showed a majority of Australians favoring a republic, but with a directly elected president.

Australia's primary human rights problem involves discrimination and other abuses faced by its 399,000 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who make up roughly two

percent of the population. Aborigines allegedly face discrimination and mistreatment by police and prison officials and are incarcerated at far higher rates than whites. Adult Aborigines make up 1.6 percent of Australia's adult population but 20 percent of the total prison population, according to a 2000 report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Critics note that often Aborigines are imprisoned under mandatory sentencing laws for minor crimes. The mandatory sentencing law in the Northern Territory and a less draconian one in Western Australia "appear to target offenses that are committed disproportionately by indigenous Australians," the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) said in 2000.

Aboriginal leaders link Aboriginal crime, as well as high rates of domestic violence among Aborigines, to poverty, high unemployment, alleged economic and social discrimination, and inferior educational and health care opportunities. Compared with white Australians, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have life expectancies that are 20 years lower and infant mortality rates that are nearly twice as high. The government is generally responsive to these concerns and has introduced numerous remedial health care and education programs.

CERD in 2000 also criticized a 1998 legislative amendment that restricted Aboriginal claims to state-owned pastoral land. The Howard government countered that under the amended Native Title Act, 79 percent of Australian land is still subject to native-title claims. Parliament had amended the law at the behest of farmers and miners following a 1996 court ruling that Aborigines could claim native title to pastoral land leased by commercial users. The amended act still requires the government to compensate Aboriginal groups with valid claims to pastoral land.

Domestic and international human rights groups have criticized the government's practice of detaining anyone arriving in Australia illegally, including asylum seekers, pending resolution of their claims. While most cases are decided in a matter of weeks, a small number of asylum seekers are detained for years while their cases are on appeal. A parliamentary group that visited all six immigrant detention centers reported in June that they were "shocked" by the conditions in the facilities. The camps hold more than 2,000 people.

Social analysts and commentators estimate that domestic violence affects up to one family in three or four, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Australia's human rights record in 2000. Studies show that women earn only two-thirds to three-fourths of their male counterparts' wages, the report added.

Australian trade unions are independent and active, but recent legislation aimed at increasing the country's economic competitiveness has curbed their power and contributed to a decline in union rolls. The 1996 Workplace Relations Act encouraged the use of "workplace agreements" between management and individual employees that are subject to relatively few government regulations. These contracts are gradually replacing the previous system under which the federal and state governments handed down minimum-wage awards that were supplemented by industrywide or company-level bargaining. The 1996 act also banned closed shops, limited redress and compensation for unfair dismissal, tightened restrictions on secondary boycotts, and permitted workers to strike only while they were renegotiating their contracts. In 1999, however, a union successfully challenged this latter provision. The International Labor Organization recommended in 2000 that the government amend provisions of the act linking certain strikes to interference in trade and commerce and to ensure that workplace agree-

ments do not undermine collective bargaining rights. Union membership slumped to about 25 percent of the workforce in 2001 from 40 percent in 1990.

## Austria

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy (federal)      Political Rights: 1  
Economy: Mixed              Civil Liberties: 1  
capitalist                      Status: Free

Population: 8,100,000

PPP: \$25,089

Life Expectancy: 78

Ethnic Groups: German (98 percent), other, including Slovenian, Croatian, and Hungarian (2 percent)

Capital: Vienna



### Overview:

Austria's right-wing, nationalist Freedom Party suffered another in a series of electoral setbacks in 2001, losing ground in Vienna's municipal elections. The Social Democrats and the Greens registered impressive gains and immediately collaborated to challenge the ruling conservative coalition government. Press freedom groups expressed concern over the alleged intervention of political figures into the work of editorial staff. They also called upon Austria to abandon new plans to criminalize certain journalistic activity. Austria experienced a noticeable increase in illegal immigration during the year, which prompted the imposition of lower immigration quotas. The ruling People's Party faced allegations of receiving illicit funds from a secret arms deal with Botswana.

The Republic of Austria was established in 1918, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and was reborn in 1945, seven years after its annexation by Nazi Germany. Occupation by the Western Allies and the Soviet Union ended in 1955 under the Austrian State Treaty, which guaranteed Austrian neutrality and restored national sovereignty.

The Freedom Party lost ground in municipal elections in Vienna in March, the party's third consecutive setback since it became a coalition partner in the national government. The party captured 20 percent of the vote, compared with 28 percent in the 1996 elections. Jorg Haider, the party's former leader and the current governor of Carinthia province, stirred controversy after issuing anti-Semitic slurs during the campaign. Haider openly espoused a populist, xenophobic and pro-Nazi platform in successful national elections in 1999. After the Freedom Party became a junior coalition partner in the center-right government of chancellor Wolfgang Schussel, the European Union (EU) imposed diplomatic sanctions against Austria. Sanctions were lifted in the middle of 2000, following Haider's resignation as Freedom Party leader. Haider does not hide his ambition to one day become Austrian chancellor.

In July, the Green Party alleged the ruling People's Party had received illicit financing via a secret arms deal with Botswana. Botswana reportedly received tanks, machine guns, armored vehicles, and grenades in the 1998 deal.

In August 2001, the Vienna Green Party, seizing upon the Freedom Party's elec-

toral setback, announced plans to form a coalition with the Social Democratic Party in municipal government. This was seen as a test for possible future collaboration on the national level.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Austrians can change their government democratically. The country's provinces possess considerable latitude in local administration and can check federal power by electing members of the upper house of parliament. Voting is compulsory in some provinces. The independent judiciary is headed by a supreme court and includes both constitutional and administrative courts.

A 1955 treaty prohibits Nazis from exercising freedom of assembly and association. Nazi organizations are illegal, but Nazis are welcomed in the Freedom Party. In 1992, public denial of the Holocaust and justification of approval of Nazi crimes against humanity were outlawed. In general, Austrian police enforce these anti-Nazi statutes more enthusiastically when extremists attract international attention. However, Austria was called to task during the year for its Nazi-era behavior. In August, Austria made an initial payment of \$36 million to former Austria-based, Nazi-era slaves and forced laborers during World War II.

While Austrian media are considered free, the Austrian Broadcasting Company (ORF) holds a monopoly on the transmission of domestic television programs. Private TV is transmitted by cable or satellite. The press market is characterized by a monopoly. Two companies own the majority of titles in a market of six million people. The weekly news magazine *Die Kronenzeitung* commands a 43 percent market share with an editorial policy close to that of the right-wing Freedom Party. During the year, Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) complained about a lack of media diversity in Austria. It also suggested there is too much state control and censorship of the media.

A broadcasting law protects the media from political interference. However, in February, RSF reported that political figures were harassing journalists. The group pointed to an increase in lawsuits against media outlets—many filed by Freedom Party leaders—and official intervention into the work of editorial staff covering political news.

In May, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) called on the government to abandon draft laws designed to criminalize certain journalistic investigations. The new laws would outlaw publication of certain court files and internal government documents considered "forbidden material." The IFJ expressed alarm, saying the new laws would "stifle democratic debate and send decent journalists to jail." The European Commission has in the past criticized Austria for press freedom violations.

Women hold approximately 10 percent of federal assembly seats and approximately 20 percent of provincial seats. Susanne Riess-Passer assumed leadership of the Freedom Party after Jorg Haider stepped down in 2000. Women are prohibited by law from working at night in most occupations. Nurses, taxi drivers, and a few other workers are exempted from this ban. Women are allowed to serve in the military. The ruling Social Democratic Party has pledged to begin to address gender biases by ensuring that women occupy 40 percent of all party and government posts by 2003.

In December, after a constitutional court ruled that place-name signs in Carinthia province must be written in German and Slovenian if a census reveals that more than 10 percent of the province's population is ethnically Slovene, Jorg Haider vowed to defy the ruling and insisted that a referendum on the issue be held.

Attempts by immigrants to enter Austria illegally rose significantly in 2001, breeding greater domestic resentment over the large proportion of foreigners living in the country. As of September, the Austrian army caught nearly 7,000 people trying to enter the country illegally. The total figure was considered higher as police and other security services caught many more. Many of the immigrants—from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Romania, and Bangladesh—paid Slovakian smugglers to sneak them into the country. Many immigrants use the Morava River in trying to enter Austria. The river runs along the border with Slovakia.

In August, the government announced new, lower, quotas for legal immigration. Special allowances were made for workers with special skills. Austria has the highest proportion of foreigners of the EU countries. Close to 20 percent (1.8 million) of Vienna's population is foreign. Some districts of the city contain a majority of foreigners. An August poll showed 42 percent of Austrians reject eastward expansion of the EU.

Amnesty International leveled charges of police brutality and racism against non-white, and, ostensibly, foreign immigrants. An Amnesty International country report documented cases of nonwhite detainees beaten, kicked, and punched by police.

Under Austria's informal *proporz* system, many state and private sector appointments—including those of senior teachers in state schools—are made on the basis of affiliation with the two main political parties.

Trade unions retain an important independent voice in Austria's political, social, and economic life. Fifty-two percent of workers are organized in 14 national unions, all of which belong to the Austrian Trade Union Federation and which are managed by supporters of the country's traditional political parties. The right to strike is protected.

## ↓ Azerbaijan

Polity: Presidential (dominant party)	Political Rights: 6
Economy: Capitalist- statist	Civil Liberties: 5
Population: 8,100,000	Status: Partly Free
PPP: \$2,850	
Life Expectancy: 72	
Ethnic Groups: Azeri (90 percent), Dagestani (3 percent), Russian (3 percent), Armenian (2 percent), other (2 percent)	
Capital: Baku	



**Trend Arrow:** Azerbaijan received a downward trend arrow due to greater government harassment of the country's independent journalists and media outlets.

### Overview:

A government campaign against Azerbaijan's independent broadcasters and press outlets, including the forced closures of several leading private newspapers and the arrests or intimidation of prominent journalists, intensified during much of 2001. At the same time, Washington approved a waiver of its nearly decade-long sanctions against Azerbaijan in response to Baku's support of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan. The restrictions had

been imposed following Azerbaijan's war with Armenia over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, a conflict for which a final peace agreement remained elusive at year's end.

Controlled by the Ottoman Empire since the seventeenth century, Azerbaijan entered the Soviet Union in 1922 as part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federal Republic, becoming a separate Soviet republic in 1936. Following a referendum in 1991, Azerbaijan declared independence from the disintegrating Soviet Union.

In June 1992, Abulfaz Elchibey, leader of the nationalist opposition Azerbaijan Popular Front (APF), was elected president in a generally free and fair vote. A military coup one year later ousted him from power and installed the former first secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, Heydar Aliev, in his place. In the October 1993 presidential elections, Aliev reportedly received almost 99 percent of the vote. Azerbaijan's first post-Soviet parliamentary elections, held in November 1995, saw five leading opposition parties and some 600 independent candidates barred from the vote in which President Aliev's Yeni Azerbaijan Party won the most seats. In October 1998, Aliev was chosen president with more than 70 percent of the vote in an election characterized by serious irregularities. In August 2000, Elchibey died of cancer in Turkey, with tens of thousands of mourners attending his funeral service in Baku.

In a widely expected outcome, the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party captured the majority of seats in the November 5, 2000, parliamentary election. The APF and the Communist Party came in a distant second and third, respectively. International monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe cited mass electoral fraud, including the intimidation of those gathering signatures for candidates' registration before the poll, the stuffing of ballot boxes, and a strong progovernment bias in state-run media. Despite widespread criticism of the elections, the Council of Europe approved Azerbaijan's application for membership just days after the vote, a decision widely criticized by international human rights groups.

On November 14, political opposition parties announced their refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the new legislature and convened mass rallies to protest the results. Although election results were overturned in 11 voting districts, in which new voting was scheduled for January 2001, those in the remaining districts were officially declared valid. In the January 7 runoff, pro-government parties captured the most seats.

In August, President Aliev announced that he would seek a third term in office in the 2003 presidential election. However, many observers continue to believe that he is grooming his son, Ilham, to be the country's next head of state. This theory received greater credence after Ilham was promoted to senior deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, the number two spot in the party's hierarchy.

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Azerbaijan announced its support for the U.S.-led war against the Taliban, giving the United States permission to land on and fly over its territory and allowing the use of its country as a site for U.S. army hospitals. During the last several years, intelligence agencies from Washington and Baku participated in joint antiterrorist operations. The U.S. Congress had identified Azerbaijan as one of 34 countries around the world with groups linked to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network.

Plans for the proposed U.S.-backed Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline took a step forward in 2001 with the completion of a preliminary engineering study, followed by the start



of a more detailed examination of specific engineering issues. Construction of the project is scheduled to begin in mid-2002. The pipeline, which would run from Azerbaijan through Georgia to the Turkish port of Ceyhan, is regarded as a means of reducing Moscow's influence in the region since it would bypass Russian territory.

The most recent internationally-led peace negotiations over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh failed to achieve a lasting settlement at year's end. While Baku insists that the republic remain a constituent part of Azerbaijan, even while being granted greater autonomy, Yerevan maintains that it should be left outside of Azeri jurisdiction. At the same time, Azerbaijan continued to lobby the United States to repeal Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which blocks certain U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan until the country lifts its economic blockade against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Following Baku's support of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, the U.S. Congress authorized President George Bush to waive the nine-year-old sanctions on an annual basis.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Azerbaijan cannot change their government democratically. In 1999, President Heydar Aliiev celebrated 30 years of almost uninterrupted rule since becoming Azerbaijan's Communist Party leader in 1969. The 1995 constitution gives the president control over the government, legislature, and judiciary. The 1993 and 1998 presidential and 1995 and 2000 parliamentary elections were considered neither free nor fair by international observers. Opposition political party members face frequent harassment and arrest by the authorities.

Although the constitution guarantees freedom of speech and the press, journalists who publish articles critical of the president or other prominent state officials are routinely prosecuted, and self-censorship is common. Many newspapers struggle financially in the face of heavy fines or imprisonment of their editors and staff. In August 2001, regulations went into effect that require newspapers to use a modified Latin, rather than the Cyrillic, alphabet. These requirements place an additional burden on the press, as many Azeris are familiar only with Cyrillic letters. President Aliiev signed a decree in July creating a national media council, whose members will be appointed or approved by the president, and which will enjoy wide-ranging powers, including the authority to issue licenses to broadcasters.

The government campaign against the country's independent media intensified during 2001, particularly during the last few months of the year. Numerous journalists, including Zamin Haji of the opposition daily paper *Azadliq*, were attacked by police or unknown assailants. In July, the independent ABA TV station announced its immediate closure because of continued pressure by the state authorities. In August and September, the independent papers *Milletin Sesi*, *Etimad*, *Bakinski Bulvard*, and *Avropa* were ordered to cease publication by court order or forced to close because of heavy court-imposed fines for alleged defamation of senior state officials. Shahbaz Huduoglu, the editor of *Milletin Sesi*, and Elmar Huseinov, the founder of *Bakinski Bulvard*, were sentenced to six months in prison in mid-September in separate cases for insulting the honor and dignity of the president's chief of staff and the mayor of Baku, respectively. Pressure by domestic and international groups led to their release from prison a month later, although both of their papers remained banned. At a November meeting of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, participants accused the independent publications *Yeni Musavat*, *Azadlig*, and *Hurriet* of anti-state activities; the state publishing house sub-

sequently refused to print them. Police broke up demonstrations held on November 15 and December 12 by representatives from several independent newspapers who were protesting the government's restrictions on press freedom. Several journalists were beaten or arrested, including *Yeni Musavat* editor Rauf Arifoglu. A December 20 rally estimated to have been attended by from 700 to 2,000 journalists appeared to have been conducted without significant interference by the authorities. In a positive year-end development, parliament adopted amendments to the laws on the mass media on December 26 limiting the government's power to shut down newspapers or strip journalists of their accreditation. The legislation also abolished a requirement for media outlets to register with the ministry of justice before beginning publication. Most of Azerbaijan's print media praised the passage of the amendments, which some attributed to pressure from the Council of Europe.

The government restricts some religious activities of foreigners and Azerbaijanis who are members of nontraditional religious groups through burdensome registration requirements and interference in the dissemination of printed materials. Islam, Russian Orthodoxy, and Judaism are considered "traditional" religions and their members can worship freely. In June 2001, President Aliev issued a decree creating the State Council for Relations with Religious Organizations, which is charged with monitoring all organizations involved in religious activities and supervising the renewal of their licenses.

The government frequently restricts freedom of assembly and association, particularly for political parties critical of the government. Several hundred Nagorno-Karabakh war veterans conducted hunger strikes and public demonstrations in January and February 2001 to demand pension and disability benefit increases. Police forcibly dispersed the protestors, arresting several dozen and subsequently sentencing nine of them to between one and six years in prison. In April, police broke up a demonstration by supporters of the opposition Democratic Party of Azerbaijan who were calling for an end to the criminal investigation of party leader Rasul Guliev. In July, 27 people accused of having participated in antigovernment demonstrations following the November parliamentary elections were sentenced to prison or probation. Most trade unions belong to the state-run Azerbaijani Labor Federation, and there is no effective collective bargaining system.

The judiciary, which does not function independently of the executive branch, is inefficient and corrupt. Detainees are often held for long periods before trials, and then access to evidence and lawyers is restricted. Police abuse of suspects during arrest and interrogation reportedly remains commonplace, with torture often used to extract confessions. According to opposition and human rights groups, several hundred political prisoners are in detention throughout the country. The more than 750,000 refugees who fled the war in Nagorno-Karabakh remain in Azerbaijan, often living in appalling conditions. Most are unable or unwilling to return to their homes because of fears for their safety and concerns over dismal economic prospects in the breakaway territory.

Significant parts of the economy are in the hands of a corrupt nomenklatura, which severely limits equality of opportunity. Most women work in the low-paying public sector, and traditional norms perpetuate discrimination and violence against women.

## Bahamas

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free

Population: 300,000

PPP: \$15,258

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Black (85 percent), white (12 percent), Asian and Hispanic (3 percent)

Capital: Nassau



### Overview:

On July 1, 2001, Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham, 54 years old, said that he would leave active politics within the following year, signaling the end of his nine-year stewardship at the helm of the island-chain nation. Ingraham, who revitalized the local economy and helped clean up its politics, said that his decision was final and did not depend on whether his Bahamas Freedom Party (BFP) won elections slated for 2002. In early 2001, Ingraham announced that new legislation would remove the notoriety of the islands' robust financial center as a place for money laundering; its provisions eliminated anonymity for international business accounts and improved local banks' cooperation with international investigative agencies. Shortly thereafter, the United States approved the Bahamas' request to protect non-American offshore banking clients' identities without paying a Penalty, by giving the island country qualified jurisdiction status. However, in late November, a Bahamian court ruled that it was unconstitutional for government regulators to freeze suspicious bank accounts, thereby weakening laws that allowed the country to escape an international money laundering blacklist. The Bahamas' key tourist industry struggled throughout the year, particularly in the aftermath of Hurricane Michelle in November and bad publicity from shark attacks, plane crashes, and an arson fire in September that burned Nassau's Straw Market, a popular local attraction.

The Bahamas, a 700-island nation in the Caribbean, is a member of the Commonwealth. It was granted independence in 1973. The British monarchy is represented by a governor-general.

Under the 1973 constitution, a bicameral parliament consisted of a 49-member house of assembly directly elected for five years and a 16-member senate with 9 members appointed by the prime minister, 4 by the leader of the parliament opposition, and 3 by the governor-general. The number of seats in the assembly has been reduced by 9, to 40, in keeping with a campaign promise by the Free National Movement (FNM) party. The prime minister is the leader of the party that commands a majority in the house.

Lynden Pindling, the country's independence hero who is known as the "Black Moses," served as prime minister for 25 years as the head of Progressive Liberal Party (PLP). Dogged by years of allegations of corruption and high official involvement in narcotics trafficking Pindling—who died in 2000—was ousted by Ingraham and the FNM in the 1992 elections after two and a half decades of rule. Ingraham, a lawyer and former cabinet official, had been expelled by the PLP in 1986 for his outspoken attacks on corruption, and became leader of the FNM in 1990.

Ingraham vowed to bring honesty, efficiency, and accountability to government. Pindling, at the time the western hemisphere's longest-serving head of government, relied on his image as the father of the nation's independence. With 90 percent of the electorate voting, the FNM won 32 seats in the house of assembly, to the PLP's 17. Pindling held his own seat and became the official opposition leader.

Upon taking office as prime minister, Ingraham appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the Pindling government. In 1995 the commission detailed widespread mismanagement and malpractice in the national telephone and airline companies. In the 1997 election, Ingraham claimed credit for revitalizing the economy by attracting foreign investment. Voters handed his FNM a 34 to 6 majority in parliament, rebuking Pindling and the PLP for a second time. In April 1997, Pindling resigned as opposition leader and was replaced by Perry Christie, who had served in the PLP cabinet until he denounced government corruption in the wake of a drug probe.

By the end of the 1990s, a spiraling crime rate linked to illegal narcotics and gun-running had left Bahamians questioning whether the islands were returning to the ways of the previous decade, when the Bahamas was known as "a nation for sale." In March 2000, the U.S. State Department praised the Bahamas for giving "high priority" to combating the transshipment of drugs and for cooperating with regional antinarcotics efforts. In addition to setting up the new antidrug intelligence unit, the Ingraham government also announced sweeping plans to bring the country's financial sector into full compliance with international standards and practices. In June 2000, amendments to the Money Laundering (Proceeds of Crime) Act strengthened requirements for financial institutions to report suspicious and unusual transactions.

The government announced in October 2000 that it was creating a new intelligence unit to investigate suspicious financial activity in the island chain as part of an effort to remove the country from an international money laundering "blacklist." The measure followed the release of a report in June by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)—a coordinating body set up a decade ago by the Group of 7 economic powers to coordinate international efforts against money laundering—that cited the Bahamas for not doing enough to fight illegal flows of cash. The finding was made just four months after the United States called for the Bahamas to improve its judicial system, win convictions against narcotics kingpins, and speed up extraditions. A legislative package was approved that strengthened regulation of the financial sector, including a law giving government officials the power to freeze accounts. In June 2001, the FATF removed the Bahamas from the list of countries considered uncooperative in fighting money laundering. However, the November court ruling forced government regulators to petition the Supreme Court in order to freeze an account, a cumbersome process that experts say gives suspect enterprises extra time to pull their money out of the country ahead of an investigation.

In November 2001, the government handed over its files on Bank Al Taqwa Limited to the United States after U.S. government officials accused the financial institution of being a "financier of terror" that had funded Saudi-born terrorist Osama bin Laden. The bank, a so-called brass-plate bank (a bank registered in the Bahamas but having no physical presence there), was closed down in April as part of a regulatory clamp down on such institutions. The government also revealed that one of the 19 terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks had conducted a brief flight-training exercise in May on the archipelago.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government democratically. Constitutional guarantees regarding the right to organize political parties, civic organizations, and labor unions are generally respected, as is the free exercise of religion. Human rights organizations have broad access to institutions and individuals.

The judicial system is headed by a supreme court and a court of appeals, with the right of appeal under certain circumstances to the Privy Council in London. There are local courts, and on the outer islands the local commissioners have magisterial powers. Despite antidrug legislation and a 1987 agreement with the United States to suppress the drug trade, there is evidence of drug-related corruption and money laundering, although less than during Prime Minister Lyndon Pindling's years. In 2001, the final stages were being completed for a court automation project designed to reduce delays in criminal cases, especially drug prosecutions, by means of a computerized court case management system. Significant strides were reported in reducing both the length of court cases and the backlog of criminal appeals.

Violent crime is a growing concern, particularly in Nassau, and has been a focus of the Ingraham government. Nongovernmental organizations have documented the increase in recent years of violent crime, as well as the occasional beating of prisoners—most often to extract confessions—and other abuses by police, including arbitrary arrest and lengthy pretrial detention. No independent agency exists to investigate reports of police abuse. In recent years, the Royal Bahamas Police Force has taken significant steps to reduce corruption in the force, including the establishment of new written procedures to limit the possibilities of unethical or illegal conduct. There are approximately 2,200 officers to police a total native population of approximately 300,000.

The police force has won plaudits for its key role in regional efforts to stem the drug trade. However, coordination with the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (PBDF) is plagued by operational problems and appears to reflect continuing government ambivalence about the role to be played by the RBDF in law enforcement.

The government is making significant efforts to relieve overcrowding of prisoners—the subject of serious criticism in the past by human rights organizations.

There are three daily and several weekly newspapers, all privately owned, and they express a variety of views on public issues, as do the government-run radio station and four privately owned radio broadcasters. Opposition politicians claim, however, that the state-run television service, Broadcasting Corporation of the Bahamas (ZNS), does not accord them the same coverage as that given to the ruling party. Full freedom of expression is constrained by strict libel laws. Unlike its predecessor, the Ingraham government has not made use of these laws against independent newspapers. It has amended media laws to allow for private ownership of broadcasting outlets.

Labor, business, and professional organizations are generally free from governmental interference. Unions have the right to strike, and collective bargaining is prevalent. Discrimination against the disabled and persons of Haitian descent persists. Between 25,000 and 40,000 Haitians reside illegally in the Bahamas. Tight citizenship laws and a strict work permit system leave Haitians with few rights. The influx has created social tension because of the strain on government services.

Because of its close proximity to the United States, the Bahamas is a popular transit point for illegal aliens attempting to enter the United States. Most immigrants seek to escape Cuba or Haiti, and many end up in the Bahamas.

Violence against women is a serious, widespread problem. Government crime statistics do not separate domestic violence from other incidents of crime. In 1999, the government and private women's organizations kicked off a public awareness campaign highlighting the problems of abuse and domestic violence. In 2000, the Department of Social Services created two shelters for battered women. Child abuse and neglect remain serious problems.

## Bahrain

Polity: Traditional  
monarchy

Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Population: 700,000

PPP: \$13,688

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Bahraini (63 percent), Asian (19 percent),  
other Arab (10 percent), Iranian (8 percent)

Capital: Manama

**Ratings Change:** Bahrain's political rights rating improved from 7 to 6, and its civil liberties rating improved from 6 to 5, because of political reforms that set the stage for the establishment of an elected legislature, abolished emergency laws and courts, released political prisoners and allowed exiles to return, granted nationality to *bidoon* (stateless peoples), and improved political debate and freedom of association.

Political Rights: 6\*

Civil Liberties: 5\*

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Sheikh Hamad ibn Isa al-Khalifa ended almost a decade of civil unrest in February 2001, when he presented Bahrainis with the opportunity to vote in a referendum on a new national charter. The charter, which calls for the establishment of a partially elected legislature, an independent judiciary, political rights for women, equality for all citizens, and a body to investigate public complaints, addresses the key grievances of Shiite-led opposition groups. Ninety percent of Bahrainis turned out to vote in the referendum, and 98 percent of them approved the new charter.

Bahrain has been ruled by the al-Khalifa family since 1782. The country was a British protectorate from 1861 to 1971, when British forces withdrew after years of Arab nationalist disturbances. The emir retained a virtual monopoly on power until the adoption of a constitution, which provided for a partially elected national assembly, in 1973. Describing Bahrain's new legislative body as "obstructionist," the emir ordered its dissolution in 1975.

With the Iranian revolution in 1979 and its efforts to spread Islamic fundamentalism, resentment among Bahrain's majority Shiite population against its Sunni rulers intensified. Religious and secular opposition activists were arrested and exiled in large numbers during the 1980s and 1990s. Sheikh Isa ibn Salman al-Khalifa, who ruled from 1961 until his death in 1999, responded to demands for political liberalization by appointing a consultative council of 30 prominent business and religious leaders in 1993.

The council, or *Shura*, was expanded to 40 members in 1996. It has no legislative power.

The arrest of a Shiite cleric and several Sunni former members of parliament in 1994 for petitioning for the reinstatement of parliament and the release of political detainees sparked civil unrest that killed more than 40 people. According to international human rights monitors, the Bahraini government arrested thousands of people, sentenced hundreds to prison, and expelled more than 500 people. Security forces routinely raided homes and assaulted suspected political opponents. While the government blamed Iran for inciting unrest, political analysts and private sector businessmen blamed the government's failure to resolve widespread social and economic problems, particularly unemployment, which disproportionately affect the Shiite population.

In 2000, Sheikh Hamad began a gradual process of liberalization. He released a number of political detainees, including former member of parliament and leading Shiite activist Sheikh Abdul Ameer al-Jamri, from three years' detention without trial. Prime Minister Khalifa ibn Salman al-Khalifa appointed four women (including one Christian), a Jewish businessman, and a businessman of Indian descent to the Shura, thus allowing women and non-Muslims on the council for the first time. In addition, a government-appointed committee was instructed to draw up the new national charter, which was approved in the February 2001 referendum.

Prior to the referendum, the emir visited Shiite communities and met with opposition leaders to discuss their demands and to obtain support for the national charter. In early February 2001, he announced an amnesty affecting all prisoners held on national security charges and opposition figures in exile. All political prisoners were released and many exiles returned in time to participate in the referendum. Major opposition groups supported the charter.

In a further move to address opposition demands, the government issued a decree on February 18 canceling the 1974 State Security Law, which severely curtailed due process and was used to send hundreds of activists to prison with no chance of appeal. Also in February, the government announced that it would grant citizenship to some 10,000 bidoon, or stateless people, resident in Bahrain, and it ordered that anyone fired from a state job for political reasons be rehired. In an effort to combat corruption, the ministries of health and agriculture underwent purges of personnel.

Measures to improve the economy, address economic disparities, and alleviate problems such as unemployment were also taken. With little oil, Bahrain relies heavily on its offshore banking and tourism industries. In January, a government decree instituted Penalties of up to seven years' imprisonment and fines of up to \$2 million for money laundering. The new Economic Development Board began easing restrictions on foreign investment. A new job-creation strategy outlines plans to recruit more nationals into Bahrain's security forces, and identified tourism, education and training, and health care as key areas for investment promotion. While such projects were getting under way, the government announced plans in April to provide unemployment benefits. Job seekers will get up to \$265 per month under the new system, which includes measures to weed out cheating.

Bahrain's bright new outlook extended to its foreign relations. In March, the International Court of Justice resolved a long-standing territorial dispute between Bahrain and Qatar over the Hawar Islands and several other territories on the Qatari peninsula. The court awarded the Hawar Islands to Bahrain, but rejected Bahrain's claim to Zubarah, a disputed town on the Qatari mainland. Two minor islands went to Qatar.

Both sides readily accepted the decision, which is binding and may not be appealed, and hailed a "new era of cooperation," which began with a revival of calls to build the Friendship Bridge, a causeway between the two states.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The approval of a new national charter, the abolition of the State Security Law, the release of detainees, and the granting of nationality to bidoon helped to improve the overall human rights situation in Bahrain. But these developments left some uncertainty as to the degree of improvement that may be expected in coming years. It is unclear, for instance, how much authority the partially elected legislature, promised by 2004, will actually have. Opposition activists and other observers hope for a transition to a Western-European-style constitutional monarchy, while some worry that the emir will retain the final word on policy. Amnesty International praised Bahrain's progress on human rights, but emphasized its need to ratify international treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, and to ensure that its legislation is compatible with international standards. And many observers warned that guarantees of equality and separation of powers, along with other objectives outlined in the new charter, will not take effect until the passage of relevant legislation.

Bahrainis cannot change their government democratically, though they were able in 2001 to exercise their influence in their country's first referendum in 30 years. Political parties are illegal, and the emir rules by decree, appointing all government officials, including the 15-member cabinet, the Shura, urban municipal councils, and rural *mukhtars* (local councils). Citizens may petition the emir and officials at regularly scheduled audiences.

The 1974 State Security Law and State Security Court were abolished by decree in February. The law had allowed authorities to detain individuals suspected of "antigovernment activity," including participation in peaceful demonstrations and membership in outlawed organizations, for up to three years without trial. Security trials were held in secret with few due process considerations.

Members of the ruling family serve as judges on courts at all levels. Courts are also staffed by judges brought from other countries, such as Egypt, on renewable contracts. Ordinary civil and criminal courts generally guarantee an open trial, the right to counsel, and the right to appeal. However, there have been reports that people tried in criminal courts for alleged antigovernment crimes were denied open trials and the right to counsel. All political detainees were reportedly released following a general amnesty in February.

While proposed political reforms created unprecedented public debate during the year, freedom of the press remained limited. Privately owned newspapers refrain from criticizing the royal family, while broadcast media are state owned and broadcast only official views. Some observers note that increased political debate does not necessarily lead to increased independence of journalists. According to one opposition leader, "If you read the newspapers, you will read articles in favor [of] democracy written by the same people who just a year ago were attacking anybody who uttered the word 'election.'" Opposition activists express concern over the government's decision to retain information ministry officials viewed as hostile to reform. The information minister is head of the Bahraini Journalists' Society and the managing director of a major daily



newspaper. He has also been condemned for undemocratic practices, including banning television programs and pressuring editors not to publish controversial articles. In November, journalist Hafeed al-Shaikh Saleh was charged with undermining national unity in an article he wrote for a Lebanese newspaper.

Taking advantage of their new freedoms, Bahrainis have established dozens of social groups and associations since early 2001. Human rights activists and lawyers set up an independent human rights organization. One report described a range of new groups, including one to address the concerns of divorced women, an anti-Arab-Israeli-normalization committee, and a cat-protection agency. However, the government's General Organization for Youth and Sports (GOYS) in July announced a ban on public seminars on political issues and ordered all clubs and associations to obtain a special permit before holding any forum. Officials said the move was taken in the interest of law and order. Political parties are prohibited, though at least two—one nationalist and the other Islamic—have applied for registration. In 2001, the government allowed visits by international human rights groups, including Amnesty International.

Bahraini women may own and inherit property, represent themselves in public and legal matters, obtain passports and leave the country without the permission of a male relative, drive without escorts, and wear clothing of their choice. A non-Bahraini woman will automatically lose custody of her children if she divorces their Bahraini father. Labor law does not discriminate against women, but there is discrimination in the workplace, including wage disparity and denial of opportunity for advancement. In April 2001, the government announced that it would deny entry into Bahrain to women traveling alone without a visa obtained before departure. Bahraini women were allowed to vote for the first time ever in the February referendum.

Islam is the state religion, and Bahrainis are overwhelmingly Muslim. The state controls all official religious institutions through monitoring and funding. Non-Muslims, including Jews, Christians, Hindus, and Bahais, are free to practice, maintain places of worship, and display religious symbols. Sunni Muslims enjoy favored status, while Shiites generally receive inferior educational, social, and municipal services. Beginning in 1999, Shiites were permitted to work in the defense forces and the interior ministry, but only in subordinate positions.

In February, Bahraini officials announced that more than 10,000 stateless people, or bidoon, would be granted citizenship. The decision applies to people whose families settled in Bahrain after arriving from neighboring countries, particularly Iran. Although born and raised in Bahrain, bidoon had not been recognized as Bahraini nationals until now. More than 100 bidoon have so far been naturalized and given Bahraini passports.

Independent labor unions, collective bargaining, and the right to strike are nonexistent. Bahrain has not ratified key International Labor Organization conventions on the right to organize, collective bargaining, and workplace discrimination. Thousands of Bahrainis have been imprisoned for attempting to organize. Foreigners who come to Bahrain to work as domestic laborers are frequently mistreated and denied pay. Bahraini law does not protect these workers.

## Bangladesh

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 133,500,000  
 PPP: \$1,483  
 Life Expectancy: 59  
 Ethnic Groups: Bengali (98 percent), other, including Bihari (2 percent)  
 Capital: Dhaka



### Overview:

The political gridlock that has undermined Bangladesh's economy since the mid-1990s continued in early 2001, as the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and three allies boycotted parliament and organized several nationwide strikes. Ignoring the opposition's demand for early elections, On June 23, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed became the first premier to complete a full five-year term in office. In national elections held on October 1, however, the ruling Awami League party was voted out of office in elections marred by political violence and intimidation.

With the partition of British India in 1947, Bangladesh became the eastern part of the newly formed state of Pakistan. Bangladesh won independence in December 1971 after Indian troops helped defeat occupying West Pakistani forces in a nine-month war. The 1975 assassination of Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by soldiers precipitated 15 years of often-turbulent military rule and continues to polarize Bangladeshi politics. The country's democratic transition began with the resignation in 1990 of the last military ruler, General H. M. Ershad, after weeks of prodemocracy demonstrations. Elections in 1991 brought the BNP to power under Khaleda Zia.

The political strikes and parliamentary boycotts began in 1994, when Hasina's center-left Awami League began boycotting parliament to protest alleged corruption in Zia's BNP government. The Awami League and the BNP differ relatively little on domestic policy. Many disputes reflect the personal animosity between Hasina, the daughter of independence leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and Zia, the widow of a former military ruler allegedly complicit in Sheikh Mujibur's 1975 assassination. The Awami League boycotted the February 1996 elections, which the BNP won, but forced Zia's resignation in March. At the June 1996 elections, held with a 73 percent turnout, the Awami League won 146 of 300 parliamentary seats while the BNP won 113.

Under Hasina, the government signed a 1996 Ganges River water-sharing accord with India and a 1997 accord ending a low-grade insurgency in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). Hasina's government also has allowed foreign companies to invest in offshore natural gas exploration, though it has refused to permit gas to be exported until Bangladesh accumulates a 50-year reserve. By some estimates, Bangladesh also achieved near self-sufficiency in food production over the past four years. An October 2000 World Bank report praised Bangladesh's fiscal year 2000 growth of 5.2 percent, but noted that each one-day nationwide strike costs the economy \$60 million.

Hasina's government contributed to political tensions in January 2000 by passing a controversial public order law that it said would improve law and order. The opposition said the law could be used against its members and to break general strikes. After several shooting incidents that killed 18 soldiers, tension with India mounted in April 2001 over a disputed section of the border.

In July 2001, Latifur Rahman, a former chief justice, was sworn in as interim prime minister and head of a caretaker administration that was charged with governing the country ahead of the elections scheduled for October. Police arrested nearly 60,000 people in August as part of a drive to improve law and order, as well as tightening gun controls. On election day, access for the country's 500,000 cell phones was switched off before voting started, in order to hinder potential troublemakers. Nevertheless, politically motivated violence continued to be a problem. A Dhaka-based organization, Democracywatch, estimated that 95 people were killed in political violence and 5,100 injured between July and September. More than 140 people were killed throughout the entire campaign period, and three died during the polling, in what was Bangladesh's most violent election to date.

A new four-party coalition, led by the BNP and also including two hardline Muslim parties, the Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikyo Jote, was sworn into power on October 10 with a convincing majority of 214 of the 300 seats in parliament. However, the Awami League claimed that the vote had been rigged and announced that it intended to boycott parliamentary proceedings. Zia announced soon after taking office that her top priority would be to free Bangladesh from lawlessness and corruption. In December, corruption charges were filed against former Prime Minister Hasina as well as several members of her government, accusing her of plundering \$ 126 million in state funds while in office.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Bangladeshis can change their government through elections. A referendum held in 1991 transformed the powerful presidency into a largely ceremonial head-of-state position in a parliamentary system. Lower-house elections are held in single-member districts under a simple-plurality rule. The June 1996 vote was the first under a constitutional amendment requiring a caretaker government to conduct elections; it was Bangladesh's freest election despite some violence and irregularities. In October 2001, roughly 2000 candidates stood in national elections that were monitored by more than 300,000 election observers. International monitors described the poll as generally free and fair, but expressed concern over intimidation and violence.

Both major parties have undermined the legislative process through lengthy parliamentary boycotts while in opposition. In recent years, political violence during demonstrations and general strikes has killed dozens of people in major cities. Opposition-led strikes held in February and April resulted in several deaths and hundreds of injuries. Awami League activists continued in 2001 to forcibly break up some opposition rallies, and police often used excessive force against opposition protesters. Student wings of political parties continue to be embroiled in violent campus conflicts. In June, a bomb attack on an Awami League office near Dhaka resulted in the death of 22 people and injuries to over 100 more.

The supreme court is independent, but according to the U.S. State Department's country report for 2000, lower-level courts are "reluctant to challenge government

decisions." Lower courts are also rife with corruption and are severely backlogged, and pretrial detention is lengthy. Many defendants lack counsel, and poor people have limited recourse through the courts. Amnesty International said in November 2000 that successive governments since independence have tolerated "widespread and persistent" torture. Police also routinely rape suspects and prisoners. The majority of police abuses go unpunished, which results in a climate of impunity. Prison conditions are extremely poor.

Authorities continued to occasionally and arbitrarily detain political opponents and ordinary citizens, and to detain citizens without charge under the 1974 Special Powers Act. The government generally detains political opponents for short periods, and many of these detentions appear to be politically motivated. The broadly drawn Public Safety Act that came into effect in February 2000 provides for jail terms of between 2 and 14 years for hijacking, committing extortion, damaging property, obstructing traffic, "causing panic," and other offenses. Human rights advocates have sharply criticized the practice under which authorities place some female victims of rape, kidnapping, prostitution, and trafficking in "safe custody" in prison, where they are vulnerable to rape and other abuses.

The print media are diverse and often critical of the government. However, journalists frequently face pressure from organized crime groups, political parties, the government, and Islamic fundamentalists, and practice some self-censorship. In April, the Committee to Protect Journalists warned that the number of violent attacks on journalists had risen sharply in 2001, noting that in a single week in April, one journalist died and three were injured in attacks by armed assailants. In the first half of the year, 50 cases of violence against journalists who had reported on corruption, political violence, and religious intolerance had been reported. In July, the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres called for an investigation into the murder of Ahsan Ali, a journalist with the Dhaka-based newspaper *Dainik Jugantor*, who had reportedly received death threats from a local Awami League student leader. In addition, journalists were targeted in October as part of a wave of postelection violence. In November, the government arrested and began a treason investigation against leading journalist Shahriar Kabir after he made a documentary about Hindus who fled to India in the wake of the elections. In an effort to cover up their abuses of protesters, police occasionally beat journalists covering demonstrations. Political considerations influence the distribution of government advertising revenue and subsidized newsprint, upon which most publications are dependent. The state-owned Bangladesh Radio and Television controls most broadcast media, whose coverage favors the ruling party. Prior to the elections, a bid to temporarily close down Ekushey Television, the country's only private terrestrial broadcaster, was overturned by the supreme court.

Rape, dowry-related assaults, acid-throwing, and other violence against women occur relatively frequently. According to the Acid Survivors Foundation, the number of acid attacks jumped 50 percent in 2001; of the 338 attacks registered throughout Bangladesh last year, the majority were carried out against women fleeing arranged marriages. A September 2000 United Nations report said that 47 percent of all Bangladeshi women are subjected to domestic violence. A law requiring rape victims to file police reports and obtain medical certificates within 24 hours of the crime in order to press charges prevents most rape cases from reaching the courts. Police also accept bribes not to register rape cases and rarely enforce existing laws protecting

women. In rural areas religious leaders occasionally issue *fatwas* (religious edicts) that impose floggings and other punishments on women accused of violating strict moral codes. However, in a landmark decision in January, the supreme court ruled that all fatwas were illegal and should be made punishable by an act of parliament. Women also face discrimination in health care, education, and employment, and are underrepresented in politics and government. As a result of parliamentary deadlocks throughout the year, a provision that granted women 30 reserved seats in parliament has been allowed to lapse. Under customary laws of the minority Hindu community, women have no legal right of divorce or inheritance. Muslim women in theory enjoy greater legal protection in family matters, but these laws are routinely flouted.

The Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association said in a 1999 report that organized groups traffic nearly 25,000 Bangladeshi women and children each year into Middle Eastern and other South Asian countries for the purposes of prostitution and low-paid labor. Law enforcement officials rarely investigate trafficking, and human rights groups say the police are often engaged in these and other crimes.

Islam is the official religion. Hindus, Christians, and other minorities worship freely but face societal discrimination. In June, a bomb explosion at a church killed 10 and wounded more than 20 worshippers. Widespread violence against Bangladesh's Hindu minority flared up after the October elections. BNP supporters reportedly attacked the Hindus because of their perceived support for the rival Awami League. Atrocities including murder, rape, destruction of property, and kidnapping forced hundreds of Hindus from their homes, and some crossed the border into India. In November, the supreme court ordered the government to explain its poor record of protection for Bangladeshi Hindus. There are also occasional reports of violence against members of the Ahmadiya religious minority.

The Garos and other tribal minorities have little input in land issues affecting them, and minority rights groups say that Bengalis have cheated many tribal people out of their land. A 1997 accord between the government and the CHT People's Solidarity Association ended a 24-year insurgency in the CHT that sought autonomy for the Chakmas and 12 other indigenous tribes, and killed 8,500 soldiers, rebels, and civilians. A February 2000 Amnesty International report said the government had not fully implemented some of the accord's main provisions, including the rehabilitation of refugees, return of land confiscated from tribal people, and withdrawal of nonpermanent army camps. During an outbreak of ethnic violence in June in which 50 people were injured, Bengali-speaking settlers set fire to the houses of Marma tribespeople, and there were reports that a small number of Marmas fled across the border to India.

Roughly 260,000 Rohingya refugees fleeing forced labor, discrimination, and other abuses in Burma entered Bangladesh in 1991 and 1992; some 20,000 Rohingya refugees and 100,000 other Rohingyas not documented as refugees remain in the country. Bangladesh also hosts some 300,000 Urdu-speaking Biharis, who were rendered stateless at independence in 1971 and seek repatriation to Pakistan.

According to the U.S. State Department, nongovernmental human rights organizations report that they face some harassment by government intelligence agents, ruling party activists, and Muslim religious leaders. Union formation is hampered by a 30 percent employee approval requirement and restrictions on organizing by unregistered unions. Employers can legally fire or transfer workers suspected of union activities. The law prohibits many civil servants from joining unions; these workers can form

associations but are prohibited from bargaining collectively. The Bangladesh Independent Garment Workers Union is one of the few diligent, nonpartisan unions. UNICEF has reported that numerous children under age 14 are working in Bangladesh, mostly as maids, servants, farm workers, or rickshaw pullers. However, in October 2000 the International Labor Organization praised Bangladesh for drastically reducing the number of working children, to six million, or 5 percent of the workforce (down from 40 percent in 1995).

Aid donors frequently blame corruption, a weak rule of law, limited bureaucratic transparency, and political polarization for undermining economic development. In June, the international corruption watchdog Transparency International listed Bangladesh at the bottom of a 91-country list on its Corruption Perceptions Index.

## Barbados

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 300,000  
 PPP: \$14,353  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Black (80 percent), white (4 percent), other (16 percent)  
 Capital: Bridgetown

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

In 2001, Prime Minister Owen Arthur appointed a woman, Mia Motley, a former education and culture minister, as attorney general. Motley, at 35, is the youngest person ever to hold the post, as well as the first woman to do so. The island-nation's hard-pressed tourism industry received a boost in early December when a British Airways Concorde flew to Barbados on the plane's first flight there since a 2000 crash in Paris caused a 16-month hiatus in service for the supersonic model. Upset over treatment of Barbadian fishermen found in disputed territory by authorities of Trinidad and Tobago, the Barbados government in December announced that it was embarking on a general review of its economic relationship with the twin-island republic.

A member of the Commonwealth, Barbados achieved independence in 1966. The British monarchy is represented by a governor-general. The government is a parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislature and a party system based on universal adult suffrage. The senate comprises 21 members, all appointed by the governor-general: 12 on the advice of the prime minister, 2 on the advice of the leader of the opposition, and the remaining 7 at the discretion of the governor-general. A 28-member house of assembly is elected for a five-year term. Executive authority is vested in the prime minister, who is the leader of the political party commanding a majority in the house. Since independence, power has alternated between two centrist parties—the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), under Errol Barrow, and the Barbados Labor Party (BLP), under Tom Adams. Adams led the BLP from 1976 until his death in 1985. Adams was

succeeded by Bernard St. John, but the BLP was defeated and Barrow returned to power in 1986. Barrow died in 1987 and was succeeded by Erskine Sandiford, who led the DLP to victory in the 1991 elections.

Under Sandiford, Barbados suffered a prolonged economic recession as revenues from sugar and tourism declined. By 1994, the economy appeared to be improving, but unemployment was still at nearly 25 percent. Sandiford's popularity suffered, and he was increasingly criticized for his authoritarian style of government. He lost a no-confidence vote in parliament when nine BLP legislators were joined by four DLP backbenchers and one independent legislator who had quit the DLP. David Thompson, the young finance minister, replaced Sandiford.

In the 1994 election campaign, Owen Arthur, an economist elected in 1993 to head the BLP, promised to build "a modern, technologically dynamic economy," create jobs, and restore investor confidence. The BLP won 19 seats; the DLP, 8; and the New Democratic Party (NDP), a disaffected offshoot of the DLP formed in 1989, won 1 seat.

Arthur combined a technocratic approach to revitalizing the economy with savvy politics. He appointed a number of promising young cabinet members and, in the run-up to the 1999 election, was able to boast that in five years, unemployment had been halved, to 12 percent. The BLP retained power in 1999 by winning 26 of 28 parliamentary seats, a rout that left Arthur firmly in control of his country's political fortune and gave him the mandate he needed to declare Barbados a republic. The feeble showing by Thompson's DLP in the elections created worries that the parliamentary opposition was in danger of withering away.

Since being returned to office, Arthur has devoted considerable attention to new crime-fighting strategies in the face of increases in the number of armed robberies and burglaries. The proposal to renounce allegiance to the queen is part of a two-year constitutional review under consideration by parliament. Among the reforms under consideration are changes in the legislative process and a proposal to allow women the same right to share their citizenship with foreign spouses that men have. In 2000, the three main political parties offered support for a plan to turn Barbados, known as "Little England" for its many colonial trappings, into a republic and replace the queen of England as head of state with a president who shares the island's majority African roots.

During the first half of 2001, economic performance appeared to be strong, a reflection of government efforts to diversify the economy by creating financial and computer services industries. However, in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the vital tourism sector was struck hard, and local hopes hung on a boost in the winter season following the return of the Concorde in December. Following an upsurge in violent gun crimes, many linked to narcotics trafficking, joint patrols of the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) and the all-volunteer Barbados Defence Force (BDF) have been initiated to patrol the island. Efforts by Arthur's government to make good on a 2000 promise to give workers more legal protection against unfair and summary dismissal was met with stiff resistance from the country's business sector, which claimed such an action could deal a serious blow to investor confidence.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through democratic elections, and the January 1999 elections were free and fair. Constitutional guarantees regarding freedom of religion and

the right to organize political parties, labor unions, and civic organizations are respected. Apart from the parties holding parliamentary seats, other political organizations abound, including the small, left-wing Workers' Party of Barbados.

The judicial system is independent and includes a supreme court that encompasses a high court and a court of appeals. Lower-court officials are appointed on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. The government provides free legal aid to the indigent. In 1992 the court of appeals outlawed the practice of the public flogging of criminals. The prison system is antiquated and overcrowded, with more than 800 inmates held in a building built for 350.

Human rights organizations operate freely, and the government allows private groups to visit prisons to ascertain conditions. The high crime rate, fueled by an increase in drug abuse and narcotics trafficking (there has been some decrease in drug-related crime recently), has given rise to human rights concerns. There are occasional reports of extrajudicial killings as well as more numerous complaints of excessive force used by the RBPF to extract confessions, along with reports that police do not always seek warrants before searching homes. A counternarcotics agreement signed between the United States and Barbados in late 1996 provides funding for the Barbados police force, the coast guard, customs, and other ministries, for a broad array of programs to combat drug-related crimes. Barbados also entered into an updated extradition treaty with the United States, as well as, in May 1997, a maritime law enforcement agreement. In 2001, new laws were enacted governing firearms, including tighter controls on ownership.

Freedom of expression is fully respected. Public opinion expressed through the news media, which are free of censorship and government control, has a powerful influence on policy. Newspapers are privately owned, and there are two major dailies. Private and government radio stations operate. The single television station, operated by the government-owned Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), presents a wide range of political viewpoints.

In 1992, a domestic violence law was passed to give police and judges greater power to protect women, although violence and abuse continue to be major social problems; however, women are represented at all levels of government and politics.

Part of the country's move to break with the British Crown has been a government effort to exalt Bajan heroes at the expense of English ones, such as Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, whose statue stands in Trafalgar Square, Bridgetown. The effort has created resentment among many whites in the country. In response, Arthur appointed a 13-member National Reconciliation Committee to foster greater understanding between the majority Black and the minority Anglo communities.

There are two major labor unions and various smaller ones that are politically active. Women make up roughly half of the workforce. Violence against and abuse of women are significant social problems, and victims of sexual assaults, domestic violence, incest, and rape are often reluctant to report such incidents. Some 12,000 Barbadians—8.5 percent of the economically active population—earn less than the minimum wage of \$85 a week.



## ↓ Belarus

Polity: Presidential      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Statist      Civil Liberties: 6  
 Population: 10,000,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$6,876

Life Expectancy: 68

Ethnic Groups: Belarusian (78 percent), Russian (11 percent),  
 other, including Polish and Ukrainian (11 percent)

Capital: Minsk

Trend Arrow: Belarus received a downward trend arrow for the government's failure to ensure free and fair presidential elections and for its continued suppression of independent media and civil society.



### Overview:

The year 2001 marked Belarus's tenth anniversary of post-Soviet independence, but the country has little to show for it. President Alyaksandr Lukashenka heads an autocratic regime that disregards basic political rights and civil liberties, and the country's economic system is indistinguishable from that of the former Soviet command system. If President Lukashenka succeeds in reuniting Belarus with Russia in the coming years, independence could prove fleeting.

Despite accusations that the president has directed a government-sponsored death squad aimed at silencing his opponents, Lukashenka proved victorious in the 2001 presidential election. Western nations declared the vote unfree and unfair. Domestic supporters of opposition candidate Vladimir Goncharik accused the government of falsifying the results and claimed that no candidate received more than 50 percent of the vote—an outcome that, by law, would have forced a second round of voting.

When Belarus declared independence in 1991, it ended centuries of foreign ascendancy by Lithuania, Poland, Russia, and ultimately the Soviet Union. Stanislaw Shushkevich, a reform-minded leader, served as head of state from 1991 to 1994. That year voters made Alyaksandr Lukashenka the country's first post-Soviet president. He has pursued a close union with Russia, subordinated the government and courts to his political whims, denied citizens basic rights and liberties, and ruled by decree ever since.

In a 1996 referendum, Belarusian citizens favored constitutional amendments that extended Lukashenka's term by two years, broadened presidential powers, and created a new bicameral parliament. When the president ignored a court ruling that the referendum was nonbinding, Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir resigned in protest. Most Western nations have refused to recognize the 1996 Constitution or the new parliament. Instead, they recognize the pre-1996 Supreme Soviet as the legitimate legislative body.

Seven opposition parties boycotted the October 2000 parliamentary elections when the government failed to ensure a fair campaign and to give parliament more substantial duties. Some opposition candidates participated in the election, but only three received a mandate. The election commission reported voter turnout at 60 percent, but the opposition accused the commission of falsifying the number and declared the election invalid.

Although Belarusian citizens had three presidential candidates from which to choose on September 9, 2001, the outcome was never in doubt. During the campaign, the government and its supporters harassed would-be candidates and independent media. They also sought votes in exchange for promises of better wages. On election day, the president declared himself the victor with more than 70 percent of the vote.

If one can glean anything positive from the election, it is the role played by opposition parties and civil society. Although the opposition parties backing Vladimir Goncharik represented a broad political spectrum, they agreed on one thing: defeating Lukashenka. Their decision to rally around a single candidate represented an important step in their development. In 2000, they could not even agree on whether to participate in the parliamentary elections. Likewise, although Belarusian civil society is still weak, large numbers of citizens worked together to educate voters about their constitutional rights and alternatives to the current regime. Throughout the country, small groups led programs to encourage high voter turnout, especially among the country's younger generation.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Despite a constitutional guarantee of universal, equal, and direct suffrage, citizens of Belarus cannot change their government democratically. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe considers Belarus' electoral framework "fundamentally flawed" because the president rules by decree, voting and tabulation processes lack transparency, restrictions on campaigning are excessive, electoral commissions lack sufficient independence, the work of independent observers is limited, and the opportunities to challenge decisions of the Central Election Commission are few. These flaws characterized the September 2001 presidential election in which President Alyaksandr Lukashenka claimed a decisive victory, with 78 percent of the vote, over candidates Vladimir Goncharik, 12 percent, and Sergei Gaidukevich, 2 percent. Opposition parties claimed that Lukashenka received 47 percent of the vote and Goncharik 41 percent. Since the election, there have been reports of arrests and firings of state employees and bureaucrats who cooperated with the opposition.

In October 2000, Belarus held elections to the Chamber of Representatives, parliament's lower house. State media coverage of the campaign was limited and biased, and approximately half of all opposition candidates were denied registration. Non-governmental organizations reported irregularities such as ballot box stuffing and tampering with voter registration lists. In November 2000, delegates from local councils elected senators to the Republic, parliament's upper house.

The year 2001 marks the five-year anniversary of Belarus's union treaty with Russia. The two countries have signed several treaties calling for a single currency, uniform tax laws, a shared securities market, and a common defense policy. They also plan to create a supreme council, a cabinet of ministers, a parliament, and a court. Progress in implementing these plans has slowed, however, and Russian enthusiasm for the union has waned. In 2001, Russian President Vladimir Putin failed to give Lukashenka a clear endorsement in the presidential election and made clear that "a necessary precondition of [the union] is commitment to . . . freedom and democracy."

The Lukashenka regime systematically curtails press freedoms. State media are subordinated to the president, whose administration controls decisions on content and the appointment of senior editors. Harassment and censorship of independent print media

are routine. Some independent electronic media do exist. The Law on Press and Other Media prohibits media coverage of any association not registered with the state, and severely limits the media's ability to criticize public officials. The State Press Committee can issue warnings to publishers for unauthorized activities such as changing a publication's title or distributing copies abroad. It also can arbitrarily shut down publications without court orders.

Suppression of the media did not abate in 2001. During the presidential election campaign, in particular, government authorities confiscated equipment from Magic, an independent printing house, and from the newspapers *Volny Horad*, *Belaruska Ushod*, and *Narodnaya Volya*. They also seized 400,000 copies of a special election issue of *Nasha Svaboda*. Parliament is considering a draft law on information security that, critics claim, will place even more restrictions on the media.

Although the constitution guarantees religious freedom, government decrees and registration requirements limit the activities of many religious groups. In 2001, for example, the Keston Institute reported that the State Committee for Religious and Ethnic Affairs had denied Ukrainian pastor Veniamin Brukh permission to serve the Church of Jesus Christ in Minsk. Although the church filed all necessary paperwork, a representative of the state committee declared that Belarus was educating enough native pastors and, therefore, had "no need for [Brukh]." The government openly favors the Belarusian Orthodox Church.

The Lukashenka government rigorously limits freedom of assembly and association. Protests and rallies require authorization from local authorities, who can arbitrarily withhold or revoke permission. Police regularly break up and arrest participants in public demonstrations, particularly those sponsored by journalists or opposition groups. In advance of the 2001 presidential election, the government took several steps against civil society. One presidential decree banned foreign contributions to nongovernmental organizations that engage in political activities, and another placed tighter restrictions on public gatherings and demonstrations involving more than 1,000 people. Parliament also amended the civil code in an effort to limit the work of foreign organizations that have offices in Belarus. In December 2001, when the supreme court shut down the Union of Belarusian Students (ZBS), the group's leader accused Lukashenka of "persecuting students ... [who] voted against him."

Belarus has a three-tiered judiciary and a constitutional court. The constitution calls for judicial independence, but courts are subject to weighty government influence. Opposition members, independent journalists, and other persons who oppose government policies experience arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. The right to a fair trial is not always respected. In 2001, police arrested Alyaksandr Chyhir, the son of former Prime Minister Mikhail Chyhir, on charges of automobile theft. According to the younger Chyhir, the government trumped up the charges on him and two other men in retaliation for his father's opposition to the Lukashenka regime.

The constitution outlines a range of personal liberties and freedoms, but the government honors them selectively. Wiretapping by state security agencies limit the right to privacy; arbitrary search and seizure compromises the inviolability of the home; and the internal passport system controls freedom of movement and choice of residence. In 2001, the government oversaw a six-month economic liberalization program that was designed to attract assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, the IMF noted late in the year that the government had only partially implemented

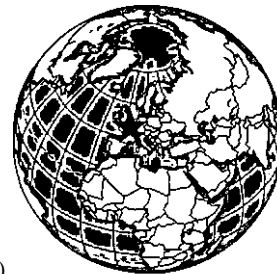
the plan. To date, Belarus's Soviet-era economic system remains in tact, and living standards are still low.

During the 2001 presidential campaign, President Lukashenka raised average monthly salaries to \$100 and promised to increase them to \$250 over the next five years. At the same time, though, he threatened foreign companies and the country's few wealthy citizens with serious reprisals if they failed to donate a portion of their profits and incomes to collective farms. Some local authorities required public and private workers to donate their labor and/or a portion of their salary to the spring planting.

## Belgium

Polity: Parliamentary democracy (federal)  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 10,300,000  
 PPP: \$25,443  
 Life Expectancy: 78  
 Ethnic Groups: Fleming (58 percent), Walloon (31 percent), other (11 percent)  
 Capital: Brussels

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

Assuming the European Union (EU) presidency in the middle of 2001, Belgium sought to downplay its own internal divisions while promoting Continental integration and tolerance. Nonetheless, tensions between the country's two dominant ethnic groups, the Walloons and the Flemings, continued to simmer. Political scandals dogged the country's political establishment, forcing the resignation of Flanders's interior minister. The country's foreign minister faced corruption charges concerning the illegal sale of EU visas to members of organized crime syndicates. Belgian courts convicted four Rwandans on war crimes charges and heard war crimes complaints against Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Other complaints of crimes against humanity were filed from several other countries.

Modern Belgium dates from 1830, when the territory broke away from the Netherlands and formed a constitutional monarchy. Today, the largely ceremonial monarchy symbolizes the weakness of Belgian unity. Ethnic and linguistic antagonism during the 1960s prompted a series of constitutional amendments, in the period 1970-1971 and in 1993, which devolved power to regional councils at the expense of the central government in Brussels. A 1993 amendment formally transformed the country into a federation of Flanders, Wallonia, and bilingual Brussels, with the German-speaking area accorded cultural autonomy. Also in 1993, parliament adopted an amendment establishing three directly elected regional assemblies with primary responsibility for housing, transportation, public works, education, culture, and the environment. The weak central government continues to oversee foreign policy, defense, justice, monetary policy, taxation, and the management of the budget deficit.

Belgium's current coalition government, formed in July 1999, is composed of

Greens, Liberals, and Socialists. In municipal voting in 2000, the right-wing, anti-immigrant Vlaams Blok registered substantial electoral gains in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern portion of Belgium. Holding 20 of the 55 seats in the city's municipal council, the party commands 15 percent support throughout Flanders. The party seeks to separate Flanders from the French-speaking southern part of the country and declare the area an independent state. The party also supports the deportation of all non-European foreigners back to their home countries.

Ethnic and linguistic tensions between French-speaking Walloons and Dutch-speaking Flemings continued to simmer. Walloons worry over identity loss, despite favorable language laws, and many Flemings call for a confederated or separate state. Flemings harbor resentments over the Lambermont accords, the terms under which federal powers are devolved to Belgium's regions. The accords allow for subsidy transfers—ostensibly from Flemish tax revenues—to Wallonia, where unemployment is higher.

Political parties are split along linguistic lines, with both Walloon and Flemish parties ranging across the political spectrum. Numerous small ethnic parties and special interest groups have emerged, which has led to a decline in the dominance of the three major parties: the Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and Liberals.

In September, Johan Sauwens, the interior minister of Flanders, resigned from his post. His nationalist Volksunie Party forced him to resign after he attended a gathering of Belgian former members of the Nazi-era SS. In October, a Belgian court formerly accused Foreign Minister Louis Michel of covering up a scandal involving the sale of EU entry visas to members of organized criminal groups.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Belgians can change their government democratically. Non-voters are subject to fines. Political parties generally organize themselves along ethnic lines, with different factions of the leading parties subscribing to a common platform for general elections. Each ethnic group has autonomy in its region, but constitutional disputes arise when members of one group elected to office in a different territory refuse to take competency tests in the dominant language of that region.

The country's judiciary is independent but has continued to experience criticism as a result of recent political and criminal scandals.

A 1993 law allows Belgian courts to try alleged war criminals. The law was expanded in 1999 to allow courts to hear cases of genocide and other crimes against humanity, committed anywhere, involving non-Belgian defendants. In June, a Belgian court began deliberations over whether to indict Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on charges of crimes against humanity. A group of Belgians, Palestinians, Lebanese, and Moroccans submitted a complaint assigning to Sharon responsibility for the deaths of 800 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982, while he was defense minister.

In August, a Belgian court convicted four Rwandans, including two nuns, for their role in the 1994 genocide in their country. By the end of 2001, complaints of massacres and other alleged crimes had been filed against current and former leaders from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

While freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed, Belgian law prohibits some forms of pornography as well as incitements to violence. Libel laws have some minor restraining effects on the press, and restrictions on the right of civil servants to criticize

the government may constitute a slight reduction of the right to civil speech. Autonomous public boards govern the state television and radio networks and ensure that public broadcasting is linguistically pluralistic. The state has permitted and licensed independent radio stations since 1985.

Belgians enjoy freedom of religion and association. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim institutions are state subsidized in this overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country, and other faiths are not restricted. Immigrants and linguistic minorities argue that linguistic zoning limits opportunity.

Amnesty International cited instances of mistreatment of asylum seekers by police during the year. Police allegedly sometimes beat foreigners in custody, and employ painful restraint methods when detaining or transporting illegal immigrants.

Belgium has enacted measures to promote sexual equality, including the prohibition of sexual harassment. Legislation mandates that, in the next general parliamentary election, 33 percent of the candidates be women. Approximately 60 percent of the workforce holds membership in labor unions, which have the right to strike—one that they frequently exercise—even in "essential" services.

## Belize

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 300,000

PPP: \$4,959

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (44 percent), Creole (30 percent),

Maya (10 percent), Garifuna (6 percent), other (10 percent)

Capital: Belmopan

**Ratings Change:** Belize's civil liberties rating declined from 1 to 2 due to strong anti-foreigner sentiment resulting in harassment and government inaction following attacks, as well as to increases in reports of police abuses.

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2\*

Status: Free



### Overview:

Throughout 2001, Prime Minister Said Musa carried out his policy of holding weekly clinics in Belize City as a means of staying in touch with people's needs. However, hostility rose significantly against foreign residents and entrepreneurs—many of whom hail from Britain, Canada and the United States, and who are attracted both by the country's legal system, which is based on English common law, and the usually harmonious relations between Belize's diverse racial groups. Underlying the seething resentment particularly directed against foreign investors is a differing opinion on the meaning of property rights. Meanwhile, Belize's Mayan peoples continued their decade-long fight to gain legal recognition of their ancestral lands. In October 2000, Musa's government signed an agreement recognizing for the first time "that the Maya people have rights to lands and resources in southern Belize based on their long-standing use and occupancy." Yet, the Maya are still treated under Belizean law as squatters on their own ancestral

lands. In 2001, it remained uncertain whether the change in the government's Indian policy will be followed by reforms in discriminatory laws affecting indigenous peoples.

Belize is a member of the Commonwealth, and the British monarchy is represented by a governor-general. Formerly British Honduras, the name was changed to Belize in 1973. Independence was granted in 1981.

Since independence, the government has changed hands three times, alternating between the center-right United Democratic Party (UDP) and the center-left People's United Party (PUP). In the 1993 elections, the UDP and National Alliance for Belizean Rights (NABR) formed a coalition, winning 16 of the 29 seats in the house of representatives.

The August 1998 elections proved to be a referendum on Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel's largely unfulfilled pledge that his UDP would create jobs. Esquivel was successful in resisting a regional trend toward currency devaluation. Tired of a long-stagnant economy, voters carried opposition leader and former Attorney General Musa to the power, giving his PUP 26 out of 29 seats in parliament. Musa, who ran on an antitax, pro-jobs platform, pledged to make Belize a party to international treaties on indigenous and women's rights. Among Musa's early initiatives were the creation of a national health service and a pruning back of the power of cabinet ministers.

The government has approved logging and oil concessions on more than 700,000 acres of forests and coastal areas that surround Maya lands and that the Indians depend on for subsistence activities. In 1999, efforts by Indian groups to assure their land rights before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights were effectively blocked by the Musa government. In August 2000, even as discussions were taking place over Maya rights, the government announced that a U.S.-based oil company registered in the Virgin Islands would begin widespread exploratory drilling in the southern region that includes Maya lands. A September 2001 court decision in favor of Nicaragua's Miskito-Indians by the San Jose, Costa Rica-based Inter-American Human Rights Court may signal an important precedent, as the Belizean Mayans asked that their government rescind all permits, licenses, and concessions for logging and oil exploration. These, they say, violate Indian rights by permitting development on their ancestral lands.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government democratically in peaceful, fair, and open elections. The 29-seat house of representatives is elected for a five-year term. Members of the senate are appointed: 5 by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister; 2 by the leader of the parliamentary opposition; and 1 by the Belize Advisory Council. Since independence from Great Britain, each election in racially diverse Belize has resulted in the incumbent party's being ousted. In the 1998 elections there was a 78 percent turnout of a population that has swelled in recent years because of immigration from other Central American countries. There are no restrictions on the right to organize political parties, and there are Mestizo, Creole, Maya, and Garifuna in parliament. Civil society is well established, with a large number of nongovernmental organizations working in social, economic, and environmental areas.

In general, the judiciary is independent and nondiscriminatory, and the rule of law is respected. However, judges and the director of public prosecutions must negotiate the renewal of their employment contracts, which renders them vulnerable to political

influence. Lengthy backlogs of trials are in part the result of the low pay received by judges, which results in high turnover rates. Narcotics cases often go on for years while defendants are free on bail. Occasional reports of police misconduct and brutality can be investigated either by the police department's internal affairs office or by a recently created ombudsman's office. Police misconduct, including occasional extrajudicial killing and use of excessive force, is one of the country's primary rights concerns. Reports of abuses have nearly doubled in recent years, reflecting perhaps both an increase in incidents as well as a greater public willingness to bring forward complaints.

Prison conditions do not meet minimum standards. The government opened a new facility in 1993 to alleviate overcrowding. However, this new prison, which houses death row inmates, provides in some cases one bed for six inmates, nonworking toilets, and inadequate protection from the weather.

Belizeans have suffered from an increase in violent crime, much of it related to drug trafficking and gang conflict. In February 1996 the U.S. government added Belize to its list of major drug-transit countries despite the anticrime measures undertaken in 1995, including the adoption of a quick-trial plan, and the country remained on the list in 1997.

The Belize Human Rights Commission is independent and effective. Human rights concerns include the plight of migrant workers and refugees from neighboring Central American countries, and charges of labor abuses by Belizean employers. Most of the estimated 40,000 Spanish speakers who have immigrated to the largely English-speaking country since the 1980s do not have legal status. Some have registered under an amnesty program implemented in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Reports continue of mistreatment of migrant workers, however.

There are judicial restrictions on freedom of the press, including prison terms for those who question the validity of financial disclosure statements submitted by public officials. Belize has six privately owned newspapers, three of which are subsidized by major political parties; there is, however, no daily press. The mostly English-language press is free to publish a variety of political viewpoints, including those critical of the government, and there are Spanish-language media. Belize has a literacy rate of more than 90 percent. Radio and television are saturated with political advertising during elections. Fourteen private television stations operate, including four cable systems. There is an independent board to oversee operations of the government-owned outlets.

There is freedom of religion, and the government actively discourages racial and ethnic discrimination. More than half of the Belizean Maya live in the Toledo district, where they form nearly two-thirds of the population. Despite their claim to be the original inhabitants of Belize, they have no secure title to their ancestral lands, which include some 700,000 acres of rain forest and which have been targeted by foreign, mostly Malaysian, investors. This land, for thousands of years, has provided Maya Indians with food, medicinal plants, building materials, and hunting grounds. In addition to seeking to protect their lands through titling, the Maya are working with the Washington, D.C.-based Indian Law Resource Center to convince the Inter-American Development Bank to challenge a plan to pave the Southern Highway. Indian advocates say that an improved roadway would open Maya lands to large-scale economic development, which threatens to dispossess the Maya and cause great harm to the rain forests, the coastal areas, and the nation's extensive coral reefs.

Labor unions are independent and well organized and have the right to strike, but



the percentage of the workforce that is organized has declined to 11 percent. Unionized workers earn two to three times as much as their neighbors. Disputes are adjudicated by official boards of inquiry, and businesses are penalized for failing to abide by the labor code. Violence against women is a problem.

## Benin

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3\*  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 6,600,000  
 PPP: \$933  
 Life Expectancy: 50  
 Ethnic Groups: African [42 ethnic groups, including Fon, Adja, Bariba, Yoruba] (99 percent), other (1 percent)  
 Capital: Porto-Novo



**Ratings Change:** Benin's political rights rating declined from 2 to 3 due to problematic presidential elections that were partially boycotted by opposition candidates.

**Overview:** Benin suffered a slight setback in 2001 with presidential elections that were marred by technical and administrative problems, as well as a boycott by the second- and third-place finishers in the second round of voting. The boycott gave incumbent President Mathieu Kérékou a solid victory with 84 percent of the vote. Both former President Nicephore Soglo and Adrien Houngbedji claimed fraud after they had won 29 percent and 14 percent, respectively, in the first round of voting in March, compared to Kérékou's 47 percent. Kérékou ended up running against an obscure fourth-place candidate in the second round.

Benin was once the center of the ancient kingdom of Dahomey, the name by which the country was known until 1975, when Kérékou renamed it Benin. Six decades of French colonial rule ended in 1960, and Kérékou took power 12 years later, ending successive coups and countercoups. He imposed a one-party state under the Benin People's Revolutionary Party and pursued Marxist-Leninist policies. However, by 1990, economic hardships and rising internal unrest forced Kérékou to agree to a national conference that ushered in democracy. The transition culminated in his defeat by Nicéphore Soglo in the March 1991 presidential elections. The country's human rights record subsequently improved. Kérékou made a comeback in the 1996 elections, defeating Soglo with 53 percent of the vote.

Historically, Benin has been divided between northern and southern ethnic groups, which are the main roots of current political parties. The south has enjoyed more advanced development. Northern ethnic groups enlisted during Kérékou's early years in power still dominate the military, although efforts have been made in recent years to rectify this.

Several members of the Autonomous National Electoral Commission had stepped down in protest before the second round of voting in 2001, citing a lack of transpar-

ency and poor conduct of the election. International observers said that although there were problems, such as outdated voter lists and computer difficulties, the election was generally fair and reflected the will of the majority of voters.

Benin maintained a good human rights record in 2001, but sporadic violence preceded and followed the presidential elections. Benin made efforts to curb the practice of child trafficking, which drew international attention when a Nigerian-flagged ship carrying about a dozen child laborers docked at Cotonou in April.

Benin is a poor country whose economy is based largely on subsistence agriculture. A code of ethics aimed at curbing graft in the allocation of government contracts was launched in 1999.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Benin held its first genuine multiparty elections in 1991 and now has more than 100 political parties. Under the guidance of the former Independent National Electoral Commission, legislative polls for the unicameral assembly proceeded smoothly and were judged free and fair by international observers. In the March 1999 elections, opposition parties won 42 parliamentary seats, against 41 by candidates backed by President Mathieu Kérékou. It was the first year that an electoral commission in Benin had taken an oath of moral responsibility.

The judiciary is generally considered to be independent, but is inefficient and susceptible to corruption at some levels. Lawmakers in July 2001 replaced the colonial criminal code. An African judicial training center for lawyers was set up in Benin in 2000.

Freedom of assembly is respected in Benin, and requirements for permits and registration are often ignored. Human rights are largely respected, although concern has been raised about the operation of anticrime vigilante groups and the failure of police to curb vigilantism. Prison conditions are harsh, marked by poor diet and inadequate medical care.

Numerous nongovernmental organizations and human rights groups operate without hindrance. The National University of Benin hosted workshops in July 2001 aimed at training West African teachers, lawyers, judges, security officials, and journalists in basic human rights and democratic principles.

Harsh libel laws have been used against journalists, but constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression are largely respected in practice. An independent and pluralistic press publishes articles highly critical of both government and opposition leaders and policies. There are numerous independent newspapers and radio stations, as well as an independent television station. The High Authority for Audio-Visual Media and Communications is the liaison office between the media and the government.

Religious freedom is respected. Although the constitution provides for equality for women, they enjoy fewer educational and employment opportunities than men, particularly in rural areas. In family matters, in which traditional practices prevail, their legal rights are often ignored. They have equal inheritance and property rights, but local custom in some areas prevents them from inheriting real property. Women's rights groups have been effective in drafting a family code that would improve the status of women and children under the law. A bill banning female genital mutilation was submitted to the supreme court in December 2000.

Smuggling children into neighboring countries for domestic service and meager com-

pensation is reportedly widespread. Reports in 2000 said that up to 49,000 rural Beninese children (eight percent of the rural child population) were working abroad. Many, especially young girls, suffer abuse. Benin, in May 2001, ratified both the International Labor Organization's convention prohibiting the worst forms of child labor and the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. Efforts are underway in Benin to fight child abuse and child trafficking through media campaigns and education.

The right to organize and join unions is constitutionally guaranteed and respected in practice. Strikes are legal, and collective bargaining is common. A new labor code went into effect in 1999. Approximately 75 percent of wage earners belong to labor unions. Laws prohibit employer retaliation against strikers, and the government enforces them effectively.

## Bhutan

Polity: Traditional monarchy  
 Economy: Pre-industrial  
 Population: 900,000  
 PPP: \$1,341  
 Life Expectancy: 66  
 Ethnic Groups: Bhote (50 percent), Nepalese (35 percent), indigenous or migrant tribes (15 percent)  
 Capital: Thimphu

Political Rights: 7  
 Civil Liberties: 6  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Britain began guiding this Himalayan land's affairs in 1865, and in 1907 installed the still-ruling Wangchuk monarchy.

London's role ended after a 1949 Indo-Bhutan treaty gave New Delhi control over Bhutan's foreign affairs. In 1972, the current monarch, Jigme Singye Wangchuk, now 46, succeeded his father on the throne.

Reversing a long-standing policy of tolerating cultural diversity in the kingdom, the government in the late 1980s began requiring all Bhutanese to adopt the dress of the ruling, northern-based Ngalong Drukpa ethnic group. Authorities said they feared for the survival of Drukpa culture because of the large number of Nepali speakers, also known as Southern Bhutanese, in the south. The situation for the Southern Bhutanese worsened in 1988, when the government began using a strict 1985 citizenship law to arbitrarily strip thousands of Nepali speakers of their citizenship. The move came after a census showed Southern Bhutanese to be in the majority in five southern districts.

Led by the newly formed Bhutanese People's Party (BPP), Southern Bhutanese held several demonstrations in September 1990 against the new measures. The BPP demanded full citizenship rights for Nepali speakers, the reintroduction of Nepali as a medium of instruction in southern schools, and democratic reforms. Authorities cracked down on the BPP and closed many southern schools and clinics after BPP members and other dissidents reportedly killed several local officials and raided or bombed some government buildings. As conditions worsened, tens of thousands of Southern Bhutanese fled to Nepal in the early 1990s, many of them expelled by Bhutanese forces. Credible

accounts suggest that soldiers raped and beat many Nepali-speaking villagers and detained thousands as "anti-nationals."

Under a December 2000 agreement between Thimphu and Kathmandu, a ten-person, bilateral team in early 2001 began certifying citizenship documents and interviewing family heads of the more than 90,000 Bhutanese refugees in Nepal. The Bhutanese government maintains that most of the refugees either left Bhutan voluntarily or were illegal immigrants. Refugee leaders say the vast majority of those in the camps are genuine Bhutanese nationals.

In eastern Bhutan, a small dissident group called the Druk National Congress (DNC) has in recent years organized demonstrations and other peaceful protests calling for political reform. Authorities arrested several dozen suspected DNC members and sympathizers in 1997 and 1998, according to human rights groups. The government says that only 16 people were arrested and they are awaiting trials on sedition charges. Most DNC members come from the country's third major ethnic group, the Sarchops, who live mainly in eastern Bhutan.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Bhutanese cannot change their government through elections and enjoy few basic rights. King Jigme Singye Wangchuk and a small group of elites, drawn mainly from the king's Ngalong Drukpa ethnic group, make key decisions and wield absolute power. King Wangchuk took several steps in 1998 that in theory reduced his day-to-day role in running the government and increased the power of the national assembly. However, it is not clear what practical effects, if any, these changes have had. The king removed himself as chairman of Bhutan's council of ministers, a post roughly equivalent to that of prime minister. He also gave the national assembly the powers to remove the king from the throne and choose cabinet members from among candidates nominated by the king. King Wangchuk, however, still assigns the actual portfolios. The current head of the council of ministers is Sangay Ngedup, a former minister for health and education.

The government discourages the formation of political parties, and none exist legally. The 150-member national assembly meets irregularly and has little independent power. It often serves as a forum for diatribes against the Southern Bhutanese, who hold a disproportionately small number of seats. Every three years village headmen choose 100 national assembly members, while the king appoints 40 seats, and religious groups choose 10 seats. For the 100 district-based seats, each village, in theory, nominates one candidate for its district, though it must do so by consensus. Votes are cast by family heads rather than individuals. Human rights activists say that in reality, authorities suggest candidates to the headmen in each village, and the headmen ask families to approve the candidates, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Bhutan's human rights record in 2000.

The government's human rights record has improved somewhat since the early 1990s, when soldiers and police committed grave human rights abuses against Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. These abuses included arbitrary arrests, beatings, rape, destruction of homes, and robberies. However, "arbitrary arrest and detention remain problems, and reports of torture and abuse of persons in detention continue," according to the U.S. State Department report. The report also said that some or all of the roughly 75 people still jailed for offenses related to political protests or violence in the early 1990s

may be political prisoners. In a positive move, the government in December 1999 released 40 political prisoners.

Bhutan's judiciary is not independent of the king, according to the U.S. State Department report. Despite recent efforts to improve training for judges, most have little legal education. Prison conditions reportedly are adequate, the U.S. State Department report said.

Bhutanese authorities sharply restrict freedom of expression, assembly, and association. The government prohibits criticism of King Wangchuk and Bhutan's political system, except indirectly during national assembly meetings. The state-owned weekly *Kuensel*, Bhutan's only regular publication, reports only news that puts the kingdom in a favorable light and carries only progovernment views. The only exception is occasional coverage of criticism by national assembly members of King Wangchuk and government policies during assembly meetings. Similarly, the state-run Bhutan Broadcasting Service's radio and television stations do not carry opposition positions and statements. The government generally ignores its own formal ban and allows Bhutanese to receive satellite television broadcasts originating in other countries. There is also cable television service in some areas. Authorities began operating a public-access Internet server in 1999, although most Bhutanese probably would find access too costly.

In recent years, security forces have arrested Bhutanese for taking part in a series of peaceful prodemocracy demonstrations in eastern Bhutan. They have also arrested and deported Bhutanese refugees living in Nepal who entered and demonstrated inside Bhutan for the right to return home. The government does not allow nongovernmental groups to work on human rights or other overtly political issues, but tolerates business and civic organizations.

The government's expulsion of tens of thousands of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese in the early 1990s and recent bilateral efforts to repatriate them, have underscored the tentative nature of citizenship in the kingdom. Prior to the expulsions, the government stripped thousands of Southern Bhutanese of their citizenship in the late 1980s under a 1985 law that tightened citizenship requirements. The new law required both parents to be Bhutanese citizens in order for citizenship to be conferred on a child, rather than just the father, as before. In addition, Bhutanese seeking to verify citizenship had to prove that they or both their parents resided in Bhutan in 1958, the year the kingdom granted citizenship to all land-owning adults who had lived in the country for at least ten years. This meant presenting land tax receipts or other documents from 1958, nearly 30 years earlier. Those who lost citizenship under the law could apply for naturalization if they could prove residence during the previous 15 years.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says that the overwhelming majority of Bhutanese refugees who entered camps in Nepal since screening began in 1993 have documentary proof of Bhutanese nationality. This assertion is borne out by random checks and surveys of camp residents, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Conditions for Nepali speakers still living in Bhutan have improved somewhat since the early 1990s, but major problems remain. The government reportedly requires Southern Bhutanese to secure official "no-objection certificates" in order to enter schools, take government jobs, or sell farm products. The government shut 75 primary schools in Nepali-speaking areas of southern Bhutan in 1990, and most remain closed, according to the U.S. State Department report. Authorities also ban schools from using the Nepali language as a medium of instruction. In addition, the government in 1998 fired

429 civil servants related to Nepali-speaking refugees. The move came after Bhutan's national assembly passed a resolution in 1997 prohibiting immediate family members of Nepali-speaking refugees from working in the government or armed forces.

At the same time, the government has in recent years eased some cultural restrictions introduced in the late 1980s that specifically targeted Southern Bhutanese. Although a 1989 royal decree forced all Bhutanese to adopt the national dress and customs of the ruling Drukpas, more recently enforcement has been sporadic.

While Bhutanese of all faiths can generally worship freely, government policy favors the Drukpa Kagyupa school of Mahayana Buddhism, which is the official religion. The government subsidizes Drukpa monasteries and shrines and helps fund the construction of Drukpa Kagyupa and Ningmapa Buddhist temples and shrines, according to the U.S. State Department report. The law gives Drukpa monks 10 of the 150 seats in the national assembly and 2 of the 11 seats on the Royal Advisory Council, a body that advises the king. Women make up only 16 percent of civil servants, although they increasingly are becoming senior officials as well as private sector entrepreneurs, the State Department report said.

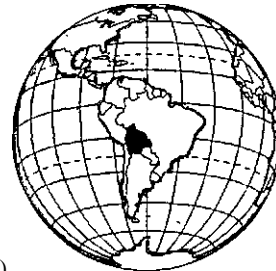
The government prohibits independent trade unions and strikes. In any case, some 85 percent of the workforce is engaged in subsistence agriculture. The government in 1998 began resettling Buddhist Bhutanese from other parts of the country on land in southern Bhutan vacated by Nepali speakers who fled to Nepal, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Bhutan began holding talks in June with separatist rebel groups from India's northeastern state of Assam, asking the guerrillas to vacate camps they had set up in southern Bhutan in the 1990s, Reuters reported. The rebels' use of Bhutanese territory has strained relations between New Delhi and Thimphu.

## Bolivia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 8,500,000  
 PPP: \$2,355  
 Life Expectancy: 62

Ethnic Groups: Quechua (30 percent), Aymara (25 percent), mestizo (25-30 percent), white (5-15 percent)  
 Capital: La Paz (administrative), Sucre (judicial)



### Overview:

On August 6, 2001, ailing President Hugo Banzer Suarez, a dictator-turned-democrat and the Americas' most successful state crusader against the production of narcotics, turned over the presidency to Vice President Jorge Quiroga. The Banzer government had committed itself to shutting down the illegal cultivation of coca (used to produce cocaine) and narcotrafficking during its five-year term, and, as Banzer prepared to step down, the country was well on its way to achieving that goal, although in September the govern-

ment was forced to admit that its claim of having eliminated all coca production from the Chapare valley was somewhat exaggerated. The highly respected Quiroga, known for his firm anti-corruption stance, fills out the one year remaining of Banzer's term, but cannot seek reelection in 2002. He pledged to continue Banzer's fight against governmental and judicial corruption and in favor of more foreign investment as a means to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty. His more immediate task, however, was to prevent the succession of protests, demonstrations, and military actions by a variety of social groups that had made Bolivia ungovernable during Banzer's last months in office. By year's end, a serious police corruption scandal added significantly to Quiroga's challenge.

After achieving independence from Spain in 1825, the Republic of Bolivia endured recurrent instability and military rule. However, the armed forces, responsible for more than 180 coups in 157 years, have stayed in their barracks since 1982.

As a result of recent reforms, presidential terms run five years and congress consists of a 130-member house of representatives and a 27-member senate. The principal parties are Banzer's conservative National Democratic Action (ADN); its governing coalition partner, the social-democratic Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR); and the center-right Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR). Banzer had come in first in elections in 1985, but a parliamentary coalition instead selected the octogenarian former president, Victor Paz Estenssoro, the founder of the MNR. In 1989 the MIR's Jaime Paz Zamora, who had run third in the polls, became president through an alliance with the ADN.

In 1993, the MIR-ADN candidate was retired General Banzer, who came in second to the MNR's Gonzalo Sanchez de Losada, a planning minister in Paz Estenssoro's 1985-1989 administration. Sanchez de Losada oversaw the massive privatization of Bolivia's state-owned enterprises and, under U.S. pressure, stepped up coca eradication. A series of labor strikes and mass protests in early 1995 was followed by the imposition by Sanchez de Losada of a six-month state of siege.

Throughout 1996, the government privatization program brought regular street protests. As Sanchez de Losada's term ended, a government otherwise hailed for initiatives such as improved access to the courts, efforts to reform a corrupt, inefficient judiciary, and broad decentralization was mired in increasingly bitter labor disputes. In nationwide municipal elections held in December 1999, conducted using the electoral code and political party legislation recently approved by congress, the ruling coalition made a strong showing, although the opposition MNR won the largest number of council seats and votes as a single party.

In February 2001, Banzer announced proposals to reform the constitution in order to decentralize and broaden political participation, to overcome social exclusion and to establish a social pact to strengthen the country's democratic institutions. In the months before his resignation, he had tried to convene a "national dialogue" on Bolivia's mounting problems as a means of creating a policy consensus between the government, the opposition, and nongovernmental organizations.

As he assumed the presidency, Quiroga enjoyed wide popularity and respect, despite growing popular disenchantment with the ADN government. Quiroga pledged to continue Banzer's fight against governmental and judicial corruption and for more foreign investment as a means to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty. Despite Banzer's suffering from advanced cancer in his lungs and liver, in September his term

as leader of the ADN was extended for two more years, as party factions were locked into infighting over who would be the ADN's candidate to succeed Quiroga. According to the United Nations Development Fund, Bolivia remains a hemisphere leader regarding inequality in the distribution of wealth, with the richest 20 percent of the population accounting for 61 percent of the nation's income, and 38 times the income of the poorest 20 percent. Crime in La Paz and other major cities is increasing steadily and, in late December, two car bombs in the eastern Bolivian city of Santa Cruz—believed to be the work of the remnants of a recently dismantled criminal gang—exploded outside a local police headquarters, killing three people.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through elections. In 1997, congressional elections were held under new legislation, in which half of the 130 lower house contests were elected individually and directly, rather than from party lists, with the top vote getter representing a single constituency. The national elections held that year were free and fair. In 2001, President Hugo Banzer Suarez urged that the national electoral court be given greater powers, enabling it to solve all election-linked disputes.

The judiciary, headed by the supreme court, remains the weakest branch of government and is corrupt, inefficient, and the object of intimidation by drug traffickers, as are Bolivia's mayoral, customs, and revenue offices. The governments of Banzer and his predecessor, Sanchez de Losada, made serious efforts to improve the administration of justice, including making it more accessible. Banzer implemented previously agreed-upon innovations such as the creation of an independent council in charge of judicial appointments, a public ombudsman, and a constitutional tribunal chosen by congress. The judicial council has suspended dozens of judges and fined or placed on probation hundreds more because of incompetence or unlawful delays of the legal process. The broad immunity from prosecution enjoyed by legislators is a serious stumbling block in the fight against official corruption.

Government-sponsored as well as independent human rights organizations exist, and they frequently report of security force brutality. The congressional Human Rights Commission is active and frequently criticizes the government. However, rights activists and their families are subject to intimidation. Prison conditions are harsh, with some 5,500 prisoners held in facilities designed to hold half that number, and nearly three-quarters of prisoners are held without formal sentences. In mid-1999, the government announced that the Bolivian military will backstop law-enforcement efforts in violent, crime-plagued sections of major urban areas.

Evidence abounds that drug money has been used to finance political campaigns and buy the favor of government officials, including police and military personnel. Critics say that Law 1008, the Law to Regulate Coca and Controlled Substances, passed in 1988, is excessively harsh, restricts suspects' constitutional rights, and violates international norms and standards of due process. Government forces, particularly the troops of the Mobile Rural Patrol Unit (UMOPAR), have in past years committed serious human rights abuses, including murder, arbitrary detention, and the suppression of peaceful demonstrations, during coca-eradication efforts in the tropical lowland region of Chapare. Police officers have also been killed in the line of duty fighting the peasant coca producers. Military troops, as well as police, have been used to suppress internal disturbances, adding to the propensity for violence.



The constitution guarantees free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties, civic groups, and labor unions. However, freedom of speech is subject to some limitations. Unions have the right to strike.

The languages of the indigenous population are officially recognized, but the 40 percent Spanish-speaking minority still dominates the political process. More than 520 indigenous communities have been granted legal recognition under the 1994 Popular Participation law, which guarantees respect for the integrity of native peoples. Indian territories are often neither legally defined nor protected, and coca growers and timber thieves exploit Indian lands illegally. Some Indians are kept as virtual slaves by rural employers through the use of debt peonage, with employers charging workers more for room and board than they earn. The observance of customary law by indigenous peoples is common in rural areas; in the remotest areas, the death Penalty, forbidden by the constitution, is reportedly sometimes used against those who violate traditional laws or rules.

The press, radio, and television are mostly private. Journalists covering corruption stories are occasionally subject to verbal intimidation by government officials, arbitrary detention by police, and violent attacks.

Violence against women is pervasive. In 1999, there was increasing cooperation between Bolivian and Argentine authorities to clamp down on the illegal exploitation of Bolivian children who are lured to work in sweatshops in Argentina.

## Bosnia-Herzegovina

Polity: International protectorate	Political Rights: 5
Economy: Mixed statist (transitional)	Civil Liberties: 4
Population: 3,400,000	Status: Partly Free
PPP: na	
Life Expectancy: 68	
Ethnic Groups: Bosniak (44 percent), Serb (31 percent), Croat (17 percent), other (8 percent)	
Capital: Sarajevo	



### Overview:

The year 2001 witnessed perhaps the most important challenge yet to the six-year-old Dayton Peace Accords (DPA) that ended Bosnia's 43-month-long civil war in 1995. In March, leaders of the Croat community in Bosnia-Herzegovina announced that they were pulling out of statewide and federal governmental institutions (including the joint Bosniac-Croat Federation Army) and instituting "self-rule" to protest changes to electoral laws imposed by the international community in 2000. A further disappointment during the course of 2001 was the lackluster performance of Bosnia's first postwar government not led by avowedly nationalist parties, the ten-party coalition named the "Alliance for Change." In the predominantly Serb entity of Bosnia, the Republika Srpska (RS), meanwhile, instability caused by unstable political alliances also proved to be the rule.

Immediately upon being recognized as an independent state in April 1992, Bosnia-Herzegovina plunged into civil war. In November 1995, the DPA, an internationally sponsored peace agreement, brought an end to the fighting by creating a loosely knit state composed of the Bosniac-Croat "Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina" and the RS. The DPA also gave the international community a decisive role in running post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina, manifested in the significant powers and authorities granted to international civilian agencies such as the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Peace and security in post-Dayton Bosnia is provided by the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), numbering over 20,000-strong. Despite these considerable efforts by the international community, however, most aspects of political, social, and economic life in postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina remain divided along ethnic lines.

In March 2001, Bosnian Croat dissatisfaction with both post-Dayton international policies and their Bosniac partners in the Federation reached a climax when the Croatian National Assembly, formed by a number of Croat political parties and cultural organizations, and supported by much of the Bosnian Catholic hierarchy, announced that Croat officials were pulling out of governmental institutions at statewide and federal levels and establishing Croat "self-rule." Bosnian Croats serving in the Federation Army and police forces were also ordered to stop reporting for duty.

International officials responded by removing from office the Croat member of the collective state presidency, Ante Jelavic, who was also the leader of the most important Croat political party in the country, the Croatian Democratic Community-Bosnia Herzegovina, along with a number of other Croat officials. NATO troops also seized control of Hercegovacka Banka in Mostar, believed to be one of the most important sources of funding for the Croat separatist effort.

The political impasse lasted for most of the year, although in the summer Croat members of the Federation Army returned to their barracks, and in November Croat representatives returned to statewide institutions as well. Nevertheless, this outcome did not resolve the fundamental issues leading to the Bosnian Croats' dissatisfaction; consequently, there remains the promise of more problems down the road.

Other disappointments for the peace process in Bosnia resulted from the generally poor performance of the much heralded Alliance for Change, a ten-party coalition that took power in January. The lack of cohesion within the Alliance was evident in June, when the Alliance's highly respected prime minister, Bozidar Matic, tendered his resignation after fewer than six months in office when his own coalition refused to support an electoral law his government had designed, and which had the support of the international community.

On the other hand, Alliance for Change officials generally received high marks from the international community for their efforts after September 11 to crack down on local cells of Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network.

Political instability also characterized events in the RS for much of the year. Efforts by RS Premier Mladen Ivanic to push economic reform measures forward were generally stymied by the leading political force in the RS, the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS), which continued to benefit from its control over many economic enterprises in the RS, a situation that led to renewed calls to have the SDS banned from political activity.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** In general, voters are allowed to freely elect their representatives and are allowed to form political parties insofar as their programs are compatible with the Dayton Peace Accords. The High Representative, however, has the authority to remove publicly elected officials from office if they are deemed to be obstructing the peace process. As noted above, the High Representative exercised this right in March by dismissing Ante Jelavic from the joint state presidency. The High Representative also has the right to impose laws and regulations on the country when local officials are unable to agree on important matters.

In August, Bosnia's Parliamentary Assembly passed the long-awaited Election Law, which in theory will allow local authorities to assume responsibility from the OSCE for future elections. Some critics, however, have charged that the Election Law, as passed, continues to force voters to cast their ballots along ethnic lines.

Citizens enjoy the right to freedom of assembly, and demonstrations, strikes, and other forms of public protest and discussion are commonplace. Free trade unions exist and are very active.

Corruption in the judiciary, police forces, and the civil service provides a considerable obstacle to establishing the rule of law in Bosnia. All these institutions are plagued by a lack of professionalism and ethnic and political biases. After more than six years, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH) has yet to complete its task of reforming the structure and composition of local police forces in terms of minority representation. Many indicted war criminals remain at large.

A plethora of independent electronic and print media organizations operate in Bosnia, but they are hampered by their dependence on foreign donations for survival, low levels of journalistic professionalism, their appeal to narrow ethnic constituencies, and occasional harassment by official institutions.

Individuals enjoy freedom of religious belief and practice in areas dominated by members of their own ethnic group, but the same does not hold true for individuals who are members of a local ethnic minority. In this sense, religious intolerance is often a reflection of the prevailing atmosphere of intolerance for ethnic minorities in various parts of the country, rather than religious persecution per se. All three major religious organizations in the country—Islamic, Catholic, and Orthodox—have claims against the government for property confiscated during the Communist period. In a disappointing show of religious intolerance, in May a large mob of demonstrators disrupted the groundbreaking ceremony for the reconstruction of the historic Ferhadija mosque in Banja Luka. One person was killed during the incident, and scores were injured. Similar violence broke out in the Herzegovinian town of Stolac in December when local Bosniacs tried to rebuild a mosque in the heavily Croat-populated area.

There are still more than 700,000 refugees living either abroad or internally displaced within Bosnia. Implementation of property laws designed to allow refugees and displaced persons to reclaim their homes remains a slow process; throughout Bosnia, as of June 2001, only 54 percent of property claims filed by refugees or displaced persons had received decisions, and only 29 percent of these have actually repossessed their property.

Legally, women are entitled to full equality with men, but in practice they are significantly underrepresented in politics and government, and are frequently discriminated against in the workplace in favor of demobilized soldiers. To compensate for the

absence of women in public life, the OSCE instituted a regulation forcing political parties to list three women among the top ten names on the candidates' lists.

A significant problem in postwar Bosnia has become its emergence as a country of destination for trafficking in women. UN reports claim that a substantial part of the market for trafficked women working in brothels in Bosnia is due to the large international civil and military presence in the country.

## ↓ Botswana

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy and  
traditional chiefs

Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 1,600,000  
PPP: \$6,872

Life Expectancy: 41

Ethnic Groups: Tswana (79 percent), Kalanga (11 percent),  
Basarwa (3 percent), other (7 percent)

Capital: Gaborone

Trend Arrow: Botswana received a downward trend arrow because of two incidents that constricted press freedom.

Political Rights: 2  
Civil Liberties: 2  
Status: Free



### Overview:

Botswana drew uncharacteristic international attention in 2001 with the sensational trial of a white South African woman who was convicted of murdering her best friend in order to marry the woman's husband. Marietta Bosch, who protested her innocence in the murder of Ria Wolmarans, was subsequently hanged without notification of her family. She was executed in March after President Festus Mogae refused an appeal for clemency. Capital punishment is legal in Botswana, but the case became known because Bosch was the first white woman hanged in the country since independence. The story led to a setback for press freedom when the government barred Botswana Television from airing a documentary on the case.

Botswana is Africa's longest continuous multiparty democracy; elected governments have ruled the country since it gained independence from Britain in 1966. In October 1999 Botswana held its seventh general elections since independence. President Mogae, a former central bank chief, succeeded Ketumile Masire as president in April 1998 and Mogae was confirmed as the country's leader in October 1999. A referendum on whether the president should be directly elected was withdrawn shortly before a vote scheduled in late 1997.

The Balopi Commission, which includes former members of parliament, issued its report in 2001 on whether three articles in the constitution that created a "House of Chiefs," or consultative body to parliament, in 1966 were discriminatory. The commission recommended some change in the way the House of Chiefs is constituted and suggested a form of territorial representation. The House of Chiefs represents the country's major tribes and some smaller ones, and mainly serves an advisory role. Critics say it favors majority tribes.

Economic progress in Botswana has been built on sound fiscal management and low rates of corruption. Privatization is progressing slowly. Efforts are under way to diversify an economy in which diamonds account for 75 percent of all export earnings. The country's gross domestic product will continue to rise in 2002, largely because of diamonds, but will do so at a lower rate than in previous years because of AIDS. An estimated one-third of the country's population is infected with HIV. There is concern that the health system will not be able to care for the growing number of children left orphaned by the disease; there were 78,000 in 2001.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Botswana's national assembly, elected for five years, chooses the president to serve a concurrent five-year term. The assembly's choice is confirmed by the courts when the winning party receives more than half the seats in the parliament. The Independent Election Commission created in 1996 has helped consolidate Botswana's reputation for fairness in voting.

Botswana uses a constituency system in which the candidate who polls the highest number of votes in a constituency wins the parliamentary seat. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which has held power since independence, won by a wide majority in legislative and local elections in October 1999, soundly defeating a fractured opposition. In the October 1999 election the BDP swept 33 of 40 national assembly seats. The opposition had gone into the election holding 13 seats. The historical opposition party, the Botswana National Front, won 6 seats, while the breakaway Botswana Congress Party was reduced to a single seat, a reflection of voter dissatisfaction with the split in 1998. The BDP initially had more airtime on radio and television, but after complaints were made opposition parties were given equal access.

Botswana's courts are generally considered to be fair and free of direct political interference. Trials are usually public, and those accused of the most serious violent crimes are provided public defenders. The University of Botswana Legal Assistance Center and the Botswana Center for Human Rights offer free legal services, but are limited by a lack of resources. Prisons are overcrowded, but new facilities were slated for construction in 2001.

Botswana has an excellent record in Africa for human rights although there are occasional reports of police misconduct and poor treatment of indigenous Basarwa (San, or "red people"). Concern has been raised because of government relocation schemes, including forcible evictions from traditional lands on the Central Kalahari Game Reserve to make way for game parks and cattle ranching. Only a few thousand Basarwa are permitted to practice traditional nomadic lifestyles in the central Kalahari Desert. Almost 50,000 others have been resettled in villages or as laborers on farms. Nevertheless, some Basarwa were allowed to return to their traditional areas in 1999. However, a cabinet minister in 2001 announced that by 2002 the government would cut off remaining services, such as health care, to the "remote area dwellers" in the reserves because the cost was prohibitive.

There is a free and vigorous press in cities and towns, and political debate is open and lively. The opposition and government critics, however, receive little access to the government-controlled broadcast media. Botswana easily receives broadcasts from neighboring South Africa. The private Gaborone Broadcasting Corporation Television has a limited reach. There are a number of private radio stations in Gaborone.

Two incidents reflected a slight setback in press freedom in 2001. The government barred state-run Botswana Television from airing a documentary about the convicted murderer Marietta Bosch, which prompted the station's editor to resign. Later in the year, media organizations sued the government after officials banned advertising in the Botswana *Guardian* and *Midweek Sun* newspapers. There was also a ban on the purchase of those publications by government offices. The reports that raised the government's ire alleged that Vice President Ian Khama had made unauthorized use of military aircraft. Journalists in December protested a draft bill to set up a press council that could impose fines and jail terms against journalists and publishers.

Progress in improving the rights of women has been slow, although analysts say this could begin to change with the election of more women to parliament. Domestic violence is reportedly rampant, but security forces rarely intervene in domestic affairs, especially in rural areas.

Concentration of economic power has hindered labor organization. While independent unions are permitted, workers' rights to strike and to bargain for wages are restricted. Legislation being drafted in 2001 was expected to further liberalize the labor sector.

## Brazil

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal)  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Status: Partly Free

Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 171,800,000

PPP: \$7,037

Life Expectancy: 68

Ethnic Groups: White (55 percent), mixed (38 percent), Black (6 percent), other (1 percent)

Capital: Brasilia

Trend Arrow: Brazil received a downward trend arrow due to increases in violence and lawlessness on the part of the country's police, an upsurge of largely narcotics-related violent crime, a lack of respect for indigenous rights, and growing corruption within the federal government.



### Overview:

As President Fernando Henrique Cardoso neared the end of his second and final term in office, in 2001 the national electoral contest began to heat up, with those candidates pledged to continue the ruling Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB) legacy of reform trailing badly in public opinion surveys. Political setbacks from the energy crisis and a growing number of accusations that senior members of his government had engaged in corrupt practices have eroded public support for the PSDB and tarnished Cardoso's once-impeccable image. The energy crisis in particular seemed to drive a wedge between the PSDB and its fractious coalition partners, although causes of the crisis go beyond an alleged lack of government foresight and managerial talent. In fact, domestic electric-

ity consumption has increased by 260 percent in the last 20 years, and by about 51 percent since 1994, the year that finance minister and presidential candidate Cardoso launched a successful economic stabilization program. In late 2001, leftist Workers' Party (PT) leader Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva, a thrice-failed presidential contender, took an early lead in the polls, but a victory for the former union leader in 2002 is far from certain. Although street crime, urban sprawl, land reform, and the devastation of the Amazon basin also remain important political issues, there is a growing understanding among Brazilian opinionmakers and others that Brazilian political corruption has severely limited its government from effectively addressing those other issues. In 2001, Brazil suffered from an unprecedented wave of kidnappings, which authorities say is largely the work of organized crime groups.

After gaining independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazil retained a monarchical system until a republic was established in 1889. Democratic rule has been interrupted by long periods of authoritarian rule, most recently under military regimes from 1964 until 1985, when elected civilian rule was reestablished. A new constitution, which went into effect in 1988, provides for a president to be elected for four years and a bicameral congress, consisting of an 81-member senate elected for eight years and a 503-member chamber of deputies elected for four years.

Civilian rule has been marked by corruption scandals. The scandal that had the greatest political impact eventually led to the impeachment, by congress, of President Fernando Collor de Mello, who ruled from 1989 to 1992. Collor resigned and was replaced by a weak, ineffectual government led by his vice president, Itamar Franco.

In early 1994, Cardoso, who was Franco's finance minister and a market-oriented centrist, forged a three-party, center-right coalition around Cardoso's PSDB. Cardoso's "Plan Real" stabilized Brazil's currency and gave Brazilian wage earners greater purchasing power. As the anti-inflation plan began to yield dramatic results, Cardoso, a former Marxist backed by big media and big business, jumped into the lead. In October 1994 Cardoso won the presidency with 54 percent of the vote, against 27 percent for Lula da Silva, the leader of the leftist PT and an early front-runner. The senate was divided among 11 parties, and the chamber of deputies among 18. Cardoso's coalition did not have a majority in either house.

Cardoso spent 1995 cajoling opponents and bargaining for the congressional votes needed to carry out his economic liberalization program. That fall, his government was rocked by a bribery and phone-tapping scandal. In April 1996, Cardoso indicated that he favored a constitutional amendment to drop the one-term limit, which would allow him to run for reelection in 1998, and in 1997 he was able to secure congressional approval for such a measure.

In 1996, land issues were high on the political agenda. In January, Cardoso announced presidential decree 1775, which allows states, municipalities, and non-Indians to challenge, at the federal level, proposed demarcation of Indian lands. Following the decree, miners and loggers increased their encroachments on Indian land. In another development, a radicalized movement representing landless peasants continued to occupy mostly fallow land in rural areas to pressure the government to settle rural families. The activism contributed to scores of violent conflicts between peasants on the one hand and, on the other hand, the military, the police, and private security forces, which act with virtual impunity.

In 1998, Cardoso's first-ballot victory (nearly 52 percent of the votes cast) over

Lula, his nearest rival, was tempered somewhat by a less convincing win at the congressional and gubernatorial levels. His win was also overshadowed when published accounts of secretly recorded conversations seemed to indicate that two top officials were steering a bid to privatize part of the state-run telephone holding company to a consortium of personal friends, who ended up losing the auction.

The revelation in 1999 of a vast criminal conspiracy centered in the jungle state of Acre highlighted the lawlessness of Brazil's remote areas and moved Cardoso to take firm measures to combat organized crime. At the same time, a power struggle between the state intelligence service (*Abin*) and the federal police, in which the wiretapping of top political figures, including Cardoso himself, was revealed, contributed to the scandal over the privatization of the national telecommunications system.

In 2000, the Brazilian senate removed, for the first time ever, one of its members accused of corruption. Public safety issues appeared increasingly to determine how people spent both their money and their time. In September, a congressional committee probing organized crime and drug trafficking released an explosive report implicating nearly 200 officials in 17 of Brazil's 27 states—including at least ten state and federal congressmen and a host of police officers, judges, mayors, and other local officials. Cardoso used the opportunity to warn that what he called a barrage of unfounded accusations was eroding faith in Brazilian democracy. In October, mayoral candidates of the moderately left, anti-corruption, PT swept to victory in a number of the country's most important cities, including São Paulo—Brazil's financial and economic nerve center—giving a boost to the party's chances in 2002 presidential elections.

Long a transshipment country for cocaine produced in the Andean region, Brazil had, by the turn of the century, become the world's second largest consumer of the illegal drug, after the United States. A virtual low-intensity warfare situation in several Brazilian cities, most notably Rio de Janeiro, involving rival drug gangs and the sometimes outgunned police is being fueled by the volume of cocaine and its cheaper derivatives consumed locally. Violent urban crime is also endemic to São Paulo, the country's business capital, which, because it boasts the second largest helicopter fleet in the world (after New York City), enables companies and wealthy individuals to avoid the city's traffic and crime. The richest 20 percent of Brazil's population accounts for 63 percent of the national income, 24 times the amount received by the lowest 20 percent; such disparities make a high incidence of street crime common to almost all of Brazil's major cities. A continuing crisis in law enforcement has resulted in police strikes in more than half a dozen Brazilian states, sparked in part by extremely poor wages paid to lower-ranking officers and a generalized lack of training and attention to equipment needs. In response to U.S. pressure, the Brazilian military is playing an increasing role in antinarcotics efforts. In August 2001, the daily newspaper *Folha de São Paulo* published an army document, later disavowed by the high command, which stated that "often it is even necessary to scratch out citizens' rights" in order to maintain public order.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through elections. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and the right to organize political and civic organizations. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso is credited with initiating a marked change in attitudes concerning international criticism on rights issues, from aggressive, nationalistic rejection to dialogue and openness. He created a ministerial-rank secre-



tariat charged with defending human rights. The crime of torture was upgraded from a misdemeanor to a serious crime punishable by up to 16 years in prison.

According to the United Nations, Brazil boasts the highest rate of homicides caused by firearms for any country not at war—more than 70 percent. Police say that most violent crime—perhaps as much as 70 to 80 percent—in the country is related, directly or indirectly, to the illegal drug trade, including most of the 37,000 annual murders. Brazil's murder rate has more than doubled since the mid-1980s, and in 2000 reached 28 homicides per 100,000. Within five years, homicides in São Paulo increased 41 percent, to 3,249 in 2000. An estimated 200,000 Brazilians are employed in the narcotics business, with at least 5,000 heavily armed gang members working for different drug-trafficking groups in Rio de Janeiro alone. In a situation reminiscent of what occurred in Colombia in the 1980s, "drug commands" have now turned Rio and other cities into urban battlefields, where youths pressed into criminal service tote AK-47 assault rifles and cheap cocaine is readily available at social events. The drug apparatus serves in some respects as an alternative government, offering slum dwellers food baskets, new soccer fields, and "security" patrols, some armed with high-powered explosives and, at least on one occasion, antitank missiles.

The climate of lawlessness is reinforced by a weak judiciary, although recently some improvements have been made. Public distrust of the judiciary has resulted in poor citizens taking the law into their own hands, with hundreds of reported lynchings and mob executions. Brazil's supreme court is granted substantial autonomy by the constitution. However, the judicial system is overwhelmed and vulnerable to chronic corruption. With a few exceptions, it has been virtually powerless in the face of organized crime. A national breakdown in police discipline and escalating criminal violence, fueled by a burgeoning drug trade and increasing ties to international criminal organizations, have added to a climate of lawlessness and insecurity. Human rights, particularly those of socially marginalized groups, are massively violated with impunity.

In a positive development, federal government prosecutors have begun to act as public interest advocates on issues ranging from the environment and consumer and Indian rights, to the monitoring of police behavior. Recent legal reforms have given itinerant "traveling judges" broad special powers to decide on legal matters in makeshift courtrooms, enabling the system to clear thousands of backlogged criminal and civil cases, thus allowing the rural poor a greater possibility to have their issues addressed by law.

Brazil's police are among the world's most violent and corrupt; in 2001 Amnesty International found that they systematically resort to torture to extract confessions from prisoners. (In response, the federal human rights secretary announced a modest program to fight the practice. One immediate result of setting up a "hotline" for citizen complaints was the revelation that the police sometimes hire professional thugs to beat confessions out of prisoners.)

Police are mostly grossly underpaid in the lower ranks, and in most states, salaries start at the minimum wage level of \$72 a month. Similarly, working conditions are poor. Most lower-ranking police hold second jobs in order to make ends meet. However, higher-level officers make as much as 15 times the salary given to entry-level recruits, a sticking point within the police institution. Despite the excessive workload and poor pay typical for police officers, strikes by police are often met with public indifference or worse, since strikes are often accompanied by looting and crime, and because many Brazilians believe that the police are corrupt. Indeed, as was the case in Bahia, where

a 2001 job action resulted in a crime spree that left at least 30 people dead, the threat of civil unrest is usually the police's chief bargaining tool, a lever that is denied to them when the military is called in to restore order.

Extrajudicial killings are usually disguised as shootouts with dangerous criminals. In many cities "death squads," often composed of off-duty state police, terrorize shantytown dwellers and intimidate human rights activists attempting to investigate abuses. Since 1994, the federal government has deployed the army to quell police strikes and bring order to Rio de Janeiro's 400 slums, most of which are ruled by gangs in league, or in competition, with corrupt police and local politicians. In July 2001, Cardoso reportedly considered giving army troops special police powers in order to replace police forces that went on strike in several states, and contemplated creating a national guard, composed of elite police and army troops, to circumvent the restrictions on the military making arrests. There are some 1.3 million private security guards in Brazil, more than twice the number of police serving in the country's 27 states.

The low police salaries are only part of the problem facing reformers. In cities such as Rio de Janeiro, the murders of police officers and bombings at police precincts are regular occurrences. Police work is also hampered by poor training, resulting in ineffective investigative techniques, overly bureaucratic case management, and widespread citizen distrust of law enforcement. Such suspicions appear at times to be well founded. In June 2001, for example, 27 police officers were accused of being involved in kidnapping rings in Rio de Janeiro. The graft that seems to be endemic to Brazil's law enforcement institutions received a peculiar confirmation in July 2001, when a Rio police officer was awarded a free vacation at a mountain resort—for refusing a bribe.

The prison system in Brazil is anarchic, overcrowded, and largely unfit for human habitation, and human rights groups charge that the torture and other inhumane treatment common to most of the country's detention centers turns petty thieves into hardened criminals. Some 200,000 people are incarcerated in Brazil, nearly half of them in Sao Paulo. In 2001, 15 prisoners were killed in Sao Paulo's biggest-ever prison uprising, several apparently the victims of summary executions by police who were called in to restore order.

The press is privately owned. There are dozens of daily newspapers and numerous other publications throughout the country. The print media have played a central role in exposing official corruption. In recent years TV Globo's near monopoly on the broadcast media has been challenged by its rival, Sistema Brasileiro de Televisao (STB). In a negative development, on December 27, 2000, Cardoso promulgated a controversial law that aimed to shield public officials from slander by means of firing and fining public prosecutors who make charges that they cannot subsequently prove in court.

Large landowners control nearly 60 percent of arable land, while the poorest 30 percent share less than two percent. In rural areas, violence linked to land disputes is declining, but courts have increasingly supported the eviction of landless farmers. Thousands of workers are forced by ranchers in rural areas to work against their will and have no recourse to police or through the courts. Although casualties of rural violence appeared to decrease in the period 1998-2000, a total of 1,186 people—four times the number of casualties during the 1964-1985 military dictatorship—were killed between the return of democratic rule in 1985 and June 2000.

Brazil is a source country for victims of both domestic and international trafficking of human beings, the majority of whom are women and girls trafficked for the purpose

of sexual exploitation to Europe, Japan, Israel, and the United States. Young men usually end up in the domestic agricultural labor market; however, they also have been trafficked as athletes to Europe. They frequently are subjected to humiliating conditions or coerced into other areas of exploitation, such as prostitution. Occasionally, women are employed as domestic servants in conditions tantamount to slavery. On a positive note, the government is making significant efforts to combat trafficking, despite resource constraints and a lack of coordination between the federal and state levels. However, in some cases, local corruption has hampered enforcement efforts. The government also actively investigates and prosecutes cases of trafficking and supports various programs to combat trafficking, including public information campaigns and an interministerial campaign against the sexual exploitation of minors.

In August 2001, the Brazilian congress approved a legal code that for the first time in the country's history makes women equal to men under the law. However, violence against women and children is a common problem. Protective laws are rarely enforced. In 1991 the supreme court ruled that a man could no longer kill his wife and win acquittal on the grounds of "legitimate defense of honor," but juries tend to ignore the ruling. Forced prostitution of children is widespread. Child labor is prevalent, and laws against it are rarely enforced. A recent UNICEF study reported that 53 percent of the 17.5 million children and young people forced to work in Latin America are in Brazil, and of these one million are less than ten years old.

In June 2001, a decree granted same-sex partners in Brazil the same rights as married couples with respect to pensions, social security benefits, and taxation.

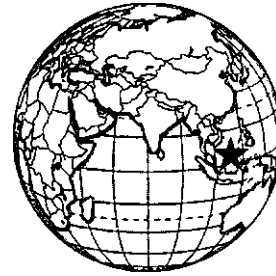
Violence against Brazil's 250,000 Indians continues. However, in a positive development, in November 2001, four Brazilian teenagers from middle- to upper-class families who burned an Indian man to death were convicted of third-degree murder and each was sentenced to 14 years in prison. The 1988 constitution guarantees indigenous peoples land rights covering some 11 percent of the country, and by law outsiders can enter Indian reserves only with permission. However, the government has completed the demarcation and registration of only 187 of the 559 eligible Indian reservations. Court and administrative rulings have eroded indigenous land claims, putting a third of the promised territory in legal limbo. Decree 1775 has opened Indian land to greater pressure from predatory miners and loggers. In some remote areas, Colombian drug traffickers have been using Indians to transport narcotics. In 2001, the Brazilian Catholic Church said that Native Brazilians suffered from violence and persecution reminiscent of the country's colonialization. It also condemned the militarization of Indian lands, a federal government initiative meant to control remote frontiers, particularly in the Amazon basin.

Despite Brazil's priding itself on being a "racial democracy," less than 16 percent of university graduates are black, while no blacks hold posts as government ministers or supreme court judges. However, more than two-thirds of Brazil's poor are black or mixed-raced peoples. In a positive development, in 2001, Brazil—pressured during a UN conference on racism held in Durban, South Africa—began to adopt quotas and "affirmative action" programs designed to ameliorate discrimination felt by Afro-Brazilians and other minorities, an action that generated a nationwide debate about racial issues.

Industrial labor unions are well organized and politically connected; many are corrupt. The right to strike is recognized, and there are special labor courts. Hundreds of strikes have taken place in recent years against attempts to privatize state industries.

## Brunei

Polity: Traditional monarchy Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist Civil Liberties: 5  
 Population: 300,000 Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$17,868  
 Life Expectancy: 74  
 Ethnic Groups: Malay (67 percent), Chinese (15 percent),  
 other (18 percent)  
 Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan



### Overview:

Throughout 2001, Brunei continued to deal with the repercussions of a scandal involving the misappropriation of funds by Prince Jefri Bolkiah, the ruling sultan's brother. Although the case against the prince was resolved through an out-of-court settlement in May 2000, his misuse of almost \$ 15 billion in state funds has had a widespread effect throughout Brunei, exacerbating the downturn in the economy, fueling resentment of the royal family's secretive and absolutist style of rule, and leading to an increase in social tensions. Following the prince's downfall, conservatives in economic and religious posts have been consolidating their position, and the government, mindful of deflecting criticism, has focused on reaffirming its Islamic credentials while tightening its control over the media.

Brunei, a hereditary sultanate, consists of two noncontiguous enclaves on the northern coast of the island of Borneo. It became a British protectorate in 1888. The country's first written constitution was adopted in 1959 and provided for five advisory councils: the Privy Council, the Religious Council, the Council of Succession, the Council of Ministers, and the Legislative Council. In 1962, the leftist Brunei People's Party (PRB), which sought to remove the sultan from power, won all 10 elected seats in the 21-member Legislative Council. The results were annulled and a PRB-backed rebellion ensued, which was crushed by occupying British troops. The sultan then assumed constitutionally authorized emergency powers for a stipulated two-year period. These powers have since been renewed every two years, and elections have not been held since 1965. Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ascended the throne in October 1967.

Brunei achieved full independence from Great Britain in 1984. In 1985, the government recognized the moderate Brunei National Democratic Party (PKDB) and, a year later, the offshoot Brunei National Solidarity Party (PPKB). In 1988, the sultan dissolved the PKDB and detained two of its leaders for two years, reportedly after the party called for elections. In 1995, the authorities permitted a PPKB general assembly. Abdul Latif Chuchu, one of the two former PKDB leaders detained from 1988 to 1990, was elected party president. Chuchu later resigned under government pressure, and since then, the PPKB has been subjected to harassment. Now, it is largely inactive. In August 1998, the sultan announced that his son, Prince Billah, was heir to the sultanate.

For years, the kingdom's population refrained from criticizing the sultan's lifestyle, as they themselves benefited from oil sales revenues. However, quiet public dissatisfaction against corruption and abuse of power has been fuelled by the exposure of gross

mismanagement at Brunei's largest private firm, Amedeo Development Corporation, which collapsed in 1998. The firm, managed by the sultan's brother, Prince Jefri, lost an estimated \$15 billion. The prince's extravagant lifestyle in the midst of an economic downturn further scarred the image of the royal family. The sultan subsequently appointed Prince Mohamed to replace Prince Jefri as chief of the Brunei Investment Agency, the investment arm of the government that manages the nation's oil wealth. The sultan also allowed the government to file a \$15 billion lawsuit against the prince for financial misconduct. The lawsuit was eventually settled out of court in May 2000 and Prince Jefri was granted a \$300,000 per month allowance.

Oil and gas accounts for more than half of Brunei's economic activity and almost 90 percent of its exports, but this natural wealth is rapidly being depleted. With a chronic budget deficit, rising unemployment, and a weak private sector, the government recognizes that it has to find new ways to support the economy in the long run. In July 2000, the sultan announced plans to turn his kingdom into an international financial center, with the Islamic banking sector being the prime target market. New laws covering international banking, business companies, trusts and limited partnerships, and registered agents and trustee licensing were introduced. There are also plans to build business and industrial centers in border areas Brunei shares with Malaysia and Indonesia.

Although the government now supports a more diversified economy, political control has tightened in some areas. For example, an Islamic scholar was appointed vice chancellor of the University of Brunei Darussalam in 1999 and conservatives have sidelined more liberal members within the civil service.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Brunei lack the democratic means to change their government. The sultan serves as prime minister (as well as finance and defense minister), rules by decree, and, along with an inner circle of relatives, holds absolute power. The Legislative Council has been fully appointed and the constitution partially suspended since 1962. Currently, only the Council of Ministers, composed largely of the sultan's relatives, and the Legislative Council convene. Since 1992, village chiefs have been chosen for life terms through local elections in which all candidates must have knowledge of Islam (although they may be non-Muslims), and cannot have past or current links with a political party. The chiefs communicate with the government through a village consultative council, and the sultan appoints the council's advisors. Citizens may petition the sultan. No public political party activity has occurred since 1995. Some members of non-Malay ethnic groups, including ethnic Chinese and others born in Brunei, are not automatically accorded citizenship, and Brunei's colonial-era nationalization laws are generally considered to be in need of reform.

There are privately owned newspapers, but they are either owned or controlled by the sultan's family, and they practice self-censorship on political and religious issues. The government-controlled Radio Television Brunei operates the only local broadcast outlet. International programming can be accessed through a cable network, but foreign journals with articles critical of the royal family or government are not allowed into the kingdom. In October 2001, the government adopted a series of restrictive amendments to existing press laws, including requiring newspapers to apply for annual publishing permits, threatening journalists with jail terms for publishing "false news," and requiring noncitizens to obtain government approval before working in the press.

Islam is the official religion. Non-Muslims face bans or restrictions on building or repairing places of worship and importing religious books and educational materials. Religious education in non-Muslim schools is also prohibited. Since 1991, the sultan has promoted local culture and the primacy of the monarchy as the defender of Islam through a conservative Malay Muslim Monarchy (*Malayu Islam Beraja*, or MIB, in Malay) ideology, apparently to ward off any incipient calls for democratization. Islamic studies and the study of MIB are required in all schools. Activities deemed offensive to Islam are actively curtailed. For example, police confiscate Christian and Buddhist icons as well as alcohol and foodstuffs that do not conform to Islamic dietary laws. In early 2001, seven Christians were arrested for alleged "cult" activities; several of them had participated in a well-organized prayer program. They were detained for several months under the Internal Security Act, and one of the accused was eventually charged with smuggling Indonesian Bibles into the country and given a two-year prison sentence. Following the trial of Prince Jefri in mid-2000, the authorities have increased their attempts to police people's behavior, and in February 2001 the Ministry of Home Affairs announced a ban on all musical performances, pronouncing them un-Islamic.

There are three independent trade unions. All are in the oil sector, but they are largely inactive and their membership constitutes less than five percent of the oil industry's workforce. Legislation does not explicitly recognize or deny the right to strike, but in practice, strikes do not occur.

The judiciary is independent. A 1996 appellate-level decision formally established the courts' power to discharge a defendant even if not requested to do so by the prosecution. Defendants enjoy adequate procedural safeguards, and in civil cases, there is a right of appeal to the Privy Council in London. Although *Sharia* (Islamic law) supercedes civil law in some areas, it is applied only to Muslims. Earlier this year, the judiciary's website was updated; it aims to provide information on the legal system in Brunei as well as to collect feedback on the public's concerns.

The police force is under civilian control. Police have broad powers to arrest without warrants, but in practice they generally obtain a warrant from a magistrate. The Internal Security Act allows the government to detain suspects without a trial for renewable two-year periods. The act has occasionally been used to detain political dissidents; for example, in 1998, several citizens were arrested for distributing letters that defamed the royal family.

Although the law permits government intrusion into the privacy of individuals, families, or homes, this rarely happens. Citizens can travel freely within the country and abroad. Under *Sharia*, Muslim women face some discrimination in divorce, inheritance, and child custody matters. There are occasional reports of physical abuse and ill-treatment of female domestic servants and foreign workers.

# Bulgaria

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy  
Economy: Mixed  
capitalist (transitional)  
Population: 8,100,000  
PPP: \$5,071  
Life Expectancy: 72

Political Rights: 1\*  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Free



Ethnic Groups: Bulgarian (83 percent), Turkish (9 percent), Roma (3 percent), other (5 percent)

Capital: Sofia

**Ratings Change:** Bulgaria's political rights rating improved from 2 to 1 due to the consistent holding of free and fair elections and the inclusion of an ethnic-based political party in the ruling coalition.

## Overview:

In a surprising victory in the June elections, the National Movement for Simeon II (NDSV) won half of the 240 seats in parliament, upsetting the two-party balance that had dominated Bulgarian politics since 1990. By July, Simeon Saxe Coburg, the former king, was named the next prime minister. Simeon II is the first monarch in any Eastern European country to win political office since the collapse of communism. By the end of 2001, public confidence in NDSV dropped considerably, having failed to make good on its election promises. Another surprising victory in November was for Georgi Purvanov, the leader of the Socialist Party and presidential candidate for the Coalition for Bulgaria alliance, who won the presidential election runoff against incumbent President Petar Stoyanov.

In February, the constitutional court had ruled that the exiled King Simeon II, a Madrid-based businessman, was not eligible to run in the presidential elections because the constitution requires a candidate to have lived in the country for five years. However, the court did not prohibit Simeon from running for a parliamentary seat. Simeon II was expelled from Bulgaria with his family, at the age of nine, after a rigged referendum in 1946 did away with the monarchy. He launched the National Movement for Simeon II in April, declaring that the party's intent is not to restore the monarchy, but to move ahead with reforms, including improving living standards, concentrating on reforms necessary to achieve full membership to the European Union (EU) and NATO, and increasing foreign investment. After a Bulgarian court refused to register the NDSV, Simeon II signed a coalition agreement with the Party of Bulgarian Women and with the Movement for National Revival, *Oborishte*, in order to ensure his party's registration for the parliamentary elections.

Occupied by the Ottoman Empire from 1396 to 1878, Bulgaria achieved full independence in 1908. Long-standing territorial ambitions led to Bulgaria's alliance with Germany in both world wars, before the Soviet invasion in 1944 and subsequent establishment of a Communist-led government. From 1954 until 1989, the country was ruled by Communist Party leader Todor Zhivkov, who resigned in the wake of a mass pro-democracy rally in Sofia and the political changes that were sweeping across Eastern

Europe. In the October 1996 presidential election, Petar Stoyanov of the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) defeated Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) candidate Ivan Marazov in two rounds of voting. With the exception of a short-lived, UDF-led government elected in 1991, Bulgaria's parliament continued to be dominated by former Communists until 1997.

Sparked by a deepening economic crisis and growing crime and corruption, a week of mass street demonstrations in November 1996 succeeded in forcing the ruling BSP to agree to early parliamentary elections the following year. One month later, Zhan Videnov, prime minister and BSP leader, resigned. In the April 1997 vote for the national assembly, the UDF and its allied factions won 52 percent of the vote and 137 of the 240 seats. UDF leader Ivan Kostov was named prime minister.

Prior to the general elections, public confidence in the UDF coalition had been undermined by low living standards, high unemployment, and scandals. The government survived a no-confidence motion in February after the opposition accused the government of failing to combat rising violent crime. Despite these setbacks, the UDF, the first political coalition to serve a full four-year term in office since the fall of communism, succeeded in privatizing and restructuring most of the state economy as well as winning an invitation for EU membership talks.

Bulgaria was elected by the United Nations General Assembly to a nonpermanent seat on the UN Security Council and will hold that seat from 2002 to 2003. Earlier in the year, the EU lifted visa requirements for Bulgaria and the European enlargement commissioner, Guenter Verheugen, declared that Bulgaria might complete EU accession talks by 2004. In April, the Bulgarian parliament ratified a memorandum that allowed NATO troops permanent access to its territory. Following the September 11 attacks in the U.S., the parliament ratified a treaty signed with the U.S. that permitted U.S. troops to pass through or stop in Bulgaria for the duration of the campaign to combat international terrorism.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Bulgarians can change their government democratically. The president is elected for a five-year term, and the unicameral national assembly, composed of 240 members, is elected every four years. In the 2001 parliamentary elections, the NDSV won 120 of the 240 seats; the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), 51; the Coalition for Bulgaria, which includes the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), 48; and the Turkish Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), 21.

The NDSV formed a coalition with the MRF after failing to gain an outright majority. The involvement of ethnic Turks in the ruling coalition means that many Bulgarians have accepted a multiethnic government, which is a positive development. The 1999 local and the 2001 parliamentary and presidential elections were regarded as free and fair by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The constitution guarantees freedom of the press. Journalists of the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR) protested in February against the nomination of Ivan Borislavov as general director. The journalists claimed his appointment by the National Council for Radio and Television was politically motivated. In April, the Bulgarian supreme court cancelled his appointment, but BNR dismissed many of the protesting journalists and replaced them with journalists loyal to the ruling UDF coalition. The situation in-



tensified at the end of March when police barred journalists from their studios and seven leaders of the protest were sacked. In October, the parliament replaced the National Council for Radio and Television with the Electronic Media Council. The members of the Electronic Media Council were selected by parliament and President Petar Stoyanov.

The constitution permits the formation of trade unions, and the 1992 Labor Code recognizes the right to strike and bargain collectively. Bulgaria's two largest unions are the Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (CITUB), a successor to the Communist-era union, and Podkrepa, an independent federation established in 1989. The constitution does, however, forbid the formation of political parties along religious, ethnic, or racial lines. In February 2000, the constitutional court declared the United Macedonians Organization (Ilinden-PIRIN) party unconstitutional, violating party members' right to associate. The European Court of Human Rights declared in October that the ban on the minority-based political party is contrary to human rights.

While freedom of worship is generally respected, the government restricts this right for some non-Orthodox religious groups. Organizations whose activities have a religious element are required by law to register with the council of ministers. Some groups, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, have endured harassment and interference in their activities; however, there were no reports of direct harassment against any religious groups in 2001. In November the Tolerance Foundation issued a press release in response to the U.S. State Department's annual Religious Freedom report, stating that "the deep attitudes... of the Bulgarian ruling elite are against the enlargement of the scope of religious freedom in Bulgaria."

The judiciary is legally guaranteed independence and equal status with the executive and legislative branches of government. However, corruption, inadequate staffing, and low salaries continue to hamper the system. Excessive physical force and discrimination by law enforcement officials towards the Roma (Gypsy) population continue to remain a serious problems. Efforts started in September 2000 to desegregate Romani schools and integrate Romani children into the national education system in Vidin, Bulgaria, continued in 2001.

Freedom of movement within the country and emigration rights are generally respected. Private property is formally protected and private property rights are respected in practice.

Women now hold 63 of the 240 seats in parliament, having doubled their membership since the last general elections. Trafficking of women for prostitution remains a serious problem.

## Burkina Faso

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary  
 (dominant party)  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Population: 12,300,000  
 PPP: \$965  
 Life Expectancy: 47  
 Ethnic Groups: Mossi, Gurunsi, Senufo, Lobi, Bobo, Mande, Fulani  
 Capital: Ouagadougou



### Overview:

A former presidential guard in February 2001 was charged with the 1998 murder of journalist Norbert Zongo in a case that has galvanized civil society to fight against the abuses committed with impunity by security forces. Zongo was killed while investigating the torture-death of a driver who had worked for President Blaise Compaore's brother. Three presidential guards in 2000, including the one charged in Zongo's killing, were sentenced to between 10 and 20 years of imprisonment for the driver's killing. One died in jail under suspicious circumstances, and the guard sentenced in the Zongo case is reportedly seriously ill. Compaoré in April announced a national day of pardon and promised compensation for economic and blood crimes, but rights advocates and the political opposition denounced the gesture because no specific proposals were offered. The government has created several commissions on politics, human rights, and other issues, but few of the recommendations offered have been implemented.

After gaining independence from France in 1960 as Upper Volta, Burkina Faso suffered a succession of army coups. In 1983, Blaise Compaoré installed himself as president in a violent coup against members of a junta that had seized power four years earlier and had pursued a watered-down Marxist-Leninist ideology. The populist, charismatic President Thomas Sankara and 13 of his closest associates were murdered. More Sankara supporters were executed two years later.

Burkina Faso has come under widespread criticism for helping fuel the trade in "blood diamonds" by allegedly allowing its territory to be used for illegal arms shipments destined for Sierra Leone and Liberia, and providing support for the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.

Burkina Faso is one of the world's poorest countries, although gains have been made in life expectancy, literacy, and school attendance. More than 80 percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture. Remittances from Burkinabe working in Côte d'Ivoire are an important source of income for families.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Burkina Faso's 1991 constitution guarantees its people the right to elect their government freely through periodic multi-party elections. In practice, this right has not been fully realized. Presidential polls in December 1991 were marred by widespread violence and an opposition boycott. President Blaise Compaoré was returned to office for a second

seven-year term in November 1998 with nearly 88 percent of the vote. The polls were marked by heavy use of state patronage, resources, and media.

Opposition parties and independent observers charged that 1997 legislative elections for five-year national assembly terms were marred by systemic weaknesses. Opposition disunity and electoral rules sharply combined to reduce the opposition's representation in the legislature to well below the 31 percent of the popular vote that opposition parties had received. The ruling Congress for Democracy and Progress took 101 of 111 national assembly seats. The next legislative elections are scheduled for April 2002.

The Independent National Electoral Commission established in May 1998 did not have control over important parts of the electoral process, particularly electoral rolls and voter cards. A new commission was appointed in 2001, headed by an academic who is considered close to the president. It includes five representatives from each sector of the government, civil society, and the opposition. The commission was given more independence through the new electoral code passed by parliament in 2000.

The Burkinabé judiciary is subject to executive interference in political cases, but is more independent in civil and criminal cases. National security laws permit surveillance and arrest without warrants. Police routinely ignore proscribed limits on detention, search, and seizure. Security forces commit abuses with impunity, including torture and occasional extrajudicial killing. Prison conditions are harsh, with overcrowding, poor diets, and minimal medical attention. Many nongovernmental organizations operate openly and freely in Burkina Faso, including human rights groups, which have reported detailed accounts of abuses by security forces. A report by the Organization of African Unity in 2001 criticized Burkina Faso for failing to properly investigate rights violations.

Burkina Faso has a vibrant free press, and freedom of speech is protected by the constitution and generally respected in practice. There is some self-censorship. At least 50 private radio stations, a private television station, and numerous independent newspapers and magazines function with little governmental interference. The media, which are often highly critical of the government, play an important role in public debate. Two journalists of *L'Independent* newspaper in 2001, however, were briefly detained for investigating the death of a schoolboy who was killed during a demonstration in December 2000. Reporters Sans Frontières filed a complaint against Compaoré in France in 2001, but French authorities dismissed it, citing presidential immunity.

Burkina Faso is a secular state, and religious freedom is respected. Freedom of assembly is constitutionally protected and generally respected, with required permits usually issued routinely. However, demonstrations sometimes are violently suppressed or banned. The government outlawed demonstrations in December 2000 and lifted the order in March 2001.

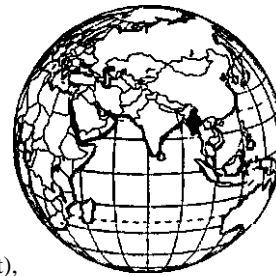
Customary law sanctions discrimination against women and is used by traditional courts to resolve civil and family disputes, especially in rural areas. Constitutional and legal protections for women's rights are nonexistent or poorly enforced. Women's educational and employment opportunities are scarce in the countryside. Female genital mutilation is still widely practiced, even though it is illegal, and a government campaign has been mounted against it. Burkina Faso is used as a transit point for the trafficking of women and children for purposes of forced labor and prostitution, but the

government has made an effort to stop this criminal activity, including providing education, making public statements against it, and arresting suspects.

Labor unions and their rights are provided for in the constitution. Several labor confederations and independent unions bargain with employers. They are a strong force in society and have staged strikes about wages, human rights abuses, and the impunity of security forces. A one-day strike by truck drivers in September 2001 halted transportation across the country. It was called to protest the alleged shooting death of a truck driver by a presidential guard.

## Burma (Myanmar)

Polity: Military                      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Statist                    Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 47,800,000          Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$1,027  
 Life Expectancy: 56  
 Ethnic Groups: Burman (68 percent), Shan (9 percent),  
 Karen (7 percent), Rakhine (4 percent), Chinese (3 percent),  
 Mon (2 percent), Indian (2 percent), other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Rangoon



### Overview:

Burma's ruling junta continued its tight grip over this impoverished Southeast Asian nation in 2001, even as it released some 200 political prisoners, the highest number of releases in several years. Late in the year, talks between the generals who run Burma and Aung San Suu Kyi, the veteran pro-democracy leader who is under house arrest in Rangoon, were at a standstill. Analysts said the regime faces little real pressure for change because it has crushed the democratic opposition, largely defeated the few ethnic insurgencies still active in the border areas, and offset the effects of Western sanctions by stepping up trade with China and other Asian countries.

After being occupied by the Japanese during World War II, Burma achieved independence from Great Britain in 1948. The military has ruled since 1962, when the army overthrew an elected government buffeted by an economic crisis and a raft of ethnic-based insurgencies. During the next 26 years General Ne Win's military rule helped impoverish what had been one of Southeast Asia's wealthiest countries.

The present junta, currently led by General Than Shwe, has been in power since the summer of 1988, when the army opened fire on peaceful, student-led pro-democracy protesters, killing an estimated 3,000 people. In the aftermath, a younger generation of army commanders who took over from Ne Win created the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) to rule the country. The SLORC refused to cede power after holding elections in 1990 that were won in a landslide by Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD). The junta jailed dozens of members of the NLD, which won 392 of the 485 parliamentary seats in Burma's first free elections in three decades.

Than Shwe, 68, and several other relatively young generals who head the junta,

refashioned the SLORC as the State Peace and Development Council in 1997. In the process, they fired some of the more blatantly corrupt cabinet ministers. The generals appeared to be trying to improve the junta's international image, attract foreign investment, and encourage an end to U.S.-led sanctions linked to the regime's grim human rights record. Yet the junta took few concrete steps to gain international support. It continued to sentence peaceful pro-democracy activists to lengthy jail terms, force NLD members to quit the party, and periodically detain dozens of NLD activists. Some observers had expressed optimism when word leaked in late 2000 that the regime was holding talks with Suu Kyi, but there was no sign of a breakthrough in 2001, or even a sense of what was being discussed.

The junta continued to face low-grade insurgencies in border areas, waged by the Karen National Union (KNU) and at least five smaller ethnic-based rebel armies. A Burmese army offensive against the KNU early in the year drove some 30,000 villagers from their homes in eastern Burma, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in January. More offensives were reported late in the year after the onset of the dry season. Thai troops, meanwhile, reportedly raided several narcotics labs inside Burma, run by a former Burmese rebel group, that help traffic millions of methamphetamine tablets to Thailand each year, according to the *Review* and other sources. The United Wa State Army (UWSA) trafficks the drugs with the reported help of Burmese soldiers and intelligence officials. The UWSA is one of about 15 rebel groups that have since 1989 reached ceasefire deals permitting them to maintain their armies and carry out some governmental functions in their territories. Like the UWSA, many are involved in narcotics trafficking.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Burma continued to be ruled by one of the world's most repressive regimes. The junta rules by decree, controls the judiciary, suppresses nearly all basic rights, and commits human rights abuses with impunity. Military officers hold most cabinet positions, and active or retired officers hold most top posts in all ministries. Diplomats say that junta leader General Than Shwe is ailing and is expected to be succeeded by General Maung Aye, the army commander and the regime's second-ranking official. However, they add, Maung Aye is locked in a behind-the-scenes struggle for the top spot with Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, the military intelligence chief and the junta's number three official. This jockeying for power reflects a broader split in the regime between supporters of Maung Aye, who oppose any type of reform, and those of Khin Nyunt, who favor modest reforms to boost Burma's flagging economy. Former strongman Ne Win, now 90, still wields some influence within the junta.

The United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva condemns the regime each year for committing tortures, disappearances, and other grave human rights abuses. In its 2001 session in the spring, the commission praised the government for beginning a dialogue with Suu Kyi, but also deplored "the deterioration of the human rights situation and the continuing pattern of gross and systematic violations of human rights" in the country.

Some of the worst human rights abuses take place in Burma's seven ethnic minority-dominated states. In these border states, the *tatmadaw*, or Burmese armed forces, often kill, beat, rape, and arbitrarily detain civilians with impunity, according to the United Nations, the United States State Department, and other sources. Soldiers also routinely seize livestock, cash, property, food, and other goods from villagers.

Tens of thousands of ethnic minorities in the Shan, Karenni, Karen, and Mon states and the Tenasserim Division remain in squalid and ill-equipped relocation centers set up by the army. The sites generally lack adequate food, water, health care, and sanitation facilities. The army forcibly moved the villagers to the sites in the 1990s as part of its counterinsurgency operations. Reports by Amnesty International in 1999 documented widespread army abuses while relocating the villagers. Press reports suggested that the army continued to forcibly uproot villagers in Karen, Shan, and other states in 2001, though on a smaller scale compared to the mid-1990s.

While army abuses are the most widespread, some rebel groups forcibly conscript civilians, commit some extrajudicial killings, and use women and children as porters, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Burma's human rights record in 2000. Rebel fighters are occasionally accused of rape, the report added. Thailand continues to host some 120,000 Karen and Karenni refugees in camps near the Burmese border and some 100,000 Shan refugees who are not permitted by Thai authorities to enter the camps, Amnesty International said in December.

The regime continued to use forced labor in 2001 despite formally banning the practice in October 2000, Human Rights Watch said in June. The government outlawed forced labor just days prior to an unprecedented November 2000 call by the International Labor Organization (ILO) for its members and UN agencies to "review" their relations with Burma. Many interpreted the resolution as a call to tighten sanctions against the regime. A 1998 ILO report found substantial evidence that the junta systematically uses forced labor. The Geneva-based organization passed a resolution in 1999 calling the regime's use of forced labor "a contemporary form of slavery." The ILO, the U.S. State Department, and other sources say that soldiers routinely force civilians to work without pay under harsh conditions. Soldiers make civilians construct roads, clear minefields, porter for the army, or work on military-backed commercial ventures. Forced labor appears to be most widespread in states dominated by ethnic minorities.

Amnesty International said in 2000 that "torture has become an institution" in Burma and that victims include political activists, criminals, and members of ethnic minorities. Dissidents say that since 1988 more than 40 political prisoners have died in Rangoon's infamous Insein prison.

The junta denies citizenship to and has committed serious abuses against the Muslim Rohingya minority in northern Arakan state. Lacking citizenship, the Rohingyas face restrictions on their movement and right to own land. They are also barred from secondary education and most civil service jobs. The government denies citizenship to most Rohingyas on the grounds that their ancestors allegedly did not reside in Burma in 1824, as required under the 1982 citizenship law. More than 100,000 Rohingya refugees remain in Bangladesh, where they fled in the 1990s to escape extrajudicial executions, rape, forced labor, and other abuses, according to reports by Human Rights Watch, the U.S. State Department, and other sources. The refugees include some of the 250,000 Rohingyas who fled to Bangladesh in the early 1990s but then largely returned to Burma, as well as newer arrivals.

Since rejecting the results of the 1990 elections, the junta has all but emasculated the victorious National League for Democracy (NLD). Authorities have jailed many NLD leaders, pressured thousands of party members and officials to resign, closed party offices, and periodically detained hundreds of NLD members at a time to block planned

party meetings. In May, the New York-based Human Rights Watch released a list of 85 Burmese lawmakers elected in 1990 who it said were in jails or government "guest houses" because of their peaceful political activities. Some have been held since 1990, but most were arrested in later crackdowns. Besides the NLD, there are nine other political parties, although most of them are moribund. A state-controlled convention began drafting a new constitution in 1993 that would grant the military key government posts in a civilian government and 25 percent of seats in a future parliament. However, the convention has not met since 1996 and never produced a final document.

The junta in late 2001 was holding some 1,600 political prisoners, Amnesty International reported in December. Many of the 200 political prisoners who were released in 2001 had reached the ends of their terms or had been held without trial for years, the organization added. Most political prisoners are held under broadly drawn laws that criminalize a range of peaceful activities. These include distributing pro-democracy pamphlets and distributing, viewing, or smuggling out of Burma videotapes of Suu Kyi's public addresses. The frequently used Decree 5/96 of 1996 authorizes jail terms of 5 to 25 years for aiding activities "which adversely affect the national interest."

Burmese courts respect some basic due process rights in ordinary criminal cases but not in political cases, according to the U.S. State Department report. The report also said that authorities in 2000 arrested and sentenced on fabricated charges nearly every lawyer with alleged links to the NLD. Prisons and labor camps are overcrowded, and inmates lack adequate food and health care. However, conditions in some facilities have reportedly improved somewhat since 1999, when the junta began allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross access to prisons.

The junta sharply restricts press freedom, jailing dissident journalists and owning and tightly controlling all daily newspapers and radio and television stations. It also subjects most private periodicals to prepublication censorship. The regime released at least two jailed journalists in 2001, but continued to hold at least 18 others, the Paris-based *Reporters sans Frontieres* said in August.

Authorities continued to arbitrarily search homes, intercept mail, and monitor telephone conversations, the State Department report said. The regime's high-tech information warfare center in Rangoon reportedly can intercept private telephone, fax, e-mail, and radio communications. Laws and decrees criminalize possession and use of unregistered telephones, fax machines, computers and modems, and software.

Since the 1988 student pro-democracy demonstrations, the junta has kept universities closed on and off for a total of nearly seven years, limiting higher education opportunities for a generation of young Burmese. Moreover, since reopening universities in 2000 after a four-year hiatus, authorities have lowered standards and shortened the academic term at many schools, made students pledge loyalty to the regime, barred political activity on campuses, and relocated some schools to relatively remote areas. The few nongovernmental groups in Burma generally work in health care and other nominally nonpolitical fields.

Criminal gangs have in recent years trafficked thousands of Burmese women and girls, many from ethnic minority groups, to Thailand for prostitution, according to reports by Human Rights Watch and other groups. Women are underrepresented in the government and civil service.

Ordinary Burmese generally can worship freely. The junta, however, has tried to

control the Buddhist clergy by placing monastic orders under a state-run committee, monitoring monasteries, and subjecting clergy to special restrictions on speech and association. Authorities also jailed more than 100 monks in the 1990s for their pro-democracy and human rights work; about half of these have been released, according to the U.S. State Department report. Buddhists make up around 90 percent of Burma's population.

There was "a significant increase in the level of anti-Muslim violence" in Burma between July 2000 and June 2001, according to the U.S. State Department's annual report on religious freedom covering that period. The regime "may have acquiesced" in some of the violence, the report added. Officials often reject or delay approval of requests by Islamic and Christian groups to build new churches and mosques.

Independent trade unions, collective bargaining, and strikes are illegal. Several labor activists continued to serve long prison terms in 2001 for their political and labor activities. Child labor is relatively common in small businesses, on family farms, and in other industries, according to the U.S. State Department report. The junta forces most state workers and many other Burmese to join a tightly controlled mass movement, the Union Solidarity Development Association. The Association monitors forced labor quotas, reports on citizens, and organizes meetings called to denounce the NLD and its members.

In recent years, the junta's economic mismanagement has contributed to periodic gas and power shortages, persistently high inflation rates, stagnant economic growth, and a hugely overvalued currency. Weak property rights and poor land ownership records further hamper economic development. The European Union and the United States, moreover, maintain economic sanctions against Burma and prevent it from receiving some multilateral aid because of its dismal human rights record. Meanwhile, official corruption is reportedly rampant. Given these problems, foreign investment has been limited.

## Burundi

Polity: Civilian-military (transitional)      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 6  
 Population: 6,200,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$578  
 Life Expectancy: 47  
 Ethnic Groups: Hutu [Bantu] (85 percent),  
 Tutsi (14 percent), Twa [Pygmy] (1 percent)  
 Capital: Bujumbura



Trend Arrow: Burundi received an upward trend arrow due to a negotiated agreement between political parties and the installation of a transitional government.

### **Overview:**

In 2001 Burundi made a tentative step toward overcoming the civil discord that has wracked the country for years. Long-running negotiations, mediated by Nelson Mandela, the former president of South Africa, resulted in agreement in principle by most parties on a future democratic political solution to the conflict pitting the Tutsi minority against a



Hutu majority. A transition government was installed on November 1 with President Pierre Buyoya remaining chief of state for the next 18 months and Domitien Ndayizeye, the secretary-general of the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), the Hutu-dominated opposition party, as vice president.

Despite this potentially important step, Burundi continued to suffer from continuing guerrilla warfare between the government and the two main armed Hutu resistance groups, the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD) and National Liberation Front (FNL), which have yet to agree to a ceasefire and to the political accords. In addition, in July rebel Tutsi military opposed to the negotiations staged an unsuccessful coup attempt against the government of President Buyoya. Continued instability within the region further complicates efforts at reconciliation.

With the exception of a brief period following democratic elections in 1993, the minority Tutsi ethnic group has governed the country since independence in 1962. The military, judiciary, educational system, business sector, and news media have also been dominated by the Tutsi. Violence between the country's two main ethnic groups has occurred repeatedly since independence, but the assassination of the newly elected Hutu president, Melchoir Ndadaye, in 1993 resulted in sustained and widespread violence. Since 1993 an estimated 200,000 Burundi citizens, out of a population of 5.5 million, are estimated to have lost their lives.

Ndadaye's murder fatally weakened the hold on power of the Hutu-backed political party, FRODEBU. Negotiations on power sharing took place over the succeeding months, as ethnically backed violence continued to wrack the country. Ndadaye's successor was killed along with Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana in 1994 when their plane was apparently shot down while approaching Kigali airport in Rwanda. This event triggered the Rwandan genocide and intensified killings in Burundi.

Under a 1994 power-sharing arrangement between the main political parties, Hutu politician Sylvestre Ntibantunganya served as Burundi's new president until his ouster in a 1996 military coup led by Buyoya, who had formerly been president. Buyoya claimed to have carried out the coup to prevent further human rights violations and violence. Peace and political stability within the country continued to be elusive as armed insurgents sporadically staged attacks and the government security forces pursued an often ruthless campaign of intimidation. The search for peace eventually led to an agreement to allow a measure of political space for the parliament, which has a FRODEBU majority, and the beginning of negotiations in Arusha in 1998.

The negotiations for ending the civil war continued well into 2001. Nineteen organized groups from across the political spectrum agreed to recommendations from committees regarding the nature of the conflict, reforms in the nation's governing institutions, security issues, and economic restructuring and development. The form of the political institutions through which power would be shared and the reform of the military proved to be especially sensitive and difficult issues. Even after the signing of the accords by the last of the 19 parties in September 2000, questions about its implementation remained, which were only resolved in mid-2001. An upsurge in guerilla activity in the wake of the accords claimed hundreds of lives.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Political and civil liberties within Burundi continue to be circumscribed, although parties and civic organizations do function. President Pierre Buyoya is an unelected chief of state.

The constitution was suspended when he took power, as was the legitimately elected parliament. In June 1998 a transitional constitution was put into place; it reinstated and enlarged the parliament through the appointment of additional members and created two vice presidents. The parliament's powers remain limited in practice, although it provides an outlet for political expression and remains an important player in determining the nation's future.

The negotiated political agreement which entered into force in November, 2001, allows Buyoya to remain president for the next 18 months and then for the presidency to be occupied by a member of FRODEBU for a subsequent 18 months until presidential and parliamentary elections are held in November 2004. In addition, Jean Minani, a leading member of FRODEBU who returned from exile, was elected Speaker of the National Assembly.

There are more than a dozen active political parties, ranging from those that champion radical Tutsi positions to those that hold extremist Hutu positions. Most are small in terms of membership. FRODEBU and the Tutsi-dominated Unity for National Progress (UPRONA) party remain the leading political parties.

Burundians continue to be subject to arbitrary violence, whether from the government or from guerilla groups. Although detailed, specific figures on the number of dead or injured are difficult to obtain, widespread violence continued in parts of Burundi in 2001. This has been documented by respected independent organizations inside and outside Burundi, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the ITEKA Human Rights League. Amnesty International issued several appeals during the year, for example, for investigations into human rights abuses allegedly conducted by both guerilla and government forces. In addition to operations of the government security forces, there has been intense activity by armed opposition groups, particularly in the province of rural Bujumbura.

Reprisals by the armed forces have often been brutal and indiscriminate, and have resulted in hundreds of extrajudicial executions, mainly of members of the Hutu ethnic group. Much of this violence has been committed in zones where the local civilian and military authorities had ordered the civilian population to leave the area because of counterinsurgency operations. The continued impunity of the armed forces and the weakness of the Burundian judicial system are important contributing factors to the violence.

Some different viewpoints are expressed in the media, although they operate under significant self-censorship and the opposition press functions sporadically. The government-operated radio station allows a measure of diversity. The European Union has funded a radio station. The Hutu extremist radio broadcasts sporadically and has a limited listening range.

Constitutional protections for unionization are in place, and the right to strike is protected by the labor code. The Organization of Free Unions of Burundi is the sole labor confederation and has been independent since the rise of the multiparty system in 1992. Most union members are civil servants and have bargained collectively with the government. Freedom of religion is generally observed.

Women have limited opportunities for advancement in the economic and political spheres, especially in the rural areas. Only 5 percent of females, for example, are enrolled in secondary school. Burundi's mainly subsistence economy is estimated to have contracted by 25 percent over the last five years. The five-year conflict and the two

years of economic sanctions imposed by neighboring states have crippled the economy (25 percent cumulative negative real gross domestic product growth over the last five years), and worsened social indicators. Over the five years of conflict and economic sanctions, poverty has increased by 80 percent in rural areas and more than doubled in urban areas. Child malnutrition is estimated to be at 38 percent, and reported cases of major endemic diseases have increased by over 200 percent since 1993. Access to basic social and health services has been severely diminished.

## Cambodia

Polity: Dominant party (military-influenced) Political Rights: 6  
Civil Liberties: 5\*

Economy: Statist Status: Not Free

Population: 13,100,000

PPP: \$1,361

Life Expectancy: 56

Ethnic Groups: Khmer (90 percent), Vietnamese (5 percent), Chinese (1 percent), other (4 percent)

Capital: Phnom Penh

Ratings Change: Cambodia's civil liberties rating improved from 6 to 5 due to modest trends toward improved labor and press rights, as well as an increasingly active civil society.



### Overview:

A decade after an internationally brokered deal ended Cambodia's civil war, foreign governments and international agencies expressed concern in 2001 that the government had not taken advantage of the peace to improve the country's poor human rights record. International donors pledged more than \$600 million in aid, but urged the Southeast Asian nation's autocratic prime minister, Hun Sen, to improve governance and tackle corruption. The United Nations, meanwhile, said that many candidates for local elections scheduled for February 2002 were facing harassment and intimidation.

After winning independence from France in 1953, Cambodia was ruled in succession by King Norodom Sihanouk, the U.S.-backed Lon Nol regime in the early 1970s, and the Chinese-supported Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979. Under the Maoist Khmer Rouge, at least 1.7 million of Cambodia's 7 million people died by execution, disease, overwork, or starvation. Vietnam invaded in December 1978 and installed a Communist government in January 1979 under the Khmer People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP). During the 1980s, the KPRP government fought the allied armies of Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge, and a former premier, Son Sann. An internationally brokered peace deal signed in 1991 formally ended the war and put the impoverished country on the path to multiparty elections, although the Khmer Rouge continued to wage a low-grade insurgency from the jungle.

In Cambodia's first free parliamentary elections in 1993, the royalist United Front for an Independent, Neutral, and Free Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), headed by Prince Norodom Ranariddh, a Sihanouk son, defeated the Cambodian People's Party (CPP),

the successor to the KPRP. Following the vote, CPP leader Hun Sen, a Khmer Rouge defector, used his control over the army to force FUNCINPEC into forming a coalition government. Backed by Cambodia's security forces, Hun Sen harassed and intimidated FUNCINPEC members, opposition groups, and the press in the mid-1990s before ousting Ranariddh in a bloody July 1997 coup. By then the two leaders were locked in an open power struggle, each trying to recruit allies from the Khmer Rouge. The Khmer Rouge itself was a spent force within a year of the coup following the death of its leader, Pol Pot, and the defections of top commanders.

Since the coup, Hun Sen has faced few real threats to his power, while the end of the Khmer Rouge insurgency has brought peace to Cambodia for the first time since the 1960s. The CPP won a flawed election on June 26, 1998, that appeared to be held primarily to convince donors to resume aid they had suspended after the coup. The CPP won 64 seats; FUNCINPEC, 43; and the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), led by Cambodia's leading dissident, 15. Turnout was officially more than 90 percent. In November 1998, Hun Sen brought FUNCINPEC into a coalition government as a junior partner.

International donors resumed aid to Cambodia in 1999, and their grants and soft loans now make up about half of the government's annual budget. At the latest donor meeting in June 2001, governments and multilateral agencies pledged \$615 million in aid while urging the Cambodian government to carry out legal and judicial reforms and curb corruption and illegal logging. While Hun Sen promised to increase the pace of reform, opposition leader Sam Rainsy urged donors to reconsider the merits of providing aid. He said the government had made minimal progress in tackling poverty and corruption, strengthening land rights, and establishing a tribunal to try Khmer Rouge leaders on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

The government moved somewhat closer to bringing former Khmer Rouge leaders to justice in August when it pushed through parliament a law setting up a special tribunal following two years of negotiations with the United Nations. The body will have both local and UN-appointed judges and prosecutors. Many in the UN, however, are concerned with the fairness of any trials because Cambodian judges, who generally are considered to be influenced by the government, will be in the majority. At the same time, any majority decision will have to be signed by at least one international judge. At year's end, the government had not published a list of defendants or a date for trials to begin.

In a further sign of the country's fragile rule of law, the UN's representative on Cambodia, David Leuprecht, said in an August statement that he was "gravely concerned about instances of violence and intimidation against commune election candidates and members of political parties."

During the year, courts convicted more than four dozen men for their roles in a November 24, 2000, attack on government buildings in Phnom Penh that killed at least four people. An obscure, California-based antigovernment group, the Cambodian Freedom Fighters, claimed responsibility for the attack.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Cambodia's most recent parliamentary elections in 1998 were neither free nor fair because of violence, restrictions on press coverage and campaign opportunities, and official manipulation of the procedures for allocating parliamentary seats. There were at least 21 politically motivated killings, mainly of FUNCINPEC supporters, between late May and the

June 26, 1998, election, UN observers reported. During the election campaign, authorities prevented opposition parties from using radio or television to reach voters, disrupted some opposition rallies, and banned political demonstrations in Phnom Penh. As the ballots were being counted, the CPP-dominated National Election Commission changed the electoral formula to boost the ruling party from a plurality to a majority of parliamentary seats. In any case, Cambodia's national assembly has little independent power and does not act as a check on Hun Sen's executive power.

Political parties generally operate freely, despite the murders in 2000 and 2001 of at least five party members who had planned to run in the 2002 commune elections. Local officials attributed the killings to personal disputes, while human rights groups said that at least three of the killings were politically motivated. A court convicted Im Nan, a CPP commune head, for the 2000 murders of a FUNCINPEC candidate, Pak Choeun, and that of his wife, Doung Meas. Another court convicted two other men for the 2001 killing of Uch Horn, an SRP candidate. However, there have been few, if any, prosecutions in the 41 political killings that followed the 1997 coup and the 21 or more election-related killings during the 1998 campaign.

While Cambodia's overall human rights record has improved somewhat in recent years, security forces continue to commit serious abuses, the judiciary is not independent, trafficking and other abuses against women continue unabated, and employers violate labor rights with impunity. Soldiers and police committed several extrajudicial killings in 2000, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Cambodia's human rights record in 2000. There is little evidence that extrajudicial killings ceased in 2001. While courts have successfully prosecuted some police and soldiers accused of lesser crimes and human rights abuses, anecdotal evidence suggests that most rogue officers act with virtual impunity.

The judiciary suffers from pervasive corruption, poorly trained and underpaid judges, a severe shortage of attorneys, and a lack of resources, according to the U.S. State Department report. Defendants often lack adequate legal representation for fair trials or must bribe judges for favorable verdicts, the report added. Pretrial detention is often lengthy. The makeup of two key judicial bodies is viewed widely as biased in favor of the ruling CPP, according to the State Department report. Those bodies are the Constitutional Council, which can review the constitutionality of laws, and the Supreme Council of Magistracy, which appoints, supervises, and can discipline judges. The latter has taken disciplinary action against several judges.

Police and soldiers routinely torture, beat, and otherwise abuse suspects in custody, according to the U.S. State Department and the Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO). Despite some recent improvements, prisons remain dangerously overcrowded and inmates often lack sufficient food, water, and health care. In a sign of the poor state of Cambodia's criminal justice system, mobs in some cases have taken matters into their own hands, killing several alleged criminals.

Many of Cambodia's more than two dozen private newspapers routinely criticize government policies. Authorities, however, have in recent years used a strict 1995 press law to suspend several newspapers for 30-day periods for criticizing the government or monarchy. The press law provides journalists with several rights but also permits the information ministry to suspend newspapers, broadly prohibits publishing articles that affect national security and political stability, and subjects the press to criminal stat-

utes. Government officials or close associates own almost all of the six Khmer-language television stations and 14 Khmer-language radio stations, the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres said in 2000. Only one independent radio station, Sambok Kmum (Beehive), broadcast in 2001. The information ministry has denied repeated requests from opposition leader Sam Rainsy for a license to operate a radio station. There have been no convictions in the cases of six journalists murdered on the job between 1994 and 1997.

Women enjoy equal access with men to education, but they are underrepresented in government, politics, and private sector management jobs. Nongovernmental groups say that rape and domestic violence are common. They also allege that trafficking of women and girls for prostitution continues to be widespread despite some prosecutions of traffickers in recent years. Many prostitutes reportedly are girls who were sold by their families into the commercial sex industry. Brothel owners frequently abuse and hold prostitutes in conditions of bonded servitude.

Buddhism is Cambodia's state religion, and more than 95 percent of the population is Buddhist. Muslims and other religious minorities can worship freely. The estimated 200,000 to 500,000 ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia face harassment and discrimination both by officials and within mainstream society, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Workers, farmers, students, and others held numerous protests throughout the year with little interference, although police or government-organized groups broke up some demonstrations. Of Cambodia's several hundred nongovernmental groups, some 40 do human rights work, investigating alleged abuses and educating Cambodians about their rights.

Cambodia's few independent trade unions are active but are small and have limited resources. Authorities have made few attempts to prosecute or punish employers accused of firing union leaders or other anti-union harassment. Workers in the garment sector, where unions are most active, frequently held strikes and demonstrations in Phnom Penh to protest against low wages, poor and dangerous working conditions, forced overtime, and dismissal of pro-union staff. In a country where some 80 percent of workers are subsistence farmers, union membership is estimated at less than one percent of the workforce.

Cambodia's relatively young garment industry is likely to be increasingly hurt by competition from Chinese and Vietnamese factories. They have more sophisticated equipment, better-skilled workers, and, in China's case, good access to U.S. and European markets, according to a 2001 report by the Cambodia Development Research Institute, a private Phnom Penh think-tank. Cambodia's garment sector accounts for 70 percent of total exports and provides jobs for some 160,000 people, mostly young women.

With Cambodian courts unable to enforce property rights and the land registration system a shambles, military and civilian officials have in recent years forcibly evicted several thousand families from their land, according to LICADHO and other Cambodian human rights groups. At the same time, local committees are increasingly settling many land disputes, according to the U.S. State Department report. Government officials, soldiers, and police tolerate and at times take part in money-laundering schemes, gun running, drug trafficking, and the activities of mainland Chinese prostitution rings.

## Cameroon

Polity: Presidential  
(dominant party)  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 15,800,000  
PPP: \$1,573  
Life Expectancy: 55

Political Rights: 6\*  
Civil Liberties: 6  
Status: Not Free



Ethnic Groups: Cameroon Highlander (31 percent), Equatorial Bantu (19 percent), Kindi (11 percent), Fulani (10 percent), Northwestern Bantu (8 percent), Eastern Nigritic (7 percent), other African and non-African (14 percent)  
Capital: Yaounde

**Ratings change:** Cameroon's political rights rating improved from 7 to 6 due to the creation of an electoral observatory.

### Overview:

Cameroon's human rights record came under international scrutiny in 2001, when nine young men disappeared after being detained by a notorious anticrime squad called the Operational Command. The young men, who came to be known as the "Bamenda Nine," were detained in January for allegedly stealing a gas canister. Local human rights groups said they were killed a few days later. President Paul Biya sacked the unit's chief operational officer, who was detained with others in the unit. They are to face trial in a military court. In the political sphere, Cameroon made a step forward in 2001 when President Biya appointed members to the National Observatory of Elections. Its president is a longtime member of the ruling party, but its vice president is an outspoken woman of more independent credibility.

Cameroon was seized during World War I, in 1916, and divided between Britain and France after having been a German colony since 1884. Distinct Anglophone and Francophone areas were reunited as an independent country in 1961. Approximately one-fourth of Cameroonians are Anglophone. The Biya administration remains largely Francophone, and the country's main opposition is from Anglophone Cameroonians. The linguistic distinction constitutes the country's most potent political division. Cameroon's population comprises nearly 200 ethnic groups. For more than three decades after independence, Cameroon was ruled under a repressive one-party system. In 1992 and 1997 President Biya held fraudulent multiparty elections, which he won after a boycott by the opposition Social Democratic Front (SDF), led by John Fru Ndi.

Privatization has progressed, but graft and the absence of independent courts inhibit business development. The government in 2000 set up an anticorruption body, but it is unlikely that any serious reform will take place until changes are made in the government and judiciary. Biya in 2001 sacked a number of ministers, who were considered to be among the most overtly corrupt, in an effort to retain some credibility in the eyes of international donors.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Although Cameroon's constitution provides for a multiparty republic, citizens have not been allowed to choose their government and local leaders by democratic means. Presidential

elections have been devalued by rampant intimidation, manipulation, and fraud. In 1996, the constitution extended the presidential term to seven years and allowed President Paul Biya to run for a fourth term. His reelection in 1997 with 93 percent of the vote was marred by serious procedural flaws, as well as by a boycott by the three major opposition parties, because the government dismissed demands for an independent election commission.

Legislative elections have also been fraudulent. The ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement won 116 seats and the SDF won 43 in polling in 1997, overseen by regime loyalists in the ministry of territorial administration. The next legislative polls are scheduled for May 2002 and local elections are to be held that year as well. During the last municipal elections, in 1996, the opposition won a number of mayoral seats. However, the government changed the constitution and appointed its own officials as city mayors, effectively nullifying the election results through an administrative maneuver.

Cameroon's courts remain highly subject to political influence and corruption. The executive controls the judiciary and appoints provincial and local administrators. Military tribunals may exercise jurisdiction over civilians in cases involving civil unrest or organized armed violence. A military court in March 2001 released six members of the Southern Cameroon National Council after 15 months in detention without trial.

In the north, powerful traditional chiefs known as *lamibée* run their own private militias, courts, and prisons, which are used against the regime's political opponents. Torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees are routine in Cameroon, despite legislation passed in January 1997 that prohibits torture. Indefinite pretrial detention under extremely harsh conditions is permitted after a warrant is issued or in order to "combat banditry." Prison conditions are harsh, and inmates routinely die.

Numerous nongovernmental organizations generally operate without hindrance. Various intelligence agencies operate with impunity, and opposition activists are often held without charges or disappear while in custody. Security forces routinely impede domestic travel, repress demonstrations, and disrupt meetings. Three people were killed in October 2001 when authorities cracked down on demonstrators of the Southern Cameroon National Council. Dozens of protesters were detained. A youth group linked to the ruling party reportedly pointed out leading council members to authorities.

The constitution provides for freedom of the press, but serious restrictions inhibit open political exchange. Criminal libel law is regularly used to silence regime critics. Eleven years after the national assembly passed a bill liberalizing the audio and visual media, Biya signed the legislation into force in 2001. A handful of private radio stations were already operating without a license, but they only broadcast religious or music programs locally. Rádio Veritas, which is operated by the Roman Catholic Church, is preparing to set up in Cameroon. Another independent station, Radio Magic, applied for a license and began broadcasting out of Douala in August 2001. It was shut down immediately. Rádio Veritas and Radio Magic would be the only independent national broadcasters, which is significant in the run-up to elections in 2002.

Freedom of religion is generally respected. Slavery reportedly persists in parts of the north, and discrimination exists against indigenous Pygmies and other ethnic minorities, while the Beti and Bula dominate the civil service and state-run businesses.

Violence against women is reportedly widespread. Women are often denied inheritance and landownership rights even when these are codified, and many other laws



contain unequal gender-based provisions and Penalties. Female genital mutilation is practiced in some parts of the country. Cameroon is a transit center and market for child laborers and traffickers.

Trade union formation is permitted under the 1992 labor code, but some of the code's provisions have not been implemented and many government workers are not covered. Workers have the right to strike but only after arbitration, the decisions of which the government can overturn.

## Canada

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy (federal)

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 31,000,000

PPP: \$26,251

Life Expectancy: 79

Ethnic Groups: British Isles origin (28 percent),

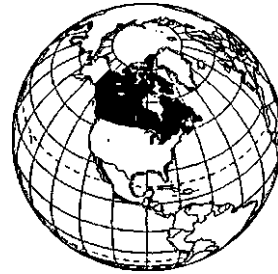
French (23 percent), other European (15 percent), other (34 percent)

Capital: Ottawa

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 1

Status: Free



### Overview:

Canada's political life was dominated by a debate over the country's response to the September 11 terror attacks on the United States. In the aftermath of the terror acts, Prime Minister Jean Chretien introduced a number of measures designed to strengthen internal security. Some of these measures, however, drew criticism on the grounds that they would tip the balance away from Canada's traditional respect for civil liberties.

Colonized by French and British settlers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Canada came under the control of the British Crown under the terms of the Treaty of Paris in 1763. After granting home rule in 1867, Britain retained a theoretical right to overrule the Canadian parliament until 1982, when Canadians established complete control over their own constitution. The country is governed by a prime minister, a cabinet, and the parliament. The parliament consists of an elected 301-member house of commons and an appointed 104-member senate. The British monarch remains the nominal head of state, represented by a ceremonial governor-general appointed by the prime minister.

Immediately after the September 11 attacks, Canada joined other members of the Group of 8 industrial countries in devising measures to combat international terrorism, including stopping funds for foreign terror groups. In early December, Canada and the United States undertook a comprehensive bilateral agreement on improving cross-border security. Discussions were also begun with the United States and Mexico on forging a continental security perimeter.

Two measures in an omnibus antiterror bill drew particular concern from civil libertarians. One allows police to make preventive arrests of those suspected of planning a terror act. Another requires suspects to testify before a judge, even if they have not been formally accused of a crime. In a compromise with the critics, the government

agreed that this clause would become inoperative after five years; some want the entire antiterror act to be subject to a "sunset clause."

Chretien's Liberal Party is in firm control of the national government after a sweeping electoral victory in 2000. The triumph made Chretien the first Canadian prime minister to win three consecutive terms in the post-World War II period. Chretien is the longest-serving leader of a democratic country in the western hemisphere.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Canadians can change their government democratically, and as a result of government canvassing, Canada has nearly 100 percent effective voter registration. Prisoners have the right to vote in federal elections, as do citizens who have lived abroad for fewer than five years.

The judiciary is independent. Limitations on freedom of expression range from unevenly enforced "hate laws" and restrictions on pornography to rules on reporting. Recently, there have been complaints that the judiciary has become overly activist and has issued decisions that have the effect of usurping the powers of the legislature.

The media are generally free, although they exercise self-censorship in areas such as the amount of violence shown on television.

Civil liberties have been protected since 1982 by the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but have been limited by the constitutional "notwithstanding" clause, which permits provincial governments to exempt themselves by applying individual provisions within their jurisdictions. Quebec has used the clause to retain its provincial language law, which restricts the use of English on signs. The provincial governments, with their own constitutions and legislative assemblies, exercise significant autonomy. Canada's criminal law is based on British common law and is uniform throughout the country. Civil law is also based on the British system, except in Quebec, where it is based on the French civil code.

The status of Quebec became a contentious issue in Canadian politics. Six years after Canada's divisive 1995 referendum on independence for Quebec, separatism for the province remained a primary political issue.

In 1996, parliament amended the constitution to outlaw discrimination based on "sexual orientation" by adding this term to the 1977 Human Rights Act list that includes age, sex, race, religion, and disability. Canada has also taken important steps to protect the rights of native groups, although some native groups contend that indigenous peoples remain subject to discrimination.

Canada boasts a generous welfare system that supplements the largely open, competitive economy. Trade unions and business associations enjoy high levels of membership and are free and well organized.

Religious expression is free and diverse, but religious education has been the subject of controversy in recent years. Many provinces have state-supported religious school systems that do not represent all denominations. In 2000, a major scandal was triggered by a series of legal actions taken by members of native groups who had been educated in schools operated by religious denominations under federal charter. The cases involved widespread allegations of physical and sexual abuse by teachers and administrators in incidents that went back several decades.

Canada maintains relatively liberal immigration policies. However, concern has mounted over the possible entry into Canada of immigrants who were involved in ter-

ror missions. Pressure towards tightening immigration laws grew following the 1999 arrest of Ahmed Rassem, an Algerian national who was in Canada illegally, and who was involved in an attempt to smuggle bomb-making material into the United States. Further pressure for immigration restrictions grew again after evidence was uncovered of a support network in Canada for those involved in the September 11 attacks.

## Cape Verde

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Population: 400,000  
 PPP: \$4,490  
 Life Expectancy: **68**  
 Ethnic Groups: Creole [mulatto] (71 percent), African (28 percent), European (1 percent)  
 Capital: Praia

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

Cape Verde, a West African archipelago, had a spectacularly close presidential election in February 2001. In the end, opposition candidate Pedro Verona Rodrigues Pires defeated ruling party contender Carlos Alberto Wahnnon de Carvalho Veiga by only 12 votes in an election that overturned a decade of rule by the Movement for Democracy (MPD). Both presidential candidates have served as prime ministers. It was a test for Cape Verde's democracy that despite the closeness of the election, trust remained in the country's institutions and the results were accepted. The African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV) also defeated the MPD in January's legislative polls. The change in voting appeared to be a reflection of the popular attitude that the MPD had grown complacent.

After achieving independence from Portugal in 1975, Cape Verde was governed under Marxist, one-party rule by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (which is now the PAICV) for the next 16 years. The MPD won a landslide 1991 victory in the first democratic elections after Cape Verde became the first former Portuguese colony in Africa to abandon Marxist political and economic systems. In December 1995, the MPD was returned to power with 59 percent of the vote. António Mascarenhas Monteiro's mandate ended in 2001 after he had served two terms as president.

Respect for human rights and civil liberties remain very good in Cape Verde. Concern about prison conditions was raised during the year, but detention facilities are far better than in many neighboring countries.

The country's stagnant economy has been bolstered somewhat by increased exports and tourism, but infrastructure improvements are still needed to assist in private sector development. Cape Verde is one of Africa's smallest and poorest lands. It has few exploitable natural resources and relies heavily on imported food. Foreign aid and remittances by Cape Verdean expatriates provide a large portion of national income. The government is pursuing privatization and is making efforts to take advantage of benefits offered by the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, hoping to gain access to U.S. markets and attract foreign investment.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The president and members of the national people's assembly are elected through universal suffrage in free and fair elections. Since the country's 1991 transition to multiparty democracy, Cape Verdeans have changed their government three times by democratic means. The 2001 presidential election was close from the first round, when Pires won 46.5 percent of the vote compared to 45.8 percent for Veiga. Two other candidates failed to gain 10 percent between them. The second round of voting produced an even percentage split and was decided on a dozen votes.

In the legislative elections of 2001, the PAICV won 40 seats compared with 30 for the MPD and 2 for the Democratic Alliance for Change. Disagreements within the MPD in 2000 resulted in a split and the formation of a new party, the Democratic Renewal Party, which won no assembly seats.

The 1992 constitution circumscribed the powers of the presidency, which was left with little authority beyond the ability to delay ratification of legislation, propose amendments, and dissolve parliament after a vote of no-confidence. Referenda are permitted in some circumstances, but they may not challenge civil liberties or the rights of opposition parties.

Reforms to strengthen an overburdened judiciary were implemented in 1998. Composed of a supreme court and regional courts that generally adjudicate criminal and civil cases fairly, the judiciary is independent, although cases are frequently delayed. Free legal counsel is provided to indigents, defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty, and trials are public. Judges must bring charges within 24 hours of arrest.

Human rights groups, including the National Commission on the Rights of Man and the Ze Moniz Association, operate freely. Concern about overcrowding, medical care, violence, and the use of disciplinary cells in Cape Verde's prisons was raised in 2001 by Ze Moniz.

Freedom of peaceful assembly and association is guaranteed and respected. The constitution requires the separation of church and state, and religious rights are respected in practice. Several Roman Catholic churches, however, have been desecrated in recent years. The vast majority of Cape Verdeans belong to the Roman Catholic Church.

Freedom of expression and of the press is guaranteed and generally respected in practice. No authorization is needed to publish newspapers and other publications. Broadcasts are largely state controlled, but there is a growing independent press. Criticism of the government is limited by self-censorship resulting from citizens' fear of demotion or dismissal.

Discrimination against women persists despite legal prohibitions against gender discrimination, as well as provisions for social and economic equality. Many women do not know their rights or do not possess the means to seek redress, especially in rural areas. Women receive less pay for equal work and are excluded from traditionally male professions. They are also subject to allegedly common, but seldom reported, domestic violence. Serious concerns about child abuse and the prevalence of child labor persist. Domestic nongovernmental organizations have undertaken campaigns to promote the rights of women and children.

The constitution protects the right to unionize, and workers may form and join unions without restriction. Two confederations, the Council of Free Labor Unions and the National Union of Cape Verde Workers, include 25 unions with approximately 30,000 members.

## Central African Republic

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary  
 Political Rights: 5\*  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Civil Liberties: 5\*  
 Status: Partly Free

Population: 3,600,000

PPP: \$1,166

Life Expectancy: 45

Ethnic Groups: Baya (34 percent), Banda (27 percent), Mandjia (21 percent), Sara (10 percent), other (8 percent)

Capital: Bangui

**Ratings Change:** Central African Republic's political rights rating declined from 3 to 5, and its civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5, due to a coup attempt that led to ethnic persecution.



### Overview:

The Central African Republic (CAR) was wracked by violence twice in 2001 by disgruntled members of the military, which left the democratically elected government vulnerable to further attacks by renegade troops. Former military ruler André Kolingba attempted to seize power from President Ange-Félix Patassé in May. The violence left at least 250 people dead in the capital, Bangui, and forced 50,000 others to flee their homes. More than 20,000 people, including hundreds of soldiers, fled across the border to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Human rights abuses were rampant during the ten days of fighting in Bangui, and there were fears of an ethnic bloodbath when the violence turned against members of Kolingba's ethnic group, the Yakoma. Kolingba escaped with many of his backers. In November, the former head of the armed forces, General Francis Bozize, fled north to Chad with troops loyal to him after several days of fighting in Bangui. The violence was triggered when forces backing Patassé attempted to detain Bozize in connection with the May coup attempt.

The CAR, a sparsely populated country, gained independence from France in 1960 after a period of particularly brutal colonial exploitation. Colonel Jean-Bedel Bokassa seized power in 1967 and, as self-declared emperor, imposed an increasingly bizarre personal dictatorship on the CAR, which he renamed Central African Empire. After Bokassa began to murder schoolchildren, French forces finally ousted him in 1979. A French-installed successor was deposed by General Kolingba in 1981. Kolingba accepted a transition to a multiparty system that led to democratic elections in 1993 and 1999, which Patassé won. Until the elections, members of Kolingba's Yakoma ethnic group occupied a disproportional number of positions in the government, security forces, and state-owned businesses.

General Kolingba, who was defeated in the 1999 presidential elections, sought help from mercenaries from Rwanda and Angola in the May 2001 coup attempt. In an unusual twist, a rebel group fighting the government in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Movement for the Liberation of Congo, came to Patassé's aid, along with troops from Libya.

Tension had been mounting in the CAR because of salary arrears, economic hardship, and rivalries within the country's security forces. Restructuring of the security

forces has been slow following military uprisings in 1996 and 1997. Kolingba played a part in both of those. United Nations peacekeepers withdrew in February 2000 following democratic elections and were replaced by a peace-building office.

Most of the CAR's people are subsistence farmers who rely on income from coffee, cotton, and timber. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have accused the government of executive interference in the country's privatization program, which is proceeding slowly.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Presidential and legislative elections were held in 1993 in line with the 1986 constitution, giving the CAR's people their first opportunity to choose their leaders in an open and democratic manner. President Ange-Félix Patassé, leader of the Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People, was reelected in September 1999 for another six-year term, defeating Andre Kolingba. The incumbent narrowly won the first round, eliminating the need for a runoff. UN peacekeepers watched over the voting, and international observers judged the vote to be free, although there were reports of irregularities such as ballot shortages in some areas with a strong opposition following. Kolingba and other candidates claimed fraud.

President Patassé's triumph was not matched by his party in the December 1998 national assembly elections, which produced a nearly even split between his supporters and his opponents. Opposition parties held one more seat than the ruling party, but one of their members defected, giving the ruling party a majority. There are more than 35 political parties.

The Independent Electoral Commission was established in 1999, but it was largely controlled by administrators loyal to the president. A decree later subordinated it to the state Organ of Control to oversee the election process.

Corruption, political interference, and lack of training hinder the efficiency and impartiality of judicial institutions. Limitations on searches and detention are often ignored. Conditions for prisoners, including many long-term pretrial detainees, are extremely difficult and sometimes life threatening. Juveniles are not separated from adults. Police brutality is also a serious problem, and security forces act with impunity. Several human rights and other nongovernmental organizations operate unhindered.

Broadcast media are dominated by the state and offer little coverage of opposition activities. There are several independent newspapers. The only licensed private radio stations are music- or religion-oriented. Legislation enacted in 1998 rescinded the government's authority to censor the press, but authorities have occasionally been restrictive and have used draconian criminal libel laws to prosecute journalists.

Religious groups are required by law to register with the government, but religious freedom is generally respected in practice. However, two incidents reflected repressive tendencies in 2001. The director of Radio Notre Dame in Bangui, the Reverend Tolino Falagoista, was detained in October for a month after the government accused him of writing a story about mass executions of Yakomas, including information on the existence of three mass graves, and a warning of genocide. He denied the charges. The Reverend Julien Koyenguia, a Yakoma, was detained for two months and accused of sheltering coup suspects and of preaching violence and tribal hatred.

Open public discussion is permitted, but constitutionally guaranteed freedom of assembly is not always honored by authorities. Discrimination against indigenous Pyg-

mies exists. Societal discrimination in many areas relegates women to second-class citizenship, especially in rural areas, and constitutional guarantees for women's rights are generally not enforced. Women's access to education and jobs has been limited. However, women have made some gains in the political sphere; 80 women contested the national assembly elections in 1998. Eight won seats. Female genital mutilation is still practiced, but was made illegal in 1996 and is reportedly diminishing. A family code was enacted in 1998.

The CAR's largest single employer is the government, and government employee trade unions are especially active. Worker rights to form or join unions are legally protected. Two of five labor federations are independent. For strikes to be legal, a conciliation process is required.

## Chad

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (military-dominated)

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 8,700,000

PPP: \$850

Life Expectancy: 50

Ethnic Groups: Sara (28 percent), Arab (12 percent), many others (60 percent)

Capital: N'Djamena

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 5

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

In 2001 President Idriss Déby continued to maintain control through a carefully managed electoral process resulting in his reelection as president. Intermittent fighting with rebels from the Movement for Democracy and Justice in Chad (MDJT), headed by former Defense Minister Youssouf Togoimi, continued, although negotiations designed to resolve the conflict were under way at years' end. Resources began to flow as a result of an economically crucial and environmentally sensitive \$3 billion oil pipeline project supported by the World Bank. The pipeline could bring Chad, one of the world's poorest countries, billions of dollars in new revenue, but serious questions remain about the government's ability to manage these revenues in a transparent and accountable fashion.

Chad has been in a state of almost constant war since achieving its independence from France in 1960. President Déby gained power by overthrowing Hisssein Habre in 1990. Turmoil exacerbated by ethnic and religious differences is also fanned by clan rivalries and external interference. The country is divided between Nilotic and Bantu Christian farmers who inhabit the country's south and Arab and Saharan peoples who occupy arid deserts in the north.

Chad was a militarily dominated one-party state until Déby lifted the ban on political parties in 1993. A national conference that included a broad array of civic and political groups then created a transitional parliament, which was controlled by Déby's Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS). Scores of political parties are registered.

Chad's army and political life are largely in the hands of members of the small

Zaghawa and Bideyat groups from President Déby's northeastern region. This is a source of ongoing resentment among the more than 200 other ethnic groups in the country. The formal exercise of deeply flawed elections and democratic processes has produced some opening of Chadian society, but real power remains with President Déby.

France, which remains highly influential in Chad, maintains a 1,000-member garrison in the country and, despite a sometimes rocky bilateral relationship, serves as Déby's main political and commercial supporter. Brutality by Chadian soldiers and rebels marked insurgencies in the vast countryside, but the large-scale abuses of the past have abated somewhat.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** In theory Chadians have the right to choose their political leaders. In practice, this right is severely restricted. Chad has never experienced a peaceful, fair, and orderly transfer of political power. Recent presidential and legislative elections have been marred by serious irregularities and indications of outright fraud. In May, Déby was reelected president of Chad with more than 67 percent of the vote. The six opposition presidential candidates alleged that the election was marred by fraud and called for the result to be annulled. They undertook a civil disobedience campaign and were briefly arrested. The government subsequently banned gatherings of more than 20 people, although political protests continued. The European Union "regretted" the many shortcomings in the organization of the poll and the resultant irregularities, and expressed concern about the restriction of liberties observed during the electoral period.

The legislature is unicameral. The sole chamber, the national assembly, has 125 members, directly elected for a four-year term. There is some multiparty representation in parliament. The current coalition government is dominated by the ruling Patriotic Salvation Movement (MPS) with 65 seats. Intimidation and harassment by the National Security Agency hinder opposition efforts to organize.

In a referendum held in March 1996, voters approved a new constitution based on the French model which provides for a unified and presidential state. An ostensibly independent election commission law was passed in 2000, despite significant opposition. The law gives the predominance of seats to government representatives and to those of parties in the ruling coalition.

In 2001, killings and torture with impunity by Chadian security forces and rebel groups reportedly continued. In recent years tens of thousands of Chadians have fled their country to escape the violence. Several of the 20 or more armed factions have reached peace pacts, but many of these agreements have failed. Chad's long and porous borders are virtually unpoliced. Trade in weapons among nomadic Sahelian peoples is rife, and banditry adds to the pervasive insecurity.

The rule of law and the judicial system remain weak, with courts heavily influenced by the executive. Security forces routinely ignore constitutional protections regarding search, seizure, and detention. Overcrowding, disease, and malnutrition make prison conditions life threatening, and many inmates spend years in prison without charges.

State control of broadcast media allows little exposure for dissenting views. Newspapers critical of the government circulate freely in N'Djamena, but have little impact among the largely rural and illiterate population.

Despite harassment and occasional physical intimidation, the Chadian Human Rights



League, Chad Nonviolence, and several other human rights groups operate openly and publish findings critical of the government. Although religion is a source of division in society, Chad is a secular state and freedom of religion is generally respected. Women's rights are protected by neither traditional law nor the Penal code, and few educational opportunities are available. Female genital mutilation is commonplace. Workers' right to organize and to strike is generally respected, but the formal economy is small. Union membership is low. Most Chadians are subsistence farmers.

## Chile

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 15,400,000  
 PPP: \$8,652  
 Life Expectancy: 75  
 Ethnic Groups: White and mestizo (95 percent), Indian (3 percent), other (2 percent)  
 Capital: Santiago



### Overview:

The long legal ordeal of Capt. General Augusto Pinochet appeared to come to an end in July 2001, when an appeals court in Santiago decided to drop charges against the ailing, 85-year-old former dictator for human rights atrocities committed by his regime after it found that he suffered from dementia. Pinochet was accused of covering up death squad activities following his seizure of power in 1973. The case, pursued both locally and internationally by courts and rights activists alike, helped to unravel both the myth of military impunity and the structure of the undemocratic institutions he bequeathed the country upon leaving power in 1990. Meanwhile, Socialist President Ricardo Lagos faced increasing public disenchantment with his government as unemployment neared ten percent and the country's once-booming export-driven economy downshifted to much lower growth rates. In December legislative elections, Lagos's Coalition for Democracy dropped to 47.9 percent support, down from 50 percent won in similar elections four years earlier, with a pro-Pinochet party positioned to become the country's largest. Analysts said that the country's high unemployment, particularly among Chile's youth, was largely responsible for an upsurge in robberies in the country's major cities. The economic meltdown in nearby Argentina caused some concern in Santiago, but experts said that they believed that Chile's economy would continue to grow.

The Republic of Chile was founded after independence from Spain in 1818. Democratic rule predominated in the twentieth century until the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende by the military under Pinochet. More than 3,000 people were killed or "disappeared" during his regime; some of them were pitched from aircraft into the Pacific Ocean or pushed out of helicopters over the Andes. The 1980 constitution provided for a plebiscite in which voters could reject another presidential term for Pinochet. In the

1988 vote, 55 percent of voters said no to eight more years of military rule, and competitive presidential and legislative elections were scheduled for 1989.

In 1989, Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin, the candidate of the center-left Concertación for Democracy, was elected president over two right-wing candidates, and the Concertación won a majority in the chamber of deputies. However, with eight senators appointed by the outgoing military government, the coalition fell short of a senate majority. Aylwin's government was unsuccessful in its efforts to reform the constitution and was stymied by a right-wing senate bloc in its efforts to prevent Pinochet and other military chiefs from remaining at their posts until 1997.

Eduardo Frei, a businessman and the son of a former president, was the Concertación candidate in the December 1993 elections, and he won handily over right-wing candidate Arturo Alessandri. Frei promised to establish full civilian control over the military but did not have the needed votes in congress. In 1995, the military defiance of a supreme court ruling that Pinochet's secret police chief be jailed for the 1976 murder of an exiled opposition leader in Washington, D.C., finally ceased, and the army general was imprisoned. However, Frei had to retreat from demanding full accountability for rights violations that occurred under military rule.

The senate has 48 seats, including a senator-for-life position for Pinochet and 9 designated senators mandated by the 1980 constitution. In October 1997 Frei selected the army chief of staff as Pinochet's replacement from a list of names Pinochet submitted. In December, the ruling coalition won a convincing victory in an election in which all 120 lower house and 20 of 49 senate seats were open. However, the binomial electoral system, which allows a party receiving only 33 percent of the votes to share power in two-seat constituencies with a party receiving as much as 66 percent, resulted in pro-Pinochet forces retaining their veto on constitutional reforms.

The detention of Pinochet in London in October 1998, the result of an extradition order from Spain, where he was wanted for alleged rights crimes against Spanish citizens living in Chile, produced a strong political polarization in Chile and resulted in several emergency meetings called by the new leadership of the armed forces, as well as a reunion of the National Security Council. However, as the months of imprisonment lengthened for Pinochet in 1999, tempers subsided somewhat. A number of the general's cronies were called to account by the courts for their own repressive roles, while the current armed forces sought a dialogue with rights groups and relatives of the missing.

On December 12, 1999, Lagos, 61, a moderate socialist and the leader of Chile's Concertación coalition, faced right-wing Alliance for Chile candidate Joaquin Lavín, the mayor of a Santiago suburb and a former advisor to Pinochet, winning 47.96 percent to Lavín's 47.52 percent. Both candidates, however, fell short of the 50 percent majority needed to win outright in a first round, where results showed a strong polarization between right and left. Lavín's strong showing—historically the right never received more than 40 percent of the votes—was fueled by an 11 percent unemployment rate and concerns about crime.

Lagos won the January 16, 2000, runoff election, taking a 2.6 percent lead over Lavín. Although the Concertación coalition had 70 seats to the opposition's 50 in the lower house, it held just 20 seats in the senate, to 18 held by the opposition. A bloc of 11 others were either senators-for-life or had been designated under Pinochet's rules. Lagos's strong early performance appeared, by late 2000, to be threatened by eco-

conomic woes and transparency issues. Although Lagos had high personal popularity ratings, Chileans faulted Lagos's government for Chile's soaring unemployment, price increases, and charges of government corruption. In October 2000 municipal elections, Lavin won 61 percent of the votes against 29 percent for Marta Larraechea, Frei's wife, in the contest for the Santiago mayoralty, one of 300 that were up for grabs. Although the ruling coalition won 51.2 percent of the votes nationwide, the opposition, capitalizing on the government's inability to bring down a 10.7 percent unemployment rate, raised its number of mayoral seats to 163 from 126, out of a total of 341, and garnered 40.9 percent of the vote. In December 2000, a judge stunned Chileans by indicting Pinochet on homicide and kidnapping charges, in a year that saw the judiciary expand human rights protections by ruling that allegations of crimes against humanity, including torture, kidnapping, and genocide, fell within its purview and were not subject to amnesty decrees. As the gruesome details about crimes Pinochet either knew about or ordered were made public during the effort to bring him to justice, even his once most-fervent supporters appeared less willing to defend his legacy.

In 2001, Lagos came under friendly fire from supporters and regional neighbors alike for his decision to "modernize" Chile's air force by purchasing ten F-16 fighter planes from the United States for \$714 million. Critics of the decision said that the sale would eventually upset South America's military balance and force equally cash-strapped regional governments to spend more for military hardware. The Chilean right was also locked in internecine warfare; it was revealed that contending factions had engaged in a "dirty war" in which one group had employed former secret police personnel to blackmail a senior political figure into renouncing a bid for the senate in elections held December 16, 2001. In that contest, Chileans voted for a completely new lower house and half of the 38 senate seats that were to be decided by popular vote and Pinochet supporters made big gains in the legislative elections, although they failed to win control of congress from the governing center-left coalition. At the end of 2001, Lagos appointed a new armed forces chief widely viewed as non-political, a move hailed by some analysts as heralding a new civil-military relationship in Chile.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government democratically. The 2001, 2000 and 1999 elections were considered free and fair, although low registration rates among young voters are a cause for concern.

In 1990, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was formed to investigate rights violations committed under military rule. Its report implicated the military and secret police leadership in the death or forcible disappearance of 2,279 people between September 1973 and March 1990. However, in 1978, the Pinochet regime had issued an amnesty for all political crimes, and the supreme court, packed by Pinochet before leaving office, had, before the year 2000, blocked all government efforts to lift the amnesty.

Chile's civilian governments have investigated hundreds of human rights cases involving incidents occurring after 1978 brought to civilian courts. The investigations have resulted in a handful of convictions. In June 1999, a civilian judge decided that five senior military officers—members of the so-called Caravan of Death that summarily executed 73 political prisoners in several cities—should be tried for the crimes committed in 1973. In 1999, the army commander, General Ricardo Izurieta, began a

dialogue with human rights groups not only to clarify the fates of many disappeared political activists, but also to identify those military officers who had ordered their torture and death. In September 1999, the supreme court ratified a lower-court ruling that the amnesty declared by Pinochet's regime was not applicable to cases in which people disappeared, because the absence of the victims' bodies meant the crimes committed were kidnappings, not murders. Thus the crimes continued beyond the 1978 deadline established by the regime and could be prosecuted. In 2001, a much-touted report issued by the military about the fate of the "disappeared"—designed to show the armed forces' desire to be part of a reconciliation with large sectors of Chilean society—proved to be misleading at best.

Chile is in the midst of a multi-year transition from a closed judiciary-driven criminal legal system to a more efficient adversarial system that allows for opposing prosecuting and defending attorneys to make arguments in open court.

In a positive development, in April 2001 a new press law was passed that was hailed by international human rights advocates as an important step in protecting freedom of expression. The law repealed the controversial Article 6 (b) of the State Security Law that criminalized what it called "contempt of authority" and mandated prison sentences for those who "insult" public officials, such as the president, the commanders in chief of the armed forces, and members of congress and the supreme court. In a decade of democratic rule, some 30 journalists, politicians, and ordinary citizens had been prosecuted under its provisions. The legislation also protects journalists from any obligation to reveal their sources and ends the power of the courts to issue gag orders on the press for reporting on controversial criminal cases. However, a number of restrictive press statutes remain on the books, including a provision that allows judges to confiscate publications.

Chile has two national police forces—a uniformed force, the Carabineros, one of Latin America's best law enforcement institutions with a long history of popular support and respect; and a smaller, plainclothes investigations force. After the September 1973 military coup, the Chilean national police were incorporated into the defense ministry. Following the return of democratic rule, the police were placed under the operational control of the interior ministry but remain under nominal control of the defense ministry. The investigations police are responsible for criminal investigations and immigration control. The 30,000-person Carabineros force is responsible for law enforcement, traffic management, narcotics suppression, border control, and counterterrorism throughout Chile. Carabineros also conduct extensive and visible civic action duties as well, such as search and rescue, and assisting with births in rural areas. In recent years, the Carabineros' prestige has been diminished somewhat as a result of complaints about inadequate numbers of uniformed police patrolling the streets and allegations that some officers have been corrupted by the drug trade. The police are also often the targets of accusations about brutality and the lack of due process rights of detainees. In 2001, the government inaugurated, in high-crime areas, a community-based policing program that included a variety of programs meant to lower public anxiety about crime through better street lighting, information sharing and other communications devices.

Prisons in Chile are often overcrowded and antiquated, with facilities nationally running at about 163 percent of capacity.

Workers may form unions without prior authorization as well as join existing unions.

Approximately 12 percent of Chile's 5.7 million workers belong to unions. Private sector employees have the right to strike, but the government regulates that right and some restrictions apply. Public employees belonging largely to services considered to be essential for the public welfare are prohibited from striking, although in the past job actions have occurred.

Corruption among officials and senior law enforcement personnel is not a major problem. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index consistently ranks Chile in the top 20th percentile among the nations of the world for transparency in doing the public's business, close to the United States and way ahead of its South American neighbors. Allegations of official corruption in Chile are normally investigated—although much less so in the military—and, where appropriate, sanctions are meted out. Because of its growing size, relative sophistication, and antiquated laws, Chile's financial system is vulnerable to money laundering, although narcotics corruption is not a serious issue affecting Chile. Current laws do not mandate the reporting of either suspicious or high-value transactions, nor has Chile established a distinct governmental organization to undertake financial intelligence analysis.

Native American groups in the country's southern region are increasingly vocal about their rights to ancestral lands that the government and private industry seek to develop. Chile has some 1.2 million indigenous people, almost ten percent of the country's total population, two-thirds of them Mapuches. A 1993 indigenous rights law guaranteed that Indian lands could not be embargoed, sold, expropriated, or taxed. New development projects, promoted by the government, continue to threaten Mapuche lands in the south of Chile, where highly charged land disputes have resulted in the region's being dubbed the country's "little Chiapas," an allusion to Mexico's trouble southern state. Upon taking office, President Ricardo Lagos began to make good on a campaign promise that the "Indian question" would receive priority attention. In May 2000, he announced the creation of a "historical truth and new deal commission" to consider the needs of Mapuche communities. He also announced that the Mapuche will be given 370,000 acres of government-owned land. In July 2001, one of the largest Mapuche demonstrations was held in the regional capital of Temuco, to protest against a raid at an Indian organization headquarters. The several hundred demonstrators clashed with police, damaged storefronts, and set up roadblocks.

In 2000, Lagos appointed five women to his 16-person cabinet. Violence and discrimination against women and violence against children remain problems.

## China

Polity: One party      Political Rights: 7  
Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 6  
Population: 1,273,300,000      Status: Not Free  
PPP: \$3,617  
Life Expectancy: 71  
Ethnic Groups: Han Chinese (92 percent), other, including  
Tibetan, Mongol, Korean, Manchu, and Uighur (8 percent)  
Capital: Beijing



### **Overview:**

China's leaders prepared in 2001 for a party congress in late 2002 that is likely to usher in a younger generation of rulers.

There are few signs that the potential leaders from the younger generation favor loosening the Communist Party's tight grip on power, though they are likely to continue the country's painful transition to a market economy, which has already thrown millions out of work.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took power in 1949 under Mao Zedong after defeating the Nationalist Koumintang in a civil war that began in the 1920s. Aiming to tighten the party's grip on power, Mao led several brutal, mass ideological campaigns that resulted in millions of deaths and politicized nearly every aspect of public life. Following Mao's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping emerged as China's paramount leader. While maintaining the CCP's monopoly on power, Deng scaled back the party's role in everyday life and launched China's gradual transition from a central planning system to a market economy.

The party showed its intent to hold on to power at all costs with the June 1989 massacre of hundreds, if not thousands, of student protesters in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square. The Beijing demonstrations were part of a nationwide student movement protesting official corruption and demanding democratic reforms. Following the crackdown, the CCP named hardliner Jiang Zemin as party secretary-general, sacking the relatively moderate Zhao Ziyang. A former Shanghai mayor and party boss, Jiang became state president in 1993 and was widely recognized as China's new paramount leader following Deng's 1997 death.

Jiang, 75, has continued Deng's policies of selling off state enterprises, rolling back the cradle-to-grave welfare system, and encouraging private enterprise, while tightly restricting dissent. The CCP hopes that economic development will stave off broad calls for political reform. It fears, however, that liberalizing the economy too fast will create social unrest at the same time that Chinese citizens increasingly are exposed to foreign news and ideas about freedom and democracy.

While the student activism of the late 1980s has largely died down, factory workers and farmers have in recent years held thousands of street demonstrations over hardships associated with economic restructuring. These hardships are expected to increase as the government slashes tariffs and takes other measures to open up China's economy to trade and foreign investment as part of the condition for Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). The trade body formally admitted China in November 2001.

In line with its WTO commitments, the government has in recent years privatized thousands of small- and medium-sized state-owned enterprises, throwing more than 20 million people out of work. It hopes to sell off the remainder by the middle of the decade. But Beijing has not created a system of unemployment benefits, health insurance, and pensions for laid-off and retired state enterprise workers. Moreover, workers who still have jobs with state-run factories often receive their wages and benefits late, since most state enterprises are heavily in the red.

More layoffs could be in store if the government follows through on its pledges to clean up China's ailing state banks. They make 80 percent of their loans to state firms. Partly as a result, bad loans now make up some 30 percent to 40 percent of the state banks' outstanding loans, according to Western experts. They say that recovering loans from delinquent borrowers and cleaning up the balance sheets of state banks will involve even more painful job cuts at state firms. Failure to do so, however, raises the risk of a financial crisis.

In the countryside, where 900 million Chinese live, farmers have in recent years held thousands of riots, demonstrations, and other protests against high and often arbitrary local government fees and taxes. The government announced in December that a third of China's provinces would try out a new system in 2002 whereby farmers would pay taxes to provincial, rather than township, authorities. Called by some the biggest reform in the countryside since China disbanded communes in the early 1980s, the new system is aimed at forcing townships to cut costs rather than squeeze peasants in order to meet their ballooning debts.

Rural areas also have too many workers chasing too few farm and factory jobs. Rural unemployment and underemployment combined are estimated to be more than 30 percent, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on China's human rights record in 2000. This has contributed to a "floating population" of 100 million people, by official count, who have left homes in rural areas in search of work in the cities, where the migrants increasingly compete with locals for jobs. China's WTO accession could make matters worse for many peasants if cheaper agricultural imports chip away at their incomes.

Workers and farmers have also held many demonstrations against widespread official corruption. According to official figures, economic corruption consumes 13 percent to 17 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) annually. Authorities have in recent years responded by executing hundreds, if not thousands, of people for corruption. They include 14 people executed in 2000 for their roles in a \$6.6 billion smuggling racket in the port of Xiamin, the largest so far exposed in China. The government, however, has made few efforts to fight graft by creating more transparent and accountable institutions and improving law enforcement.

Chinese authorities, meanwhile, continue to forcefully put down any organized dissent. Since December 1998, courts have sentenced more than 30 members of a fledgling dissident group, the China Democracy Party, to prison terms of up to 13 years on subversion or other charges. The government has also jailed thousands of followers of the Falun Gong spiritual movement, which in April 1999 organized the biggest demonstration in the capital since 1989 to demand official recognition.

The government has also tried to crush independence movements among the seven million ethnic Uighurs and other, smaller Turkic-speaking groups in China's northwestern Xinjiang province. Since the mid-1990s, Chinese authorities have executed several

hundred Uighurs accused of involvement in separatist activities, and detained, imprisoned, or tortured thousands of others, Amnesty International said in October. Most Uighur independence activities appear to be peaceful, although armed groups have carried out several bombings and assassinations. Uighur leaders accuse Beijing of exploiting the region's rich mineral resources, controlling religious affairs, and altering Xinjiang's demographic balance by encouraging an influx of Han Chinese through job opportunities and other incentives.

The CCP faces these pressing economic and social issues at a time when it is choosing a new generation of leaders. The CCP's sixteenth congress in late 2002 will reshuffle the powerful standing committee of the party politburo. It is widely expected to name Hu Jintao, the youngest member of the current Politburo, to replace Jiang as party secretary-general. Hu, 58, strongly supports maintaining the CCP's tight control over politics, the media, and cultural affairs, the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* noted in February. Under the constitution, Jiang must give up the presidency in 2003. Some of his aging colleagues resent his plans to hold on to the chairmanship of the powerful Central Military Commission past the congress, *The Economist* of London reported in August. CCP leaders are also sharply divided over Jiang's controversial July proposal that the party open its ranks to private businesspeople. Jiang said that the party should bring in capitalists in order to boost its "influence and cohesiveness." But conservatives fear that giving private entrepreneurs influence within the party will strengthen the CCP's economic reform camp.

China's economy posted solid growth in 2001, even taking into account the fact that official figures are widely believed to be somewhat inflated. Zeng Peiyan, chairman of the State Development Planning Commission, predicted in December that GDP would grow by 7.4 percent in 2001, down from 8.0 percent in 2000.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) runs China as a single-party state, prohibiting opposition parties, controlling the judiciary, and restricting sharply most basic rights. The CCP Politburo's seven-member standing committee makes all key political decisions and sets government policy. China's legislature, the National People's Congress, is constitutionally the most powerful state body. In practice, it rubber-stamps the Politburo's decisions. At the same time, many of the Congress's handpicked delegates have in recent years registered protest votes over the government's handling of crime and other issues.

In a limited democratic experiment, rural Chinese elect their local village committees. These bodies, however, cannot levy taxes and hold few administrative powers. While government-supported candidates have lost races in some villages, the overall election process is hardly free and fair. Local party officials carefully vet candidates, and balloting is often marred by irregularities and unfair procedures. By some estimates, up to 90 percent of China's 900,000 or more villages have held elections since the 1980s, although there are no exact figures.

The CCP controls the judiciary and directs verdicts in sensitive cases, but has also introduced reforms in recent years aimed at making ordinary criminal and civil trials fairer. Police and judges, however, frequently ignore the new rules and flout due process rights, and local authorities often intervene even in ordinary cases. Overall, 99 percent of trials result in guilty verdicts.

The government revised the Criminal Procedure Law in 1997 to grant defense law-



yers greater roles and to increase their access to defendants, create a more adversarial trial process, and to end the presumption of guilt (although without establishing a presumption of innocence). Other reforms sought to curb the widespread practice of bribing judges for favorable verdicts, open most trials to the public, and increased training for judges and lawyers. But criminal defense lawyers "are often harassed and intimidated, and sometimes detained or even convicted of crimes, merely for actively defending the interests of their clients," according to a 2001 report by the New York-based Human Rights in China. Reflecting in part the reluctance of many lawyers to defend criminals, 70 percent of defendants in criminal cases lack counsel at trial, according to National Bar Association figures.

In a positive development, many ordinary Chinese have won out-of-court settlements or even outright victories in recent years in civil suits against township governments, employers, state firms, and local police. This would have been impossible only a decade ago. Judges, however, are often wary of ruling against local governments, which provide their salaries and appointments. Even when they do win, plaintiffs often find it impossible to enforce judgments against local authorities. In any case, courts generally accept only lawsuits that dovetail with Beijing's policies and priorities, such as curbing abuses by local officials.

Any reforms to the way Chinese courts operate are undermined by the fact that authorities still imprison without trial hundreds of thousands of people each year, using administrative procedures. Officials can sentence suspects without trial to up to three years in "re-education through labor" camps. These camps held some 230,000 people in 1997, the latest year for which figures are available, according to the U.S. State Department report. Authorities can also detain without trial homeless people and other "undesirable" city dwellers under a practice called "custody and repatriation." The State Department report said authorities detain upwards of 1.7 million people each year under "custody and repatriation."

By most accounts, Chinese prisons, labor camps, and detention centers hold thousands of political prisoners for peacefully expressing their political, religious, or social views, although the exact number is not known. Many political prisoners are jailed under broadly drawn laws against subversion, "endangering state security," or "leaking state secrets." In addition, the Criminal Procedure Law criminalizes the advocating of independence or greater autonomy for Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet. Even after they are released, many former political prisoners face unrelenting police harassment that prevents them from holding jobs or otherwise leading normal lives.

China executes thousands of people each year, more than all other countries combined, according to Amnesty International. As part of Beijing's ongoing "Strike Hard" campaign against crime, many Chinese have been put to death for nonviolent offenses including hooliganism, pimping, theft of farm animals or rice, tax fraud, embezzlement, or bribery. Capital trials are often summary, increasing the odds of innocent people being executed. All told, Chinese law punishes 65 separate crimes by death.

Throughout China, torture of criminal suspects, political dissidents, and others is "widespread and systemic, committed in the full range of state institutions, from police stations to 're-education through labor' camps, as well as in people's homes, workplaces and in public," Amnesty International said in a February report. Courts have in recent years sentenced some officials convicted of torture to heavy prison sentences, although most perpetrators go unpunished.

The CCP sharply restricts press freedom. It prohibits the media from promoting political reform, covering internal party politics or central government affairs, criticizing Beijing's domestic and international policies, or reporting financial information the government has not released. At the same time, the CCP often allows the media to report on certain problems that the party itself seeks to alleviate. These include corruption, arbitrary decisions, and other abuses by local officials. At least a dozen journalists are serving prison terms for breaching these limits. Authorities have in recent years also dismissed several journalists and editors, and suspended or banned some liberal magazines, newspapers, and publishing houses. While China's press is both public and private, the government owns and operates all radio and television stations.

The government promotes Internet use, but restricts content and regulates providers. Regulations introduced in 2000 require content providers to gain official approval of websites and obtain permission to post news from foreign sources. They also criminalized the unauthorized release on the Internet of broadly defined "state secrets" and banned content that could be subversive, harm China's reputation, or undermine social stability. Authorities have in recent years arrested several dissidents for information disseminated through the Internet. Growth in the number of Chinese Internet users slowed in 2001, rising by 17.8 percent, to 26.5 million users, in the first half of the year after more than quadrupling in the same period a year earlier, the government said in July.

China has hundreds of thousands of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that work in ostensibly nonpolitical areas. These include the environment and the provision of social services for women and migrant workers. Beijing, however, does not allow NGOs to work on human rights or other overtly political issues. Authorities use a complex vetting process to deny licenses to politically oriented groups, in part on the basis of State Council Order 43 of 1989. It bans "identical or similar social organizations... within the same administrative area." This allows officials to deny registration to independent labor organizations or other activist NGOs on the grounds that they would serve functions allegedly covered by some existing state-controlled groups. Once registered, NGOs are supervised by specific government departments. Government figures show that at the end of 1998 China had more than 1,500 quasi-NGOs, 165,000 social organizations, and 700,000 nonprofit organizations registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

Workers, farmers, and other aggrieved Chinese have held thousands of public protests in recent years over labor and economic concerns and corruption by local officials. Security forces, however, broke up many demonstrations, particularly those with overt political and social messages or where protesters became unruly. By official count, Chinese staged more than 100,000 demonstrations nationwide in 1999.

Beijing sharply restricts religious freedom by placing religious groups under the tight control of state-sponsored associations and cracking down on religious leaders and ordinary worshippers who reject these bodies. For each of the five religions recognized by the government, the respective "patriotic association" appoints clergy; monitors religious membership, funding, and activities; and controls publication and distribution of religious books and other materials. In addition, Beijing does not allow the Roman Catholic patriotic association and its member churches to maintain loyalty to the Vatican. The five recognized religions are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism, and Catholicism.

Some local governments tolerate mainstream groups that reject their respective patriotic associations. In many areas, unregistered Protestant and Catholic congregations worship freely. At the same time, local authorities throughout China have in recent years raided, closed, or demolished scores of "underground" churches, mosques, temples, and seminaries, according to the U.S. State Department report and other sources. They have also harassed and at times fined, detained, beaten, or tortured hundreds of bishops, priests, and ordinary Protestant and Catholic worshippers for months and, in some cases, years. In Xinjiang, authorities sharply restrict construction of mosques, limit Islamic publishing and education, ban religious practice by those under 18, and control the leadership of mosques and religious schools.

Since July 1999, when Beijing banned the Falun Gong spiritual movement, more than 250 practitioners have reportedly died in custody, with about half of the deaths coming in the first seven months of 2001, Amnesty International said in September. As of late 2000, courts had sentenced without trials up to 5,000 Falun Gong followers to up to three years in "re-education through labor camps," the State Department report said. Unidentified Falun Gong and official sources said in 2001 that Beijing now officially sanctions violence by police against Falun Gong practitioners, *The Washington Post* and Amnesty International reported separately.

In addition to those arrested and jailed, many Falun Gong practitioners have been expelled from schools or fired from their jobs for refusing to renounce their beliefs. Beijing broadened the crackdown in October 1999 to include other groups that, like the Falun Gong, also combine *qigong* (a traditional martial art) and meditation. In recent years, officials have also harassed religious groups with unorthodox practices or beliefs or that have charismatic leaders.

China's one-child family planning policy is applied fairly strictly in the cities and less so in the countryside, where 70 percent of the population lives. While urban couples seldom receive permission to have second children, rural couples generally may have second children if the first are girls. The one-child policy nominally applies less strictly to ethnic minorities, although officials in Xinjiang province reportedly pressure Uighur parents to have only one child. Throughout China, couples adhering to the policy receive stipends and preferential education and medical benefits. Those failing to comply face fines, loss of benefits or access to social services, or even forced abortion and sterilization.

Chinese women face considerable discrimination in employment and other areas of mainstream society and are far likelier than men to be laid off when state firms are slimmed down or privatized, according to the State Department report. A 2000 survey by the All-China Women's Foundation indicated that one in four married women are victims of domestic violence. Trafficking of women within China for forced marriage and prostitution and abroad for forced labor is fairly widespread, although the number of victims is not known, the State Department report said.

In the absence of vigorous unions or strong enforcement of labor laws, private factories often pay workers below-minimum wages, force them to work overtime, sometimes without extra pay, and arbitrarily dismiss employees. Although the law does not guarantee the right to strike, authorities frequently allow workers to strike or demonstrate to protest dangerous conditions, layoffs, and unpaid wages, benefits, or unemployment stipends. Most prisoners are forced to work with little or no compensation.

The government prohibits independent trade unions, requires all unions to belong

to the CCP-controlled All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), and has in recent years detained or jailed several labor activists. Some were trying to form independent unions as provided for in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, which China signed in 1997 but has not ratified. Most ACFTU-affiliated unions mainly organize social activities rather than defend workers' interests. A revised labor law approved in October extended to private and foreign firms of 25 or more workers the obligation to set up ACFTU branches. Previously, only state and collective firms needed to set up ACFTU branches.

The economic reforms that began in the late 1970s have freed millions of Chinese from party control of their day-to-day lives. Many state workers still must belong to company-based work units, which control everything from the right to change residences to permission to have children. And all government departments, state-run schools, and state firms still have party committees that handle budgets, political education, and personnel decisions.

But tens of millions of Chinese now work for private companies in the cities or in semi-private, small-scale "township and village enterprises" in the countryside. They are often free of job-related party supervision and have greater choice over where to live and work. To further boost labor mobility, the government is planning to phase out remaining migration restrictions within five years, although analysts say the largest cities are likely to take at least some steps to keep out rural job seekers, *The Economist* reported in September. The reforms have also lifted hundreds of millions of Chinese out of poverty, although some 200 million still live on less than \$1 per day, according to the World Bank.

## ↓ Colombia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies)  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 43,100,000  
 PPP: \$5,749  
 Life Expectancy: 71  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (58 percent), white (20 percent), mulatto (14 percent), black (4 percent), other, including Indian (4 percent)  
 Capital: Bogota



Trend Arrow: Colombia received a downward trend arrow due to growth in paramilitary activity and the continued inability of the government to combat corruption effectively.

### Overview:

In 2001, President Andrés Pastrana's gamble of handing over control of a vast area in south central Colombia as a gesture of goodwill upon embarking on peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) appeared close to failure, as the parleys with the guerrillas, suspended for three months, sputtered towards an inconclusive re-

suit. Meanwhile, the FARC—rather than being contained or defeated on the battlefield—grew in size and threat, although by the end of the year it appeared that a smaller guerrilla organization, the National Liberation Army (ELN), might be suing for peace in earnest after a series of devastating military defeats at the hands of right-wing paramilitary forces. Pastrana's own sagging popularity received a boost in July, albeit short-lived, when Colombia hosted, then won, the Copa America soccer tournament, but the president was unable to transform the temporary relief into greater efficacy at the negotiating table. Hampering his effort was the fact that his term ends in 2002. In addition, Colombia's vicious right-wing paramilitary forces appeared to be growing in strength and audacity, still often aided and abetted by senior regional military commanders, who see the privately financed death squads as helping to fill a security vacuum their underfunded forces cannot. On September 10, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) would finally join the FARC and the ELN in their classification as international terrorist organizations. Throughout the year, the Marxist rebels kidnapped lawmakers in order to swap them for imprisoned guerrilla commanders, while the paramilitary forces killed other congressmen suspected of sympathizing with the rebels. A December decision by the European Union, handed down in the wake of the September 11 attacks in the United States, to stop issuing travel visas to the leftist guerrillas was hailed by government officials as proof that the insurgents were considered human rights pariahs overseas. Several of the candidates seen as having the most chance of succeeding Pastrana have taken a harder line against the FARC. Also in December, AUC warlord Carlos Castano admitted that he was responsible for the assassination of a charismatic presidential candidate in 1990.

Bitter debate also continued over Plan Colombia, which seeks to significantly reduce, if not eliminate, drug production in the area which produces the largest amount of cocaine in the world, and to create conditions in which peace can be achieved. The plan uses trained military troops to "secure" areas in which the police carry out the fumigation of coca and poppy crops, the latter of which are used to produce heroin. This ambitious effort puts the antidrug units in direct confrontation with both guerrilla and paramilitary forces who protect the crops and associated installations, such as laboratories and airstrips. Opponents, however, say it imposes a "military solution" to Colombia's two major problems—drug trafficking and internal conflict. In 2001, an offensive in the department of Putumayo, the source of about 60 percent of Colombia's coca, was hailed by the U.S. government as largely successful; important acreage of coca plantations was destroyed, and the FARC guerrillas were unable to offer much resistance on the ground. Most of the eradication, however, was achieved by aerial fumigation, a highly controversial tactic opposed by, among others, leading environmentalists. Critics say that aerial spraying harms people and the environment, punishes poor farmers, and has failed to stem drug trafficking. The criticisms were echoed by Colombia's top human rights official, its comptroller-general, and a leading senator from Pastrana's own party.

Following independence from Spain in 1819, and after a long period of federal government with what are now Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama, the Republic of Colombia was established in 1886. Politics have since been dominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties, whose leadership has largely been drawn from the traditional elite. Under President Cesar Gaviria (1990-1994) of the Liberal Party, a new constitution was approved; it limits presidents to a single four-year term and provides for an

elected bicameral congress, with a 102-member senate and a 161-member house of representatives.

Modern Colombia has been marked by the corrupt machine politics of the Liberals and Conservatives; left-wing guerrilla insurgencies; right-wing paramilitary violence, the emergence of vicious drug cartels; and gross human rights violations committed by all sides.

In the 1994 legislative elections, the Liberals retained a majority in both houses of congress. Ernesto Samper, a former economic development minister, won the Liberal presidential nomination. The Conservative candidate was Pastrana, a former mayor of Bogotá and the son of a former Colombian president. Both candidates pledged to continue Gaviria's free-market reforms.

Samper won in a June 1994 runoff election and, with strong U.S. encouragement, presided over the dismantling of the Cali drug cartel, most of whose leaders were captured in 1995. The arrests, however, netted persuasive evidence that the cartel had given \$6 million to the president's campaign, with Samper's approval. In February 1996 the country's prosecutor-general formally charged Samper with illegal enrichment, fraud, falsifying documents, and covering up his campaign financing. In June the house, dominated by Samper's Liberals, voted 111 to 43 to clear Samper on grounds of insufficient evidence.

In the June 21, 1998, election, Pastrana won the presidency of Latin America's third most populous country in an impressive victory over the Liberal Party candidate, Interior Minister Horacio Serpa. In an effort to consolidate the peace process, in November Pastrana oversaw the regrouping by FARC guerrillas in, and the withdrawal by a dispirited military from, a so-called demilitarized zone of five southern districts. The move, strongly resisted by the military, gave the guerrillas *de facto* control over a territory the size of Switzerland.

In 1999, talks with the FARC sputtered along, burdened by the sweeping political, social, and economic reforms being demanded by the rebels, and by the government's inability to rein in the paramilitary forces. Talks were also hampered by military reluctance to grant the FARC concessions beyond the *de facto* partitioning of the country. The governments of neighboring Panama, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Brazil also expressed concern about the deadly violence spilling over into their countries. Colombia resumed extradition of its nationals after a nine-year hiatus, handing over two top drug suspects to U.S. authorities.

Government control continued to erode through much of Colombia in 2000, as the FARC went through the motions of seeking settlement of a civil war whose main casualty continued to be a conflict-weary public. Pastrana achieved some success in severing ties between the armed forces and the AUC, whose members several times were reported to have danced and drank as they executed their victims, but the efforts fell far short of what was needed to satisfy either the guerrillas or human rights groups. They pointed out that most of the victims of the AUC were not insurgents, but civilian noncombatants. Colombia's most notorious death squad leader admitted what has long been an open secret—that not only do the paramilitary groups make big money from the drug trade (as do the guerrillas), but also that they are financed by local and foreign private enterprise. In a two-year period, 1998 to 2000, the paramilitary forces nearly doubled their numbers. Meanwhile, Colombia's neighbors continued to be alarmed at the spillover effects—assassinations, armed incursions and a flood of refugees—of the worsening civil war.

In 2000, the FARC guerrillas appeared to be trying to consolidate their control of as much as 40 percent of the country, issuing laws and setting up judicial institutions, in a clear bid to negotiate with the government from a position of strength. In July police seized more than 3,270 pounds of pure cocaine with a street value of \$53 million that was meant to bankroll the activities of top paramilitary chieftain Carlos Castano, who in 2001 was assigned a strictly "political" role within the organization. In the run-up to the October municipal elections, critical to the government's antidrug and antiviolenace strategies, both guerrillas and paramilitary forces prevented citizens from registering to vote. Election day turnout, however, was strong, with Independents winning in mayoral races in four of Colombia's five largest cities—including in Bogota, the capital—in what was seen as a challenge to the dominance of the traditional Liberal and Conservative parties. Government spokesmen pointed out that in 2000, the number of military operations against paramilitary groups increased 123 percent, and that a total of 10 percent of their forces were jailed—a much greater number than the percentage of guerrillas who were imprisoned.

In 2001, it became clear that the FARC's "demilitarized zone" was actually a "state within a state" that the guerrillas used as a sanctuary for coordinating military operations, a rest area for battle-weary insurgents, and a base for criminal activities such as drug trafficking and hostage warehousing. The guerrillas' access to funds through narcotics, mass kidnappings, and extortion have taken the once ragtag insurgents and converted them into a formidable foe of the poorly equipped military. As polls show that the insurgents enjoy support from only five percent of the people, the country's ruling elite have preferred to participate as mere spectators in their repression, leaving the fighting—and the dirty work—to military and paramilitary forces whose ranks are swelled with poor youths who, like the guerrilla fighters, mostly take up arms as an alternative to joblessness. Talks with the ELN, suspended by Pastrana in August after he accused the rebels of not talking the negotiations seriously, were scheduled to resume in early 2002, after the guerrillas declared a truce for the holidays at the end of 2001. Meanwhile, the paramilitary forces took a leaf from the playbook of their leftist foes and began to carry out mass kidnappings for propaganda purposes.

On a positive note, in July 2001, Colombian authorities arrested a retired army general allegedly linked to the organization of paramilitary death squads between 1995 and 1997. The case was seen as a test of whether Colombia can break a tradition of impunity for military members accused of rights abuses. However, in August Pastrana signed into law a bill that gave the military broad new powers to wage war with less oversight from government investigators, allowing the generals to supercede civilian rule in areas declared by the president to be "theaters of operation," and cutting the time allowed rights investigators to conclude preliminary investigations of military officials from one year to two months. In October, the U.S.-based Human Rights Watch alleged that three army brigades and the AUC collaborated in a policy of killing suspected rebel sympathizers.

Also in 2001, Transparency International ranked Colombia as the seventh most corrupt country in the world, and the second most corrupt in Latin America, following Paraguay. Anticorruption activists say that the annual cost of systemic problems exceeds \$2.2 billion and that corruption, rather than the internal war, may be a greater threat to the country's institutional survival. In August, the arrest in Colombia of three Irish Republican Army veterans who had been sent to teach members of the FARC

urban-bombing techniques served to highlight, even before September 11, the increasing sophistication of ties between international terrorist groups. Surging heroin production resulted in a sharp increase in domestic drug abuse, with the number of users up more than an estimated 260 percent over just five years earlier. A strong critic of U.S. antidrug assistance to Colombia, former Interior Minister Serpa, of the opposition Liberal Party, was a front-running candidate to replace Pastrana in the 2002 elections.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through elections. The 1991 constitution provides for broader participation in the system, including two reserved seats in the congress for the country's small Indian minority. Political violence, and a generalized belief that corruption renders elections meaningless, have limited voter participation, although an impressive 60 percent voted in the 1998 presidential contest. In 1998, Pastrana proposed a broad reform of the political system designed to combat corruption and promote greater public participation in decision making. He also offered the guerrillas a presidential pardon and guarantees for their postpeace participation in legal political activities. In 2000, hundreds of candidates for municipal office, a keystone to carrying out Colombia's antidrug program, were pressured for allegiance by contending armed groups, with 21 mayoral candidates murdered in the run-up to the vote. On the day of the vote, however, voter turnout was heavy amid peaceful conditions. In the period 1997-2000, 34 mayors were assassinated and 100 others—10 percent of the total—were kidnapped. In 2001, three members of congress were also murdered, including a leader of the Colombian congressional peace commission.

Public corruption remains one of the most serious problems facing Colombia. A March 2000 congressional graft scandal, which included \$49,119 for a new toilet and \$50,000 for toilet paper and soap, dealt a body blow to Pastrana's claim that his ruling coalition would clean up a hotbed of corruption that Colombians see as reflective of their country's moral decay. In October 2001, a former culture minister who was the wife of Colombia's inspector-general, the person responsible for government investigations, was murdered days after being kidnapped by leftist rebels.

The justice system remains slow and compromised by corruption and extortion. The civilian-led ministry of defense is responsible for internal security and oversees both the armed forces and the national police; civilian management of the armed forces, however, is limited. The country's national police force, once a focal point of official corruption, has been reorganized and is now Colombia's most respected security institution. In 2000 the FARC began to routinely execute policemen it captured after attacking police outposts; human rights monitors point out that many officers are not involved in the government's anti-guerrilla operations. In mid-July 2000, General Rosso Jose Serrano, the highly respected director of the national police who oversaw the sacking of 8,000 corrupt cops, stepped down from his post, saying that he could not face going to more policemen's funerals. Colombia's 165 prisons, which were built for 32,000 people but hold more than 47,000, are frequent sites of murders and riots. A new Penal code, approved by congress in June 2001, was designed to relieve the strain on Colombia's prisons and allows convicts to be released after serving 60 percent of their sentences, rather than the 80 percent previously required. Up to 20 percent of those incarcerated, including some of the country's most notorious criminals, were eligible for release within the first year.



Constitutional rights regarding free expression and the freedom to organize political parties, civic groups, and labor unions are severely restricted by political and drug-related violence and the government's inability to guarantee the security of its citizens. Colombia is one of the most violent countries in the world. More than 3,000 people are kidnapped each year in Colombia, and there is a greater risk of being kidnapped there than in any other country in the world. On a more positive note, in the first six months of 2001, although 12,300 people were murdered, an average of 68 per day, 620 fewer murders occurred than during the same period in 2000.

Political violence in Colombia continues to take more lives than in any other country in the western hemisphere, and civilians are prime victims. In the past decade an estimated 40,000 have died and more than 1.5 million have been displaced from their homes. More than 90 percent of violent crimes go unsolved. Human rights violations have soared to unprecedented highs, with atrocities being committed by all sides in the conflict. Human rights workers in Colombia are frequently murdered by a military often lacking in personal and tactical discipline, and by rightist paramilitary forces. In September 2001, a government prosecutor was assassinated as he was investigating a January massacre of 27 peasants by paramilitary forces, in which the role of army officers was also being probed.

Left-wing guerrillas, some of whom also protect narcotics-production facilities and drug traffickers, also systematically violate human rights, with victims including Sunday churchgoers and airline passengers. The FARC guerrillas also regularly extort payments from hundreds of businessmen throughout the country. In 2001, Human Rights Watch reported that in 2000 the FARC had been responsible for the murder of 500 civilians, compared with 100 the year earlier.

Journalists are frequently the victims of political and revenge violence, and the Committee for the Protection of Journalists ranks Colombia as the second most dangerous country in the world for the media, after Algeria. In 2001, ten reporters were killed. More than 120 journalists have been murdered in the past decade, and many were killed for reporting on drug trafficking and corruption. Another category of killings is known as "social cleansing"—the elimination of drug addicts, street children, and other marginal citizens by vigilante groups often linked to police.

There are approximately 80 distinct ethnic groups among Colombia's 800,000-plus indigenous inhabitants, who live on more than 50 million acres of land granted to them by the government, often located in resource-rich, strategic regions fought over by warring outside armed groups. These Native Americans are frequently the targets of forced recruitment by the guerrillas and selective assassination by the paramilitary forces, despite their seeking to remain neutral in the armed conflict. In a three-year period, human rights groups say, more than 1,500 Indians have been press-ganged into service with the guerrillas. In 1999, FARC guerrillas kidnapped three U.S. Native American-rights activists and killed them. Indian claims to land and resources are under challenge from government ministries and multinational corporations. In 2000, members of the U'wa tribe were violently repressed by the police as they protested a U.S. oil company's plans to drill on lands the tribe considered sacred. In September 2000, heavily armed gunmen—believed to be paramilitary fighters—murdered four members of the Embera-Katio indigenous communities. The attack came after an April 2000 agreement that the government would grant the Embera lands to replace those flooded by a dam project, as well as protect them from paramilitary violence. In 2001, paramilitary forces kid-

napped and killed several Indian community leaders and activists. In July 2001, indigenous leaders accused Pastrana's government of renegeing on a five-year-old commitment to hold periodic meetings to resolve problems faced by Indians.

The murder of trade union activists increased significantly, and Colombia remained the most dangerous country in the world for organized labor, a significant reason why only about six percent of the country's workforce is unionized, one of the lowest unionization percentages in Latin America. More than 2,500 trade union activists and leaders have been killed in little more than a decade. Labor leaders are targets of attacks by paramilitary groups, guerrillas, narcotics traffickers, and other union rivals. In July 2001, the United Steel Workers of America and an international human rights group sued the Coca-Cola Company, alleging trade unions at the company's Colombia bottling plants were systematically intimidated, kidnapped, and killed. Spokespeople for the company denied any wrongdoing.

According to the United Nations, some 948,000 Colombian children under the age of 14 work in "unacceptable" conditions. An estimated 60 percent of FARC fighters are believed to be under the age of 15, and female child-soldiers are reported to be subject to sexual abuse. Child-soldiers attempting to leave without permission are executed by firing squad. Domestic violence is a problem in Colombia.

## Comoros

Polity: Presidential  
(military-dominated)  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 600,000  
PPP: \$1,429  
Life Expectancy: 56  
Ethnic Groups: Antalote, Cafre, Makoa, Oimatsaha,  
Sakalava  
Capital: Moroni

Political Rights: 6  
Civil Liberties: 4  
Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

As Comoros prepared for a referendum in December 2001 to decide the archipelago's future, a small invasion force added another chapter to the country's history of mercenary invasions. A group of more than a dozen men, reportedly including a number of former French soldiers, were apparently on their way to the main island of Grande Comore when they were forced to land on Mohéli. Several of the mercenaries were killed and others were taken prisoner. The referendum went ahead as scheduled and provisional results indicated that at least 75 percent of voters approved of the new constitution that would give greater autonomy to the three islands of the Comoros within the framework of a confederation. Elections for each of the island's leaders and a federation leader were to follow in 2002.

Two mercenary invasions and at least 18 other coups and attempted coups have shaken Comoros since independence in 1975. In 1990, in the country's first contested elections, Supreme Court Justice Said Mohamed Djohara won a six-year term as president. A September 1995 attempted coup by elements of the Comoros security

forces, aided by foreign mercenaries, was reversed by French soldiers. An interim government ruled for five months until President Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim was elected in 1996 in internationally monitored elections that were considered free and fair. Tadjidine Ben Said Massonde became the interim ruler when Taki died suddenly in November 1998. Colonel Azali Assoumani seized power in April the following year.

Comoros comprises three islands: Grande Comore, Anjouan, and Mohéli. Anjouan voted for self-determination in a 1997 referendum, repulsed an attempted invasion by the government, and then dissolved into violence as rival separatist groups took up arms against each other. Separatists on Mohéli have also declared independence, but appear more willing to compromise. Mayotte Island, the fourth island of the Comorian archipelago, voted to remain a French overseas territory in a 1974 referendum and today enjoys a far higher, French-subsidized standard of living than the other islands do.

Efforts to end the separatist crisis began with the 1999 Antananarivo agreement, which gave greater autonomy to the islands of Anjouan and Mohéli, and provided for a rotating presidency. The parties agreed that Colonel Assoumani would head a transitional administration that would oversee the establishment of an electoral commission, a constitutional commission, and a mechanism to disarm militia members. Anjouan's refusal to sign the agreement led to violence on Grande Comore and Assoumani's coup. A reconciliation deal, known as the Fomboni Declaration, was signed in 2000 between the Assoumani government and Anjouan separatists. The Organization of African Unity and the Comorian opposition had rejected the declaration as a gimmick by both military regimes to retain power and said the deal would undermine the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros. Neither regime has international recognition. Political repression remains severe on Anjouan and less so on Grande Comore.

A framework agreement on a new federation was signed between the government in Grande Comore and Anjouan in February 2001, paving the way for elections in 2002 and a transition to democracy. The separatist leader of Anjouan, Lieutenant Colonel Said Abeid, who had seized power in 1997, was ousted in August 2001. The power base of the new leader on Anjouan, Major Mohamed Bacar, is fragile and there were three attempts to overthrow him later in the year.

Comorians are among the world's poorest people, and the ongoing secessionist crisis has further damaged an already tenuous, agriculture-based economy. Remittances from the large overseas Comorian community sustain many families. The country relies heavily on foreign aid and earns a small amount through exports of vanilla, ylang-ylang, and cloves.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Comorians are no longer constitutionally guaranteed the right to change their government. The head of state has legislative power, organized through ordinances, and executive power, exercised through decrees.

Comorians exercised their constitutional right to change their government democratically in open elections for the first time in the 1996 parliamentary and presidential elections. Mohamed Taki Abdoukarim won the presidency in a runoff election with more than 60 percent of the vote. The conservative Islamic main opposition party held several seats in the national assembly. Anjouan held its own legislative elections in

August 1999. Secessionists won an overwhelming majority in voting that was marked by intimidation and a low turnout.

The Comorian legal system is based on *Sharia* (Islamic law) and remnants of the French legal code, and is subject to influence by the executive and other elites. Most minor disputes are settled by village elders or a civilian court of first instance. Harsh prison conditions are marked by severe overcrowding and the lack of adequate sanitation facilities, medical attention, and proper diet.

Freedoms of expression and association are not guaranteed. The semiofficial weekly *Al-Watwan* and several private newspapers sharply critical of the government are published in the capital, but they appear only sporadically because of limited resources. All are believed to exercise extensive self-censorship. A few private television and radio stations, such as Radio Tropique, operate without overt governmental interference. Transmissions from French-controlled Mayotte are easily received, and some people have access to satellite and other international broadcasting. Foreign publications are readily available.

Islam is the official state religion. Non-Muslims are legally permitted to practice, but there were reports of restrictions and detentions. Detainees are sometimes subjected to attempts to convert them to Islam. Christians are not allowed to proselytize.

Women possess constitutional protections despite the influence of Islamic law. In practice, however, they enjoy little political or economic power and have far fewer opportunities for education or salaried employment. Economic hardship has forced more and more young girls, known as *mpambe*, into domestic servitude. They receive room and board, but little or no pay.

Unions have the right to bargain and strike, but collective bargaining is rare in the country's small formal sector. Public hospital doctors went on strike in September, complaining of poor working conditions.

## Congo, Republic of (Brazzaville)

Polity: Military  
(transitional)

Economy: Mixed statist  
Population: 3,100,000

PPP: \$727

Life Expectancy: 50

Ethnic Groups: Kongo (48 percent), Sangha (20 percent),  
Teke (17 percent), M'Bochi (12 percent), other (3 percent)

Capital: Brazzaville

Ratings Change: Congo (Brazzaville's) political rights rating improved from 6 to 5 due to the adoption of a new constitution by the transitional parliament.



### Overview:

Congo's transitional parliament in September 2001 adopted a draft constitution that was to be voted on in a referendum in December. The constitution, which was drawn up in April by a national forum for political reconciliation, provides for a multiparty system and

establishes wide-ranging powers for the president, who would be directly elected for a seven-year term. The constitution also guarantees basic rights for women and children, the press, ethnic groups, and the judiciary, among others. Presidential and parliamentary elections are expected to be held in 2002. There are indications that former President Pascal Lissouba and his prime minister, Bernard Kolelas, who are living in exile and have been found guilty in absentia of various crimes, would not be allowed to contest the vote. Although many allies of Lissouba and Kolelas have returned to the country without hindrance, there are fears that failure to complete the reconciliation process could bode poorly for the consolidation of lasting peace.

A decade after its independence from France, a 1970 coup established a Marxist state in Congo. In 1979, General Denis Sassou-Nguesso seized power and maintained one-party rule as head of the Congolese Workers' Party. Domestic and international pressure forced his acceptance of a national conference leading to open, multiparty elections in 1992. Lissouba won a clear victory over Kolelas in a second-round presidential runoff that excluded Sassou-Nguesso, who had run third in the first round.

Disputes over the 1993 legislative polls led to armed conflict. The fighting subsided but flared once again among ethnic-based militias in 1997. Sassou-Nguesso had built a private army in his native northern Congo and forcibly retook the presidency in October that year. Peace agreements were signed in late 1999 that included an amnesty for combatants who voluntarily disarmed. More than 10,000 weapons have been collected.

Sassou-Nguesso has had military support from Angola and political backing from France. Civil wars in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo and nearby Angola made large numbers of weapons and fighters available to fuel the conflict, which displaced one-third of the country's population. A small number of Angolan troops remain in Brazzaville to provide security for the government. Congo has made significant efforts at rehabilitation, and security has improved markedly. Many weapons, however, remain in circulation.

Economic reforms are under way. The World Bank has restored the country's credit eligibility, and with high world oil prices, Congo's gross domestic product was expected to soar in 2001. However, the International Monetary Fund has warned the government about massive customs fraud, rampant spending, and the slow pace of privatization. Dozens of people connected to the oil industry were charged in January 2001 after authorities said they had uncovered a vast network of illegal sales of oil products. Government ministers were also implicated. Congo is the fourth largest producer of oil in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Congolese have not had the right to change their leaders through elections since civil war broke out in 1997. They elected their president and national assembly deputies to five-year terms of office through competitive multiparty elections for the first time in 1992 and 1993, respectively. Pascal Lissouba's 1992 victory at the polls was widely considered to be free and fair. Presidential polls set for July 1997 were preempted by the war that returned General Denis Sassou-Nguesso to power. Sassou-Nguesso, who received only 17 percent of the vote in the 1992 presidential elections, has promised to conduct open, multiparty elections in 2002. Most of the country's dozens of political parties are formed along ethnic lines.

Legislative elections in 1992 produced no clear majority. After an anti-Lissouba coalition formed, the president dissolved the assembly and called for fresh polls. Legislative elections in 1993 produced a presidential majority, but were marred by numerous irregularities. Several parties boycotted the second round. Sassou-Nguesso appointed a 75-member transitional assembly, the National Transition Council, in 1997, but it does not have a broad political base and exercises no real power.

Scarce resources and understaffing have created a backlog of court cases and long periods of pretrial detention. The judiciary is subject to corruption and political influence. The three-tier formal court system of local courts, courts of appeal, and the supreme court was generally considered to be politically independent until the civil war. In rural areas, traditional courts retain broad jurisdiction, especially in civil matters.

Atrocities against civilians committed by government soldiers and rogue militia members diminished in 2001, but reports of arbitrary detentions and other abuses were reported. Prison conditions are life threatening, with reports of beatings, overcrowding, and other ill-treatment. Local human rights groups, however, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross, have been allowed access. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) generally operate freely.

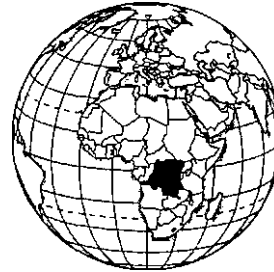
Freedom of assembly and association is constitutionally guaranteed, and this right is generally respected in practice. Public demonstrations are rare. The government generally respects press freedom, but continues to monopolize the broadcast media. The government, in 2000, approved a freedom-of-information bill that confirmed the abolition of censorship and sharply reduced penalties for defamation. About ten private newspapers appear weekly in Brazzaville, and these sometimes print articles or letters that are unflattering to the government.

Religious freedom is guaranteed and respected. Ethnic discrimination persists. Pygmy groups suffer discrimination, and many are held in effective lifetime servitude through customary ties to Bantu "patrons."

There is extensive legal and societal discrimination against women despite constitutional protections. Access to education and employment opportunities, especially in the countryside, are limited, and civil codes regarding family and marriage formalize women's inferior status. Violence against women reportedly is widespread, but incidents of rape have diminished considerably since the end of the war. NGOs have drawn attention to the issue and provided counseling and assistance to victims.

Workers' rights to join trade unions and to strike are legally protected. Collective bargaining is practiced freely. Most workers in the formal (wage) sector are union members, and unions have made efforts to organize informal sectors such as those of the agriculture and retail trades.

## Congo, Democratic Republic of (Kinshasa)



Polity: Presidential (military- Political Rights: 6\*  
dominated) (insurgencies) Civil Liberties: 6  
Economy: Capitalist- statist Status: Not Free  
Population: 53,600,000  
PPP: \$801

Life Expectancy: 48

Ethnic Groups: More than 200 tribes, mostly Bantu

Capital: Kinshasa

Ratings Change: Congo (Kinshasa's) political rights rating improved from 7 to 6 due to the government's efforts to carry out dialogue with its political opposition to end the war.

### Overview:

A young assassin in the military ended the life of President Laurent Kabila in January 2001. Kabila's son, Joseph, stepped in and soon met with Rwandan President Paul Kagame in the United States, setting in motion the revival of the 1999 Lusaka peace accord. The government in August 2001 met with rebel factions as well as political parties and civil society groups for the first time since the war erupted, as a precursor to an inter-Congolese dialogue. They decided on a series of confidence-building initiatives including the release of political prisoners, respect for human rights, and the free movement of goods and people. The dialogue, which is supposed to lead to elections, got under way in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, in October, but financial constraints allowed for only about one-quarter of the 330 proposed delegates to attend. The government delegation walked out, and plans were under way to resume discussions in early 2002. Kabila and his backers want guarantees of a full withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops before considering a power-sharing arrangement with anti-government rebels. The rebels and their sponsors, including Rwanda and Uganda, want a transitional government and security guarantees before withdrawing their forces.

As the Belgian Congo, the vast area of central Africa that is today the Democratic Republic of Congo was exploited with a brutality that was notable even by colonial standards. The country was a center for Cold War rivalries from Belgium's withdrawal in 1960 until well after Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu came to power with U.S. Central Intelligence Agency backing in 1964. The pro-Western Mobutu was forgiven for severe repression and financial excesses that made him one of the world's richest men and his countrymen among the world's poorest people. Domestic agitation for democratization forced Mobutu to open up the political process in 1990. In 1992, his Popular Revolutionary Movement, the sole legal party after 1965, and the Sacred Union of the Radical Opposition and Allied Civil Society, a coalition of 200 groups, joined scores of others in a national conference to establish the High Council of the Republic to oversee a democratic transition. Mobutu manipulated and delayed the transition.

Despite widespread domestic opposition to his rule, it was the 1994 genocide in neighboring Rwanda that triggered Mobutu's demise after he allowed Hutu Interahamwe fighters to base themselves in his country, which was then known as Zaire. Rwanda

and Uganda easily tapped into popular hatred for Mobutu in their seven-month advance on Kinshasa. They installed Laurent Kabila, who at the time was a semi-retired guerrilla fighter, as the head of their rebellion and toppled the Mobutu regime in May 1997. Mobutu fled to Morocco and died of cancer a few months later. The new war erupted in late 1998 after Kabila fell out with those who had put him in power.

The war at some point has drawn forces from at least eight countries into the fighting, including Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Chad, and Sudan on the side of Kabila, and Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi on the part of the rebels. Former Rwandan militia, former Rwandan armed forces members, and Mai-Mai guerrillas have also joined in repelling the rebel attack. The three main rebel groups are the Movement for the Liberation of Congo and two factions of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD). Splits in the rebel ranks and disagreements between their backers, Uganda and Rwanda, have hindered both peace efforts and their military endeavor.

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited the Democratic Republic of Congo in September 2001 and said he was encouraged by recent efforts to end the war. About 2,000 UN troops are in the country to help monitor the ceasefire and troop withdrawals. A voluntary disarmament program is to follow the deployment. Although there have been a number of violations of the ceasefire, there has been some progress.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has directly and indirectly claimed an estimated 2.5 million lives in the past three years and more than 2 million people have been uprooted. Human rights abuses remained rampant across the country in 2001, although repression by the government eased slightly. Opposition supporters, journalists, and human rights workers are routinely arrested and harassed, and public demonstrations are suppressed. Unfair trials, rapes, and extrajudicial executions are also reported. International human rights officials, however, welcomed the holding of a national conference in Kinshasa in June to develop a human rights agenda.

The black market has largely replaced the formal economy. Most of the country's people live marginal lives as subsistence farmers despite vast resources of timber, diamonds, copper, and other minerals. A UN-appointed panel recommended in April 2001 that sanctions be taken against Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi for becoming involved in the war to profit from the Democratic Republic of Congo's resources. The International Monetary Fund in July 2001 commended the Kabila government's efforts at economic reform. Kabila, like the Ugandan and Rwandan governments he was close to before his father seized power, began courting Western donors immediately upon assuming the presidency. In September 2001, he sacked the senior executives of all public sector firms, including the copper and cobalt mining giant Gecamines, following an audit that uncovered gross mismanagement. Mining and investment codes have been revised, and new telecommunications and electricity acts have been drafted.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The people of the Democratic Republic of Congo have never been permitted to choose or change their government through democratic and peaceful means. There are no elected representatives in the entire country. Mobutu's successive unopposed presidential victories and legislative polls were little more than political theater. Infrastructure and institutions to support a free and fair election are almost entirely absent. Laurent Kabila installed a new parliament in August 2000, but it is no more representative than any of the other assemblies before it.



At least 400 political parties registered after their 1990 legalization, but they were later banned under Laurent Kabila. Although he eased restrictions with a new law in January 1999, political activity remains harshly suppressed and opposition members are routinely harassed and detained. The 1999 law gives broad powers to the ministry of the interior to suspend or disband parties "in the event of violation of the law and emergency or the risk of serious public disorder."

A decree provides for independence of the judiciary, but in practice it is subject to corruption and manipulation. The president may dismiss magistrates at will. Courts are grossly ineffective in protecting constitutional rights, and security forces and government officials generally act with impunity. The civil judiciary is largely dysfunctional. Military courts deliver harsh sentences to civilians on questionable security and political convictions. Defendants have no automatic right of appeal to a higher court; many lack counsel, are held incommunicado, and can be subjected to torture. Long periods of pretrial detention are common in prisons in which poor diet and medical care can be life threatening.

Serious human rights abuses by Kabila's armed forces and rebel soldiers continued in 2001. Violations included extrajudicial executions, torture, rapes, beatings, and arbitrary detention. Ethnic killings by both government and rebel forces have been reported. Several hundred thousand civilians have fled to neighboring countries or have become internally displaced. Numerous nongovernmental organizations, including human rights groups, operate despite intimidation and frequent arrest. The government set free more than 200 inmates in 2001 as part of an agreement it signed with other parties in the conflict.

Freedom of expression and freedom of assembly are sharply limited by decree. Statutes provide for freedom of the press, but the government continued to sharply restrict the work of journalists. Church-run radio networks are growing, but the state-controlled broadcasting network reaches the largest numbers of citizens. A number of independent newspapers are published in Kinshasa, but they are not widely circulated beyond the city. Independent journalists are frequently threatened, arrested, or attacked, which prompts self-censorship. Common accusations include "relaying intelligence to the enemy," "discouraging the population of soldiers," and "divulging state secrets or defense secrets." Several journalists were detained across the country in 2001 and held in life threatening conditions. The Kinshasa-based Journalists in Danger said in October 2000 that more than 100 journalists had been detained for long periods since Laurent Kabila came to power in 1997. It said "the press has practically ceased to exist" in rebel-held areas of the country.

Freedom of religion is respected in practice, although religious groups must register with the government to be recognized. Members of the Roman Catholic Church in rebel-held areas face intimidation. Ethnic tension is rife in the east. Clashes between the Hema and Lendu groups in the northeast early in the year displaced at least 10,000 people and left hundreds dead.

Despite constitutional protections, women face de facto discrimination, especially in rural areas. They also enjoy fewer employment and educational opportunities and often do not receive equal pay for equal work. Violence against women, including forced sexual slavery, has soared since the onset of armed conflict in 1996. Children faced forced conscription from all sides in the conflict.

More than 100 new independent unions registered after the end of one-party rule

in 1990. Previously, all unions had to affiliate themselves with a confederation that was part of the ruling party. Some unions are affiliated with political parties, and labor leaders and activists have faced harassment. There is little union activity, owing to the breakdown of the country's formal economy. Civil servants who work in public institutions that have largely ceased to function are often owed months of salary arrears.

## Costa Rica

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 3,700,000  
 PPP: \$8,860  
 Life Expectancy: 77  
 Ethnic Groups: White and mestizo (94 percent), black (3 percent), Indian (1 percent), other (2 percent)  
 Capital: San Jose



### Overview:

Costa Rica's two traditional parties, the social democratic National Liberation (PLN) and the conservative Social Christian (PUSC), were joined in 2001 by a new party, the Citizen's Action Party (PAC), campaigning for the February 3, 2002, presidential contest. Popular dissatisfaction with the two groups that together have dominated Costa Rican political life since the 1950s was evidenced by polls at the end of 2001 that showed the PAC candidate had pulled almost even in the bitterly contested race with the PLN candidate. Continuing tensions with Nicaragua over a decision made earlier in the year by the Costa Rican government to put up a wall in a contested frontier region led Nicaraguan authorities to declare at year's end that they would investigate alleged Costa Rican contamination of a river flowing between the two countries.

The Republic of Costa Rica achieved independence from Spain in 1821 and became a republic in 1848. Democratic government was instituted in 1899 and briefly interrupted in 1917 and again in 1948, when the country was torn by a brief but brutal civil war. The 1949 constitution, which bans the formation of a national army, has proved to be the most durable in Latin America.

The PLN was the dominant party for nearly three decades. In the 1994 elections, Jose Maria Figueres narrowly defeated Miguel Angel Rodriguez, a conservative congressman and respected economist, of the PUSC. Figueres, son of the legendary former president José "Pepe" Figueres, had campaigned against the neoliberal economic policies of the outgoing president, Rafael A. Calderon, Jr., of the PUSC. Rodriguez had proposed to deepen structural reforms.

The country's economic woes result in part from a vast reduction in levels of foreign aid and international lending from governments that had been eager to keep Communists at bay. Despite his earlier campaign pledges, Figueres's last two years in office were characterized by some of the free market policies championed by his opponent in the presidential elections.

In the February 1, 1998, presidential contest, Rodriguez returned as the PUSC's standard-bearer and bested, with 47 percent of the vote, the anticorruption maverick crusader Jose Miguel Corrales of the PLN, a former congressman and soccer star. The PUSC, however, failed to win a working majority in the unicameral national assembly and was forced to make an alliance with smaller parties to sustain its legislative program.

Despite a booming economy, Rodriguez appeared to have had problems winning public approval for his government. Public safety remained a primary concern of the residents of the capital, San José. A much-touted 1999 reform of the Costa Rican legislature ended up creating more controversy than real change.

Support for the potential candidacy of 58-year-old Oscar Arias Sánchez signaled the degree to which Costa Ricans, who have a tradition of participation in electoral politics, were growing dissatisfied with the two traditional parties. In September 2000, Costa Rica's constitutional court had rejected Nobel laureate and former President Arias's attempt to run for the office again in the February 2002 by refusing to declare unconstitutional the country's prohibition on additional presidential terms. The move put to an end his attempt to reassume the office he held when he was awarded the Nobel Prize. Previously, Arias had won 88 percent of the vote in a nonbonding, privately organized and financed poll in which Costa Ricans were asked if they would support ending a ban on second terms for presidents. The court decision left Arias supporters scrambling to find a figure who could push forward free market reforms they say are necessary for Costa Rica to compete in a globalized economy.

In June 2001, the Costa Rican government began construction of a seven-foot high fence along the Penas Blancas border crossing with Nicaragua on the Pan-American Highway along the Pacific Coast. Officials in San José claimed the wall was not meant to keep Nicaraguans out of their country, but rather to control heavy goods traffic in a region that has become a favored route for drug smuggling, an explanation deemed unsatisfactory in Managua. Meanwhile, the PUSC chose parliamentary deputy and psychiatrist Abel Pacheco as its presidential standard-bearer, while the PLN selected chemical engineer and television commentator Rolando Araya Monge as its candidate. However, by year's end it was the surprise performance of PAC nominee Otton Solís, who pulled even with Araya in public opinion polls, that created the most comment.

The winner of the February 2002 election will face continuing tensions with Nicaragua, the home country of several hundred thousand guest workers in Costa Rica, many of whom work without papers on farms where they are paid subsistence wages. A crisis in the agricultural sector was one of the main issues in the presidential contest, in a country where coffee—one of Costa Rica's biggest foreign exchange earners—has lost more than half its value in recent years on the international market.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Costa Ricans can change their government democratically. The 1998 victory of presidential candidate Miguel Angel Rodriguez reflected the fact that the PLN and PUSC dominate the political landscape, although numerous other parties exist. Allegations about drug-tainted campaign contributions continue to dog both major parties. New campaign laws have been instituted to make party financing more transparent.

The 1949 constitution provided for three independent branches of government and abolished the military. The president and the 57-member legislative assembly are elected

for four years and are prohibited from seeking a second term. The assembly has power equal to that of the president, including the ability to override presidential vetoes.

The judicial branch is independent, its members elected by the legislature. A supreme court with power to rule on the constitutionality of laws is in operation, as are four courts of appeals and a network of district courts. An independent national election commission is chosen by the supreme court. Delays in the justice system, particularly the slow pace in processing criminal cases, in part due to budget cuts, have created volatile situations in overcrowded, violence-prone prisons. There are some 5,300 prisoners in Costa Rica jammed into facilities designed to hold less than half that number. Illegal narcotics are widely available in the prisons, and drug abuse there is common.

The police have a tradition of being highly politicized, with a large number owing their appointments to political sponsors. However, the Rodriguez administration moved forward with implementation of a 1994 police code designed to depoliticize and professionalize the force in order to create a permanent career path within the institution. Local law enforcement agencies have limited capabilities, especially in remote rural areas. Numerous charges of human rights violations by the heavily armed police are still made, and independent rights monitors report increases in allegations of arbitrary arrest and brutality. Corruption is not considered to be a serious problem in the public security forces, and when it is discovered, it is usually dealt with in a decisive manner. In 2001, the minister of public security fired 21 personnel from the maritime service for corruption and incompetence in the wake of the passage of the Coast Guard Professionalization Law.

A rise in violent crime and clashes in rural areas between squatters and landowners are blamed on a large immigrant population. An estimated 420,000 Nicaraguans—15 percent of Costa Rica's total population—live in the country, more than half illegally. In the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, Costa Rica declared a temporary amnesty for these and other illegal Central American immigrants, and some 160,000 Nicaraguans took advantage of the opportunity to legalize their status.

Illegal narcotics trafficking has spurred growing urban gang violence: various groups compete for control of distribution areas, as domestic consumption has risen dramatically in recent years. However, Costa Rica, which is also a haven for drug money laundering, is also a regional leader in the enactment of progressive antidrug statutes, including the use of wiretaps, controlled deliveries, and undercover agents. Information obtained during investigations by its judicial authorities suggest that the wiretap law has disrupted criminal organizations. Evidence gathered under the wiretap law has also facilitated narcotics prosecutions in foreign countries. Under a 1998 law, financial institutions have to report any transactions involving more than \$10,000. In 1999, the legislative assembly passed legislation allowing for U.S. antidrug patrols to operate in Costa Rican waters.

An official ombudsman provides recourse for citizens or foreigners with human rights complaints. The ombudsman has the authority to issue recommendations for rectification, including sanctions against government bodies, for failure to respect rights.

The press, radio, and television are generally free. Six major privately owned dailies serve a society that is 90 percent literate. Television and radio stations are both public and commercial, with at least six private television stations providing an influential forum for public debate. However, restrictive libel laws continue to dampen full

exercise of press freedoms. In the summer of 2001, the assassination of a prominent national journalist sparked several protests around the country.

Constitutional guarantees regarding freedom of religion and the right to organize political parties and civic organizations are respected. In recent years, however, a reluctance to address restrictions on labor rights has been noticeable.

Solidarity, an employer-employee organization that private business uses as an instrument to prevent independent unions from organizing, remains strong and has generally been tolerated by successive governments. Solidarity remains entrenched in Costa Rica's free-trade zones, where labor abuses by multinational corporations are rife. Minimum wage and social security laws are often ignored, and fines for noncompliance are minuscule. In 1999, the Costa Rican affiliate of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions brought a complaint before the International Labor Organization concerning an attack and death threats against a banana workers' leader. Women workers are often sexually harassed, made to work overtime without pay, and fired when they become pregnant.

Costa Rica's Indian population have demanded the right to self-government and ownership of their traditional lands. Most live in traditional communities on 22 reserves that, as they are found in remote areas, often lack schools, health care, electricity and potable water. In 1999, the official National Indigenous Commission completed distribution of identification cards to facilitate native peoples' access to public health facilities.

In 1999, the legislative assembly passed a law criminalizing sex with minors, in an attempt to crack down on the country's growing sex tourism industry. Violence against women and children is a problem, although the government has shown concrete support for programs and policies to combat it. Costa Rica is a transit and destination country for trafficked persons, particularly for persons from Asia being sent to the United States. Girls from the Philippines are also reportedly trafficked to the country for the purpose of sexual exploitation. There have also been a few cases of trafficking involving persons from Africa, Bolivia, China, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and the Middle East. Despite resources constraints, the government is making significant efforts to combat trafficking. Costa Rica's criminal code prohibits trafficking in women and minors for the purpose of prostitution, but it does not address all severe forms of trafficking. There are government-sponsored prevention programs to combat sexual exploitation of minors and trafficking, and while there are limited formal mechanisms specifically designed to aid trafficked victims, the government does offer indirect assistance to child victims of trafficking. Victims do not receive temporary or permanent residence status, and usually are deported immediately to their country of origin.

## Côte D'Ivoire

**Polity:** Presidential-parliamentary

**Economy:** Capitalist

**Population:** 16,400,000

**PPP:** \$1,654

**Life Expectancy:** 46

**Ethnic Groups:** Baoule (23 percent), Bete (18 percent), Senoufou (15 percent), Malinke (11 percent), Agni, foreign Africans, non-Africans (33 percent)

**Capital:** Yamoussoukro (official); Abidjan (de facto)

**Ratings Change:** Côte d'Ivoire's political rights rating improved from 6 to 5, and its civil liberties rating improved from 5 to 4, due to efforts to bring about political reconciliation, a sharp decline in abuses by security forces, and greater freedom of the press.

**Political Rights:** 5\*

**Civil Liberties:** 4\*

**Status:** Partly Free



### Overview:

The year 2001 began in Côte d'Ivoire as tumultuously as the previous year had ended. A coup attempt was quickly put down in January, but it led to attacks by vigilantes on African immigrants and members of the political opposition when the government of President Laurent Gbagbo accused neighboring countries of complicity in the attempted overthrow. The rest of the year was relatively peaceful as Côte d'Ivoire made efforts to resolve the problems that had contributed to the postelection violence in 2000 that claimed more than 350 lives.

The National Reconciliation Forum, which included about 700 delegates from political parties, nongovernmental organizations, human rights groups, trade associations, and religious groups, met for three months. In December, Gbagbo approved the forum's 14 resolutions, including granting citizenship to opposition leader Alassane Ouattara, and reopening an inquiry into a massacre of civilians during the election period. Authorities had barred Ouattara from contesting the presidential and legislative elections in 2000 on the grounds that he was not genuinely Ivorian, an accusation that he denies.

Côte d'Ivoire gained independence from France in 1960, and President Felix Houphouët-Boigny ruled until his death in 1993. Henri Konan Bedie assumed power and won fraudulent elections in 1995. General Robert Guei seized power in December 1999 and stood for election in 2000. When initial results showed he was losing to Laurent Gbagbo, he sacked the electoral commission, detained its officers, and declared himself the winner. Tens of thousands of people took to the streets in a popular uprising that toppled him from power. Clashes followed between supporters of Alassane Ouattara's Rally of Republicans (RDR) and Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front (FPI). Gbagbo, supported by security forces, refused to call for new polls. The political violence led to a deepening division between the largely Muslim north and mainly Christian south.

Respect for human rights improved during the year as the political atmosphere calmed and political prisoners were freed. Granting Ouattara citizenship should further

help ease political tension in the short term, but the gesture does not guarantee that he will be able to participate in future elections. Impunity for security forces and others involved in the election violence, however, remains a serious problem.

Côte d'Ivoire retains strong political, economic, and military backing from France, which maintains a military garrison near Abidjan, mainly to protect the 20,000 French nationals who live in Côte d'Ivoire. During the Houphouët-Boigny period, Côte d'Ivoire became an African model for economic growth and political stability. A plunge in the 1990s of the world price of cocoa, Côte d'Ivoire's chief export, and later coffee, its fifth largest export, considerably hurt the economy. Political unrest did further damage. Some international donors in 2001 agreed to a gradual resumption of aid.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

The people of Côte d'Ivoire have only partially been able to carry out their constitutional right to freely and fairly elect their leaders. President Henri Konan Bedie was declared president with 95 percent of the vote in a 1995 presidential election that was neither free nor fair, and was boycotted by all of the major opposition parties. Ouattara, the opposition's most formidable candidate, was barred from the contest. Demonstrations were banned, and the media were intimidated. Voting in the October 2000 presidential election appeared to be carried out fairly, but only 5 of 19 potential candidates were allowed to contest the vote. Laurent Gbagbo was eventually declared the winner, with 59 percent, compared with 33 percent for Robert Gueï.

Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) won 96 seats in the December 2000 legislative elections, while 4 went to the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire, and 5 went to the Rally of Republicans (RDR). Twenty-four seats went to smaller parties and independents, and 2 seats in Ouattara's district went unfilled. Municipal elections were held in March 2001, and the RDR won 64 of 197 mayoral seats across the country.

Côte d'Ivoire does not have an independent judiciary. Judges are political appointees without tenure and are highly susceptible to external interference. In many rural areas, traditional courts still prevail, especially in the handling of minor matters and family law.

A military tribunal in August 2001 found eight gendarmes not guilty of the massacre of 57 people during the postelection violence despite widespread evidence, including testimony gathered by Human Rights Watch and the United Nations. The court said there was insufficient evidence. Witnesses refused to testify out of fear. The trial was held on a military base, and witnesses received no protection. The National Reconciliation Forum recommended that the investigation into the massacre be reopened.

Prison conditions are harsh. However, conditions in the country's largest prison, in Abidjan, had improved markedly since 1997, according to a report by Doctors Without Borders. The government in January 2001 pardoned 3,200 prisoners to reduce overcrowding.

Although arbitrary detention, abuse of detainees, and political killings occurred early in the year, human rights violations declined significantly in 2001 compared with 2000. Domestic human rights groups and nongovernmental organizations operate without hindrance and the Gbagbo government allowed international investigators to probe reports of rights violations.

State-owned newspapers and a state-run broadcasting system are usually unreservedly pro-government. Several private radio stations and a cable television service operate, but only the state broadcasting system reaches a national audience. Many journalists were harassed, beaten, and detained in 2000. Conditions improved significantly in 2001, but a battered economy hindered the functioning of the independent media.

Freedom from discrimination is guaranteed but not respected in practice. Human Rights Watch in October accused officials of deliberately encouraging a culture of violent xenophobia in Côte d'Ivoire, whose economy has long attracted workers from neighboring countries. Members of the northern Diola ethnic group were targeted along with African immigrants during the 2000 election violence. Clashes between indigenous groups and migrants from Burkina Faso over land in the southwest have claimed several lives in recent years.

Religious freedom is guaranteed but is not respected in practice. Muslims and mosques were targeted in the 2000 violence. Churches were attacked in retaliation. Muslims, who are predominantly from the north, were seen as siding with foreign migrants and the opposition RDR.

Women suffer widespread discrimination, despite official encouragement for respect for constitutional rights. Equal pay for equal work is offered in the small formal sector, but women have few chances to obtain, or advance in, wage employment. In rural areas that rely on subsistence agriculture, education and job opportunities for women are even scarcer. Female genital mutilation is still practiced, although it has been a crime since 1998. Violence against women is reportedly common.

Child labor and child trafficking are problems. There were up to 15,000 children from Mali alone estimated to be working on Ivorian plantations in 1999. Côte d'Ivoire is drafting new laws on the issue and has set up a group to fight child trafficking and child labor. The group includes representatives from the government, the UN Children's Fund, and women's and children's protection groups, as well as members of parliament.

Union formation and membership are legally protected. Notification and conciliation requirements must be met before legal strikes can be conducted. Collective bargaining agreements are often reached with the participation of government negotiators, who influence wage settlements.



## Croatia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy      Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2\*

Economy: Mixed capitalist (transitional)      Status: Free

Population: 4,700,000

PPP: \$7,387

Life Expectancy: 74

Ethnic Groups: Croat (78 percent), Serb (12 percent),  
 Bosniak (1 percent), other (9 percent)

Capital: Zagreb

**Ratings Change:** Croatia's civil liberties rating improved from 3 to 2 due to the post-Tudjman leadership's continued improvement in the protection of civil liberties and its pursuit of important, though often unpopular, economic and social reforms.



### Overview:

In 2001, Croatia celebrated its tenth anniversary of independence from the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Although the autocratic regime of Franjo Tudjman cast a pall over the country in the 1990s, the election of President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan in 2000 signaled a new era. Since then, Croatia has made positive changes, including reducing presidential powers, restoring independence to state and private media, and rooting out corruption.

In 2001, Croatia and the European Union (EU) concluded a Stabilization and Association Agreement, a framework for reforms the country must make as a potential candidate for EU membership. Parliament also approved important reform laws and adopted a constitutional amendment that abolished its upper chamber, the House of Counties. The country's leadership faced months of public protests for its decision to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia (ICTFY) in the pursuit of Croatian war-crimes suspects. It also endured criticism for its decision to pursue difficult economic reforms.

In May 1990, Croatia elected Franjo Tudjman president. When the country declared independence the following year, civil conflict erupted in Serb enclaves of the country and the Yugoslav army invaded. One-third of Croatia remained under Serb control until 1995, when Tudjman launched an offensive to reclaim the territory. Ethnic Serbs fled Croatia in masses. Despite plans with Slobodan Milosevic to partition Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tudjman was prominent in the 1995 Dayton peace process that ended the Bosnian war.

Throughout the 1991-1995 period, Tudjman used Croat nationalism to build a strong base of support. He also began to plunder state coffers, suppress the media, and subordinate the government and the judiciary to his personal and political whims. The Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) was victorious in free, but not fair, parliamentary elections in 1995 and 1997. Tudjman was reelected in an unfair election in 1997. On December 11, 1999, he died.

The first round of voting in an extraordinary presidential election took place on January 24, 2000. Stjepan Mesic of the Croatian People's Party (HNS) and Drazen

Budisa of the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSL) advanced to a second round, which Mesic won with 56 percent of the vote. In legislative elections that also took place in January 2000, two center-left coalitions wrested control of parliament from the HDZ. Ivica Racan, the leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), became prime minister.

Opposition candidates in both elections campaigned against the HDZ's abuses of power under Tudjman and promised to rebuild Croatia's credibility as a Western democratic nation. Since then, Croatia has been invited to join the World Trade Organization and NATO's Partnership for Peace and has taken steps toward membership in the EU. In 2001, Croatia's new leadership continued to fulfill promises of reform by adopting laws that strengthened the independence of the state prosecutor's office, created the Office for Fighting Corruption and Organized Crime, made it easier for associations to register with the state, and transformed Croatian Radio and Television (HRT) and the Croatian News Agency (HINA) into public institutions.

When President Mesic and Prime Minister Racan came to power, they also agreed to fulfill Croatia's obligations to Bosnia under the 1995 Dayton peace accord. They pledged to cooperate with the ICTFY in its investigation of war crimes, including those committed by Croatian citizens. In 2001, the Council of Europe called Croatia's decision to deliver Generals Rahim Ademi and Ante Gotovina to The Hague a testimony "to the strength of [the country's] commitment to justice, the rule of law and respect for its international obligations."

Domestically, however, the decision to extradite Ademi and Gotovina compelled four HSL ministers to resign and forced Prime Minister Racan to call a confidence vote, which he survived. Likewise, when the government summoned retired General Mirko Norac to answer charges of war crimes, Norac's supporters set up roadblocks and staged protests that ranged in size from a few hundred to nearly 100,000 participants. The group Headquarters for the Protection of Homeland War Values demanded a national referendum on the rights of military leaders and veterans who served during the civil conflict. More than 400,000 citizens signed a petition in support of a referendum.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Croatian voters can change their government democratically. The constitution guarantees citizens age 18 or older the right to universal and equal suffrage.

In 2000, Croatia's new leaders linked the restoration of civil liberties with reductions in presidential power. To that end, parliament approved a constitutional amendment that transformed the country's semipresidential system into a parliamentary one. In 2001, parliament passed another amendment that abolished its upper house. Supporters of the amendment argued that the chamber's limited powers prevented it from playing a serious role in government and drained resources from the state budget. Opponents, mainly followers of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), accused the government of a politically motivated move. Through its control of the upper house, the HDZ had been able to delay reform-minded legislation. Had the chamber not been abolished, the HDZ was expected to retain control in the next round of elections.

The presidential and parliamentary elections in 2000 were peaceful, free, and fair. Thirteen candidates successfully registered for the presidential election. The leading contenders were Mate Granic of Tudjman's HDZ, Stjepan Mesic of the Croatian People's Party (HNS), and Drazen Budisa of the Croatian Social Liberal Party (HSL). In the first round Mesic received 41.11 percent of the vote; Budisa, 27.71 percent; and

Mate Granic, 22.47 percent. Only Mesic and Budisa advanced to the second round, which Mesic won with 56 percent of the vote. Voter turnout was 63 percent in round one and 61 percent in round two.

A total of 282 candidates participated in the election to the lower house of parliament. A center-left coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the HSLs won 71 seats with nearly 49 percent of the vote. A coalition of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS), the Liberal Party (LS), the HNS, and the Istrian Democratic Party (IDS) took 24 seats with 16.44 percent of the vote. Together, these two coalitions took control of parliament from the HDZ, which won only 46 seats, or 31.5 percent of the vote. A right-wing coalition of the Croatian Christian Democratic Union and the Croatian Party of Rights also won 5 seats with 3.52 percent of the vote.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has criticized repeatedly Croatia's Law on Citizenship for favoring ethnic Croats over minorities. For example, unlike Croats in Bosnia, Serbs in exile have had difficulty proving their Croatian citizenship and, therefore, exercising their right to vote. The 1999 parliamentary election law guarantees five seats for ethnic minorities. In 2001, the OSCE criticized the government for lack of progress in the return of refugees. Of the estimated 300,000 Serbs who left Croatia in the 1990s, only about 80,000 have returned. The Ministry for Reconstruction reported in December 2001 that 53,144 refugees, including 28,281 Serbs, had returned to the country since early 2000.

Croatia's constitution guarantees freedom of expression. Although President Franjo Tudjman suppressed independent media and put state media under his control, Croatia's new leadership has removed Tudjman loyalists from senior positions at Croatian Radio and Television (HRT) and has vowed to foster an environment in which independent media can flourish. Early in 2001, for example, parliament adopted legislation intended to free HRT of political influence. The law called for turning the broadcaster into a public service corporation, selecting its director and editors in chief in open competitions, and allowing nongovernmental associations to appoint 22 of 25 members on its governing council. In October, HRT chairman Ante Covic resigned and accused Mirko Galic, HRT's director, of obstructing the reforms. The same month, parliament approved the transformation of the state news agency, Hina, into an independent institution as well. In November, the Interior Ministry gave Croatian citizens access to 650 files that the Tudjman-era secret police had assembled.

Respect for freedom of religion, association, and assembly has increased in Croatia in the post-Tudjman period. In 2001, trade unions organized protests against economic reforms that had led to layoffs and salary reductions for employees of the postal service and other public entities. In addition, thousands of veterans and supporters of the HDZ rallied against the government's pursuit of suspected Croatian war criminals.

Croatia's constitution guarantees equality before the law. Under the Tudjman regime, though, persons could be denied the right to a fair trial, judicial appointments were politically motivated, and the security services served the president's needs. Likewise, when Stjepan Mesic became president, he discovered in Tudjman's office more than 830 cassettes and 14,000 transcripts that were rife with evidence of corruption. Since then, powerful business executives, sporting officials, and members of Tudjman's family have been arrested or have come under investigation for bribery and embezzlement.

In 2001, the decision of the International Criminal Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia (ICTFY) to allow Croatian courts to investigate and try suspected war criminals

signaled further progress in judicial reform. As Prime Minister Racan stated, "We know that The Hague tribunal was formed because [the West] did not consider certain countries ... capable of handling war crimes committed on their own territory. The Croatian government thinks it is capable of doing it, and we want to prove it." However, in November, a judge postponed the trial of General Mirko Norac for the fifth time. According to a Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty news report, the Croatian government "has opened a number of other cases in which Serbs were the victims, but no one has yet been brought to trial." The constitutional court received two requests in 2001 to review Croatia's law on cooperation with the ICTFY. In other news, the *East European Constitutional Review* noted that the election in 2001 of Ivica Crnic to head the supreme court was seen as "a step in the right direction in the reformation and creation of an independent judiciary."

Although the constitution states that "entrepreneurial and market freedom are the basis of the economic system," Croatian citizens found these freedoms difficult to exercise under Tudjman, who fostered an environment in which bribery and embezzlement were commonplace, privatization programs lacked transparency, and individuals were frequently deprived of salaries and pensions. Croatia's new leadership has launched an aggressive economic reform program, but high unemployment—more than 20 percent in 2001—and policies that have resulted in lower wages and job losses in the public sector have made it a target of criticism and public protest.

## Cuba

Polity: One party                      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Statist                      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 11,300,000              Status: Not Free  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 75  
 Ethnic Groups: Mulatto (51 percent), white (37 percent),  
 black (11 percent), Chinese (1 percent)  
 Capital: Havana



**Overview:** The collapse of 74-year-old Cuban leader Fidel Castro at a long outdoor rally near Havana on June 23 centered attention in 2001 on the future of the island once the world's longest-ruling dictator passes from the scene. Increasing contact with the free-market world appeared to give a boost to Cuba's long-stagnant economy, at least until the September 11, 2001, terrorist bombings in the United States put a damper on international tourism generally, including travel by Europeans to Cuba's tourist destinations. Lower prices for sugar and nickel, two of the island's most important exports, added to economic planners' concerns. The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon afforded Castro a rare opportunity to voice "solidarity" with the "people" of the United States and to condemn terrorism, while complaining about past attacks directed against Cuban civilian targets by Miami-based Cuban exiles. The Castro regime received an unexpected boost in October when U.S. coalition partner Great Britain voiced disagree-

ment with Washington's continuing inclusion of the island on its list of terrorist states. In November, Hurricane Michelle, the most powerful tropical storm to hit Cuba in a half-century, left a low death toll but a trail of physical destruction, devastating Cuban crops. In the wake of the storm, the first direct food trade was permitted between Cuba and the United States since the latter imposed an embargo on the Communist-run island in 1962. On a positive note, at the end of 2001 Castro was reported to have urged Colombia's National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrilla group to reach a peace agreement with that country's government.

Cuba achieved independence from Spain in 1898 as a result of the Spanish-American War. The Republic of Cuba was established in 1902, but was under U.S. tutelage under the Platt Amendment until 1934. In 1959, Castro's July 26th Movement—named after an earlier, failed insurrection—overthrew the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, who had ruled for 18 of the previous 25 years.

Since then, Fidel Castro has dominated the Cuban political system, transforming it into a one-party state, with the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) controlling all governmental entities from the national to the local level. Communist structures were institutionalized by the 1976 constitution installed at the first congress of the PCC. The constitution provides for a national assembly, which designates a Council of State. It is that body which in turn appoints a Council of Ministers in consultation with its president, who serves as head of state and chief of government. However, Castro is responsible for every appointment and controls every lever of power in Cuba in his various roles as president of the Council of Ministers, chairman of the Council of State, commander in chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), and first secretary of the PCC.

Since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of some \$5 billion in annual Soviet subsidies, Castro has sought Western foreign investment. Most investment has come from Europe and Latin America. The legalization of the U.S. dollar since 1993 has heightened social tensions, as the minority with access to dollars from abroad or through the tourist industry has emerged as a new moneyed class and the desperation of the majority without has increased. State salaries have shrunk to \$4 or less a month.

Under Castro the cycles of repression have ebbed and flowed depending on the regime's need to keep at bay the social forces set into motion by his severe post-Cold War economic reforms. For example, stepped-up actions against peaceful dissidents preceded the Fifth Congress of the PCC held in October 1997, as well as elections the same month to the National Assembly of Popular Power. Two small bomb explosions at hotels in Havana on July 13, 1997, also provided a pretext for action against peaceful opposition groups, which Cuban authorities tried to link to terrorist activities.

Neither the Fifth Congress, where one-party rule was reaffirmed, nor the one-party national elections provided any surprises. Castro proudly pointed to a reported 95 percent turnout at the polls; critics noted that nonparticipation could be construed by authorities as dissent and many people were afraid of the consequences of being so identified.

In the aftermath of the visit of Pope John Paul II, January 21-25, 1998, the number of dissidents confirmed to be imprisoned dropped nearly 400 percent, to 381 in mid-June 1998. Part of the decline was due to the release of 140 of 300 prisoners held for political activities or common crimes whose freedom was sought by the pontiff.

In February 1999, the government introduced tough legislation against sedition, with a maximum prison sentence of 20 years. It included Penalties for unauthorized contacts with the United States and the import or supply of "subversive" materials,

including texts on democracy, by news agencies and journalists. A month later, a court used the new law in sentencing four well-known dissidents to prison terms of up to five years. Castro used the occasion of the Ibero-American summit, which was boycotted by several Latin American leaders, to lash out at Cuba's small band of vocal dissidents and members of the independent press.

U.S.-Cuban relations took some unexpected turns in 2000, against a backdrop of unprecedented media coverage of the story of the child shipwreck survivor Elián Gonzalez, who was ordered to be returned to his father after a lengthy legal battle involving émigré relatives in Florida. In response to pressure from U.S. farmers and businessmen who pushed for a relaxation of economic sanctions against Fidel Castro's island dictatorship, in October the United States eased the 38-year-old embargo on food and medicine to Cuba. However, the aging caudillo's grip on the island was anything but relaxed. Repression of the independent media and other civil society dissidents continued unabated, and Cuba's tightening of emigration policy increased the likelihood of high-risk escapes by boat from the island. In 2001, Cuba remains the western hemisphere's per capita leader in the practice of capital punishment.

Following Castro's fainting spell in June 2001, both the septuagenarian leader and other senior government officials dismissed rumors that he was in bad health and claimed neither chaos nor an end to the Communist regime would occur when he died. In July, residents of Havana were the subjects of a first-ever public opinion survey sponsored by the regime to determine grassroots satisfaction with the quality of government services provided. Declining educational opportunity, dissatisfaction with public health services and criticism of the national police were among the most frequent complaints. Cuba's tourism industry, which grew by 500 percent in the last decade and accounts for more than half the island's foreign exchange earnings, was hard hit in the global tourism free fall that was an outgrowth of the September 11 attacks. In October, the trial began for three Guatemalans jailed since 1998 on charges of allegedly participating in a Central American terror network that organized a series of bomb attacks on tourist locations in 1997 and 1998. The three confessed to the charges and face sentences ranging from 20 to 30 years. In November, relations between Havana and Washington appeared to thaw slightly, as Continental Airlines celebrated its first charter flight to the Cuban capital. The renewal of food sales in the wake of Michelle sparked further debate among farmers and others in the United States who want the embargo lifted, and Cuban exile groups and some democracy activists who demand even tougher sanctions. In early December, Cuban state security agents detained dozens of activists around the country who were attempting to hold meetings to protest Castro's continued rule and Cuba's one-party system.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Cubans cannot change their government through democratic means. On January 11, 1998, members of the national assembly were elected in a process in which a reported 98.35 percent of 7.8 million registered voters turned out. There were only 601 candidates for an equal number of seats; opposition or dissident groups were forbidden to present their own candidates. Although the national assembly is vested with the right of legislative power, when it is not in session, this faculty is delegated to the 31-member Council of State elected by the assembly and chaired by Castro.

All political and civic organizations outside the PCC is illegal. Political dissent, spo-

ken or written, is a punishable offense, and those so punished frequently receive years of imprisonment for seemingly minor infractions. There has been a slight relaxation of strictures on cultural life; nevertheless, the educational system, the judicial system, labor unions, professional organizations, and all media remain state-controlled. A small group of human rights activists and dissident journalists, together with a still-shackled Roman Catholic Church, provide the only glimmer of an independent civil society.

In Cuba the executive branch controls the judiciary. The 1976 constitution is remarkable for its concentration of power in the hands of one individual—Castro, president of the Council of State. In practice, the council serves as a *de facto* judiciary and controls both the courts and the judicial process as a whole. In 1999, the Cuban government showed some willingness to enhance antinarcotics cooperation between the island republic and the United States. In 1999, Cuba executed at least 21 prisoners by firing squad, and in 2000 held another 24 on death row, awaiting a final decision on their execution sentence by the Council of State. Two of those on death row are Salvadoran nationals who were convicted of terrorism after confessing to a 1997 bombing campaign against hotels in Cuba that killed an Italian citizen.

Cuba under Castro has one of the highest per capita rates of imprisonment for political offenses of any country in the world. There are several hundred political prisoners, most held in cells with common criminals and many convicted on vague charges such as "disseminating enemy propaganda" or "dangerousness." There are credible reports of torture of dissidents in prison and in psychiatric institutions, where a number of those arrested in recent years are held. Since 1991, the United Nations has voted annually to assign a special investigator on human rights to Cuba, but the Cuban government has refused to cooperate. In 1993 vandalism was decreed to be a form of sabotage, punishable by eight years in prison. Individuals belonging to groups that exist apart from the state are labeled "counterrevolutionary criminals" and are subject to systematic repression, including arrests, beatings while in custody, confiscations, and intimidation by uniformed or plainclothes state security.

The press in Cuba is the object of a targeted campaign of intimidation by the government. Independent journalists, particularly those associated with five small news agencies they established outside state control, have been subjected to continued repression, including jail terms at hard labor and assaults while in prison by state security agents. At a time when their potential audiences are increasing, as a result of the Internet, about 100 independent journalists have been branded "counterrevolutionaries" by the authorities. Foreign news agencies must hire local reporters only through government offices, which limits employment opportunities for independent journalists. In 1999, in the run-up to the November summit of Ibero-American leaders, Castro singled out 17 independent journalists by name and said they were "counterrevolutionary" conspirators paid by the United States. On a positive note, in January 2001, independent journalist Jesus Joel Diaz Fernandez, the winner of the 1999 International Press Freedom Award, was released after two years in jail. However, during the rest of 2001 reporters suffered from the levels of repression reminiscent of earlier years.

Freedom of movement and the right to choose one's residence, education, or job are severely restricted. Attempting to leave the island without permission is a punishable offense. In August 2000, the U.S. State Department charged that Cuba was not abiding by a 1994 agreement seeking to establish ground rules for the orderly migration of 20,000 Cubans plus their family members to the United States. Noting that more

than 100 Cubans to whom the United States had granted visas were denied exit permits by the Cuban government in a 75-day period, the State Department said that the island's policy was encouraging Cubans "denied the means to migrate in a safe, orderly and legal fashion to risk their lives in desperate sea voyages."

Cuban authorities have failed to carry out an adequate investigation into the July 1994 sinking of a tugboat carrying at least 66 people, of whom only 31 survived, as it sought to flee Cuba. Several survivors alleged that the craft sank as it was being pursued and assaulted by three other Cuban vessels acting under official orders, and that the fleeing boat was not allowed to surrender. The government denied any responsibility, claiming the tragedy was an accident caused by irresponsible actions by those on board. Citing what it calls compelling evidence, including eyewitness testimony, in 1999 Amnesty International concluded that the force employed by the Cuban government was "disproportionate" to the nature of the crime. It noted that "if events occurred in the way described by several of the survivors, those who died as a result of the incident were victims of extrajudicial execution." Those in Cuba commemorating the dead, or who have peacefully protested the sinking, have faced harassment and intimidation.

In 1991 Roman Catholics and other believers were granted permission to join the Communist Party, and the constitutional reference to official atheism was dropped the following year. Religious freedom has made small gains. Afro-Cuban religious groups are now carefully courted by Cuban officials. In preparation for the papal visit in 1998, Catholic pastoral work and religious education activities were allowed to take place at previously unheard-of levels, and Christmas was celebrated for the first time in 28 years. On another positive note, in June 2001 the archbishop of Havana consecrated the first parish church built on the island in more than 40 years, the latest in a series of small concessions wrested by the papal representative from the regime.

In the post-Soviet era, the rights of Cubans to own private property and to participate in joint ventures with foreigners have been recognized. Non-Cuban businesses have also been allowed. In practice, there are few rights for those who do not belong to the PCC. Party membership is still required for good jobs, serviceable housing, and real access to social services, including medical care and educational opportunities. In a move that was widely criticized in Cuba's large exile community, in 2001 World Bank President James Wolfensohn congratulated Cuba for its social programs, singling out "a great job on education and health." However, critics pointed out that the statistics cited by the World Bank—that suggest that Cuba ranks with many developed countries on measures such as literacy and infant mortality—were based on official Cuban government reports unlikely to be reliable.

Many blacks have benefited from access to basic education and medical care since the Castro revolution, and much of the police force and army enlisted personnel is black. However, credible reports say the forced evictions of squatters and residents who lack official permission to reside in Havana are primarily targeted against individuals and families from the eastern provinces, which are traditionally areas of black or mixed-race populations.

About 40 percent of all women work, and they are well represented in the professions. However, violence against women is a problem, as is child prostitution.



## Cyprus (Greek)

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 900,000  
 PPP: \$19,006  
 Life Expectancy: 77  
 Ethnic Groups: Greek (78 percent), Turkish (18 percent), other (4 percent)  
 Capital: Nicosia



### Overview:

While the conflict that has kept Cyprus divided for nearly three decades remained unresolved in 2001, new hope emerged at the end of the year that a settlement might be at hand; the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders met face-to-face for the first time in four years. Cypriots staged violent demonstrations outside a British military base during the year, protesting the planned construction of high-frequency radio towers in the vicinity of the base. The Communist Party won parliamentary elections in May. Negotiations for Cyprus's accession into the European Union (EU) moved forward, raising the possibility of inclusion by 2003.

Annexed to Britain in 1914, Cyprus gained independence in 1960 after a ten-year guerrilla campaign to demand union with Greece. In July 1974, Greek Cypriot National Guard members, backed by the military junta in power in Greece, staged an unsuccessful coup aimed at unification. Five days later, Turkey invaded, seized control of 37 percent of the island, and expelled 200,000 Greeks from the north. Currently, the entire Turkish Cypriot community resides in the north, and property claims arising from the division and population exchange remain unsettled.

A buffer zone called the "Green Line" has divided Cyprus since 1974. The capital, Nicosia, is the world's last divided city. The division of Cyprus has been a major point of contention in the long-standing rivalry between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean. Tensions and intermittent violence between the two populations have plagued the island since independence. UN resolutions stipulate that Cyprus is a single country of which the northern third is illegally occupied. In 1982, Turkish-controlled Cyprus made a unilateral declaration of independence that was condemned by the UN and that remains unrecognized by every country except Turkey. (See Turkish Cyprus under Related Territories.)

Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides met with Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş in Nicosia in December, marking the first such meeting in four years. Both sides promised to negotiate until they reached a comprehensive settlement. Analysts saw the resumption of talks related to the expected accession of Cyprus to the EU in 2003. Turkey has threatened to annex the northern part of Cyprus should EU-membership occur in the absence of a settlement.

The two leaders last participated in reunification negotiations in New York in September 2000. The talks were organized to lay the groundwork for meaningful negotiations toward a comprehensive settlement of the conflict. The negotiations marked the

fourth round of UN-brokered proximity talks, so called because the two Cypriot leaders negotiated via intermediaries rather than directly. UN mediators, hoping the round of talks would address the core issues—and historic deal breakers—of territorial allotment and reunification, insisted that each party to the conflict treat the other as a political equal. President Clerides refused to continue the talks when Denktash demanded recognition of his state, which is recognized only by Turkey. Negotiations resumed in November 2000 but ended abruptly, with the two sides unable to narrow their differences.

Peace in Cyprus remains fragile. Propaganda in schools and in the media has sustained hostility among Cypriot youth. Blatant economic disparity exists between the prosperous south and the stagnating north. Cyprus ranks among the most heavily militarized countries in the world.

For several days in July, dozens of Cypriots rioted outside a British military base stationed on the island. Violent protests broke out over the British military's plans to construct frequency towers on and around the Akrotiri military base. Cypriots claimed the towers would emit harmful radiation. Britain stations 3,500 troops on a base occupying 78 square miles.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Greek Cypriots can change their government democratically. Suffrage is universal and compulsory, and elections are free and fair. The 1960 constitution established an ethnically representative system designed to protect the interests of both Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

In parliamentary elections in May, the Communist Reformist Party of the Working People (AKEL) party claimed 34.7 percent of the popular vote, the largest bloc. The party supports the island's reunification and the country's bid for EU membership.

The independent judiciary operates according to the British tradition, upholding the presumption of innocence and the right to due process. Trial before a judge is standard, although requests for trial by jury are regularly granted.

Freedom of speech is respected, and a vibrant independent press frequently criticizes authorities. Several private television and radio stations in the Greek Cypriot community compete effectively with government-controlled stations. In addition, the government also publishes a Cyprus Internet home page, which features information regarding efforts to resolve the island's protracted dispute as well as current developments and policy statements by Cypriot leaders.

Workers have the right to strike and to form trade unions without authorization. More than 70 percent of the workforce belong to independent trade unions.

## Czech Republic

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 10,300,000  
 PPP: \$13,018  
 Life Expectancy: 75  
 Ethnic Groups: Czech (94 percent), Slovak (3 percent), other, including Polish (3 percent)  
 Capital: Prague



### Overview:

In 2001, the Czech Republic continued to fulfill requirements for membership in the European Union (EU), which the country expects to join early this decade. The year was also marked by a power struggle between President Vaclav Havel and the government, efforts to identify and prosecute corruption, debates over media independence, a new British immigration policy at Prague's international airport, and the trials of former senior officials in the Communist-era government.

In December 1989, an anti-Communist opposition led by Havel and the Civic Forum brought down the Czechoslovak government. The country held its first post-Communist elections in 1990; adopted a new constitution and a charter of freedoms in 1992; and dissolved the state into the Czech and Slovak Republics in 1993. Havel became president of the new Czech Republic in 1993.

In 1992, under Finance Minister Vaclav Klaus, the country began an aggressive program of political and economic reforms. Klaus, a member of the ruling center-right Civic Democratic Party (ODS), became prime minister the same year. He resigned in 1997 amid allegations of corruption in the ODS and in the midst of an economic recession. In 1998, the ODS ceded control of the government to the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) after close parliamentary elections but negotiated control of key government positions. In 1999 the Czech Republic joined NATO.

When the year 2001 began, a power struggle between President Havel and the CSSD-ODS coalition remained heated. The previous year, the CSSD and the ODS had hoped to limit President Havel's powers through constitutional reform, and Prime Minister Zeman had contested Havel's appointment of a new Czech National Bank head without his approval. Havel, meanwhile, had challenged amendments to the law on political parties that, he argued, would make it difficult for small parties to gain representation in parliament and therefore would violate a constitutional requirement for proportional representation. In February 2001, the court ruled in Havel's favor and struck down parts of the legislation. The government, which is eager to amend the election law before parliamentary elections in 2002, modified and reintroduced the legislation.

During 2001, the government took a variety of steps to address problems of crime and corruption. The interior ministry, for example, launched a public information campaign about the negative consequences of bribery. Authorities also broke up a Czech-based network for human smuggling and charged former senior managers of the Investicni a Postovni Banka (IPB) with loan fraud, insider trading, and mismanagement of property.

Late in 2000, journalists at Czech Television (CT) responded to the appointment of Jiri Hodac to head the state-run broadcaster by taking over the CT newsroom, broadcasting their own programs, and casting the appointment as a politically motivated challenge to media independence. They accused Hodac of maintaining close ties to the center-right Civic Democrats, and thousands of Czechs took to the streets in their support.

Although Hodac initially resisted the protest by firing 20 staffers and blacking out all broadcasts, he resigned in January 2001 under governmental pressure. Nevertheless, the CT strikers refused to stand down until a new interim director fired senior managers who were loyal to Hodac and until parliament passed a law intended to limit political influence over the broadcaster. Both demands were met. Late in the year, Prime Minister Milos Zeman fueled his already contentious relationship with the country's media when his entire government sued the weekly newspaper *Respekt* and its editor over articles that accused the government of failing to fight corruption. When the prime minister stated publicly that his intention was to ensure the newspaper's demise, the newspaper filed a counter suit.

The government's decision in 2001 to allow Britain to open an immigration office at Prague's international airport set off an intense debate. Britain contends that the move, the intent of which was to prevent abuse of its asylum laws, was not directed at a single group. Critics, however, charged that the policy was aimed at Roma (Gypsies).

In other news, Czech courts took up several cases in 2001 that involve Communist-era government officials. One court postponed until 2002 the trial of former Prime Minister Lubomir Strongal, who has been accused of covering up crimes committed by the secret police in the late 1940s. Another court postponed the trial of former Interior Minister Javomir Obzina and four former secret police officials who have been accused of running a campaign to threaten, interrogate, and ultimately force dissidents to leave the country in the 1970s. Two other high-ranking officials in the Communist-era government were charged with treason in connection with the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion. In December, the Constitutional Court rejected a call from members of the CSSD to abolish the country's lustration laws.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Czech citizens age 18 and older can change their government democratically under a system of universal, equal, and direct suffrage. Voters elect members of the senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Parliament chooses the president, who appoints judges, the prime minister, and other cabinet members.

The Czech Republic has a solid record of free and fair elections. In preparation for parliamentary elections in 2002, the government has struggled to amend the country's election law. As early as May 2000, parliament approved a bill that would introduce a first-past-the-post system for electing members of the Chamber of Deputies, increase the number of election districts from 8 to 35, and raise to five percent the threshold for parties, including ones joined in coalitions, to secure seats. Fearing the creation of a de facto two-party system, however, President Vaclav Havel challenged the law before the Constitutional Court, which ruled in his favor early in 2001. On December 13, 2001, the lower house passed a new amendment to the election law that, among other things, would create 14 election districts and improve voting opportunities for Czech citizens who live abroad. The senate was expected to respond shortly thereafter.

Elections for one-third of the senate and for the country's new regional assemblies

took place in November 2000. Both elections were marked by low voter turnout. In the senate election, the Quad Coalition, a grouping of liberal opposition parties, trounced the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) and the Civic Democratic Party (ODS). The coalition now holds 39 seats in the 81-member body. The failure of the CSSD and the ODS to secure a decisive senate majority effectively quashed their plans to limit President Havel's powers through constitutional reform.

The Czech Republic's Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms gives minorities the right to help resolve matters pertaining to their group. A 1999 law restored citizenship to many residents, including Roma. In 2001, parliament approved legislation for the protection of ethnic minority rights. The law's provisions include the creation of a governmental minority council.

Freedom of expression is honored in the Czech Republic, although the Charter prohibits threats against individual rights, state and public security, public health, and morality. Libel can be prosecuted as a criminal offense. The country's print and electronic media are largely in private hands. In 2000, the Law on Free Access to Information took effect and parliament amended broadcasting laws to meet EU standards. In 2001, parliament passed an important bill designed to limit political influence over Czech Television (CT), the state broadcaster. Passage of the legislation helped end a standoff at CT between journalists and management. Under the new law, nongovernmental groups, rather than politicians, will make nominations for membership on Czech television's governing council, the body that controls the selection of Czech television's director.

The government generally respects freedom of religion. However, late in 2001, President Havel vetoed a law on churches that he believes would limit the ability of religious groups to engage in charitable activities. When the Chamber of Deputies overrode the veto in mid-December, Cardinal Miloslav Vlk suggested that the Czech Catholic Church might challenge the law before the Constitutional Court. In November, the prosecutor-general's office dropped charges of "disparaging a nation, race or belief" against Father Vojtech Protivisnky, who had urged his parishioners in the village of Rakvice to vote against the Communist Party in the 2000 parliamentary elections.

Czech citizens may assemble peacefully, form associations, and petition the government. Trade unions and professional associations are free. Judges, prosecutors, and members of the armed forces and police may not strike. In 2001, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions criticized the Czech Republic for restricting the rights of public sector workers to engage in collective bargaining and, in some professions, to strike. It also called on the country to improve its record on discrimination against women, Roma, and people with disabilities.

The Czech Republic's independent judiciary consists of a supreme court, a supreme administrative court, and high, regional, and district courts. There is also a constitutional court. In December 2001, President Havel signed a bill on judicial reform but suggested he might challenge aspects of the law, which he expected to "more widely and consistently separate judicial and executive power."

The Charter specifies "fundamental human rights and freedoms" including privacy, property ownership, sanctity of the home, and choice of residence. It also guarantees the right to education, fair wages, and protection of one's health. Citizens generally enjoy all of these rights, although Roma continue to experience discrimination.

## Denmark

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 5,400,000  
 PPP: \$25,869  
 Life Expectancy: 76  
 Ethnic Groups: Danish, German, Inuit  
 Capital: Copenhagen



### Overview:

The fortunes of Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen's fragile coalition seemed to improve throughout 2001, as his government managed to gain back support lost after the referendum on the euro last year. Citing the need for political unity after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Rasmussen called for a snap election to be held on November 20. However, following a campaign dominated by a debate on immigration, his party was defeated by the opposition Venstre (Liberal) Party, led by Anders Fogh Rasmussen, which won the largest number of seats in Parliament and joined with the Conservative Party to form a rightist coalition government. The new government's program, outlined in late November, contained proposals for new welfare spending and tax reductions, as well as a much stricter policy on immigration.

Denmark is the oldest monarchy in Europe. Queen Margrethe II, whose reign began in 1972, performs mostly ceremonial functions. The 1953 constitution established a unicameral parliament, or Folketing, in which 135 of the 179 members are elected in 17 mainland districts. Two representatives from each of the semiautonomous regions of the Faeroe Islands and Greenland are also elected. The remaining seats are allocated on a proportional basis to parties receiving more than two percent of the vote. An extensive system of local representation includes both regional and local councils. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen's coalition government, comprising his Social Democrats, the smaller Social Liberal Party, and two other left-wing parties, had been in power since January 1993.

Rasmussen's coalition suffered a setback in a September 2000 referendum, when Danes voted by a wide margin against adopting the euro. The outcome of the referendum reflected popular concerns about preserving democracy, national sovereignty, and Denmark's generous welfare state. It also gave a boost to Pia Kjaersgaard's ultranationalist Danish People's Party (DPP), which has seen its popularity nearly double since the 1998 general election.

In voting against the euro, Danes defied the government, main opposition parties, big business, major trade unions, and economists, all of whom support monetary union. Some opponents of the euro say that monetary union will weaken Denmark's welfare system. Others cite European sanctions against Austria following the electoral success of Jorg Haider's Freedom Party as proof of the EU's undemocratic tendencies. Also, nationalists like Kjaersgaard oppose European integration along with immigration as a threat to national identity.

The DPP's anti-Europe, anti-immigrant platform has gained significant support among Danes. It received 12 percent of the vote in the recent elections, winning 22 of

the 179 seats in Parliament. Although direct DPP participation in government is unlikely, as most parties refuse to align themselves with a party that they consider to be xenophobic, their influence will be felt more strongly in the new rightist government.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Danes can change their government democratically. Representatives are elected to the Folketing at least once every four years in a modified system of proportional representation. In the most recent elections, 87 percent of Danes participated in the polls. The autonomous territory of Greenland held a general election in 1999 for its 31-seat parliament. Prime Minister Jonathan Motzfeldt's social-democratic Siumut Party has dominated politics on the island since 1979, when Greenland won home rule from Denmark. A proposed referendum on independence for the Faeroes, scheduled for May, was called off in early March after the island's government backed down on the issue in the face of the Danish government's insistence that a vote for independence would mean the ending of Denmark's annual subsidy payment by 2005. Denmark ranks highly on the annual Corruption Perceptions Index published by Transparency International; in 2001, it was in second place with a score of 9.5 out of 10.

The judiciary is independent, and citizens enjoy full due process rights. The court system consists of 100 local courts, 2 high courts, and a 15-member supreme court with judges appointed by the queen on recommendation of the government.

Denmark's constitution guarantees freedom of expression. Danish media reflect a wide variety of political opinions and are frequently critical of the government. The state finances radio and television broadcasting, but state-owned television companies have independent editorial boards. Independent radio stations are permitted but tightly regulated. In November, Radio Oasen (Oasis), Europe's only legal neo-Nazi radio station, had its license permit removed by local authorities after it violated laws regarding the incitement of racial hatred.

The rights of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities are widely respected. In the recent elections, a Dane with an immigrant background was elected to parliament for the first time. However, the Danish People's Party (DPP) has tapped into public fears about crime and national identity to rally opinion against immigrants. In August, the DPP placed a full-page ad in *Jyllands-Posten*, the country's leading newspaper, publishing the names of about 4,700 immigrants who had recently been granted Danish citizenship. The ad drew heavy criticism from rights activists and politicians, who called the ad "distasteful." Nevertheless, anti-immigrant sentiment has risen, and in 2000 the government responded with legislation barring immigrants under age 25 from bringing foreign spouses to Denmark. Another measure makes learning Danish a requirement for receiving some forms of welfare.

Freedom of worship is guaranteed to all. More than 90 percent of the population belongs to the state-supported Evangelical Lutheran Church, although with more than 170,000 adherents, Islam is the country's second biggest religion. The Evangelical Lutheran faith is taught in public schools, although students are not required to attend religious classes.

Denmark is among the countries most tolerant of homosexuals. In 1989, Denmark became the first country to grant legal recognition to same-sex partnerships. In May 2000, Denmark passed legislation granting homosexuals in registered partnerships the right to adopt each other's children.

Women constitute approximately 45 percent of the Danish labor force. According

to the Swiss-based Inter-Parliamentary Union, Denmark ranks behind only Sweden in its percentage of women in parliament; currently 37 percent of Danish members of parliament are women.

Workers are free to organize, bargain collectively, and strike. The vast majority of wage earners belong to trade unions and their umbrella organization, the Danish Federation of Trade Unions.

## ↑ Djibouti

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (dominant party)  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 600,000  
 PPP: \$2,377  
 Life Expectancy: 46  
 Ethnic Groups: Somali (60 percent), Afar (35 percent), other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Djibouti



Trend Arrow: Djibouti received an upward trend arrow due to an accord that consolidated a peace agreement signed in 2000 between the government and Afar insurgents, paving the way for a more extensive multiparty system.

### Overview:

The government of President Ismael Omar Guelleh followed up a peace agreement it signed with the radical wing of the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) in 2000 with a more extensive accord in May 2001. It, like the previous agreement, was aimed at putting an end to the ethnic Afar insurgency against *Issa* (Somali) "tribal dictatorship" that began in 1991. The insurgents had demanded the installation of a democratic, multiparty system. The largest FRUD faction agreed in 1994 to end its insurgency in exchange for inclusion in the government and electoral reforms. The May accord reportedly provides for greater decentralization, more representative local bodies, and a more extensive multiparty system.

Djibouti was known as the French Territory of the Afar and Issa before gaining independence from France in 1977. President Hassan Gouled Aptidon controlled a one-party system until 1992, when a new constitution adopted by referendum authorized four political parties. In 1993, he was declared winner of a fourth 6-year term in Djibouti's first contested presidential elections. Both the opposition and international observers considered the poll fraudulent.

Aptidon stepped down in April 1999 after 22 years in power, opening the way for the country's first free presidential election since independence. Guelleh, of the ruling Popular Rally for Progress (RPP) party, defeated opposition leader Moussa Ahmed Idriss, of the Unified Djiboutian Opposition (ODU). Guelleh, who is Aptidon's nephew and a former head of state security, had long been considered the de facto head of government and the president's heir apparent.



Djibouti's people are deeply divided along ethnic and clan lines. The majority Issa and minority Afar peoples hold most political power. Legislative elections in 1997 returned the ruling party to power, thereby reinforcing the long dominance of the Mamassan clan of the majority Issa ethnic group.

Djibouti closed its border with the self-declared Republic of Somaliland in April because of a trade dispute over cigarettes. Relations initially soured between Somaliland and Djibouti when Djibouti hosted peace talks in 2000 that led to the installation of an interim government in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, which Somaliland opposes. By October 2001, Djibouti and Somaliland said they had resolved their differences and guaranteed the free movement of people, goods, and livestock across their common border.

Approximately 2,700 French troops are among 10,000 French residents of Djibouti. French advisors and technicians effectively run much of the country. Although this is slowly changing, President Guelleh favors retaining strong ties with France.

Djibouti has little industry, few natural resources, and high unemployment. Services provide most of the national income. Only one-tenth of the land is arable. Efforts to curb rampant corruption have met with little success, but efforts at privatization have received praise.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

The trappings of representative government and formal administration have had little relevance to the real distribution and exercise of power in Djibouti. The April 1999 presidential poll was marked by low turnout among the fewer than 200,000 eligible voters. Ismael Omar Guelleh won the poll with 74 percent of the vote, compared with 26 percent for Moussa Ahmed Idriss. For the first time since elections began in 1992, no group boycotted the vote. Although international observers declared the poll generally fair, the ruling party had the advantage of state resources to conduct its campaign.

The 1997 legislative elections were marginally more credible than the plainly fraudulent 1992 polls, but easily reinstalled the ruling Popular Rally for Progress (RPP) party, which, in coalition with the legalized arm of the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) at the time, won all 65 national assembly seats. FRUD leaders joined the cabinet as part of the 1994 peace pact.

The judiciary is not independent. The government in 2000 promulgated a new law on judicial organization, which included the establishment of a national committee for the promotion and protection of human rights and provided for the separation of the court system from the ministry of justice.

Security forces arrest dissidents without proper authority, despite constitutional requirements that arrests may not occur without a decree presented by a judicial magistrate. Prison conditions are harsh, with reports of beatings, torture, and rape of female inmates. There are complaints of harassment of political opponents and union leaders. The Djiboutian Human Rights League, women's groups, and other nongovernmental organizations operate without hindrance.

Freedom of assembly and association is nominally protected under the constitution, but the government has little tolerance for political protest. Despite constitutional protection, freedom of speech is not guaranteed. The government closely controls all electronic media. There is one official newspaper. Independent newspapers, most of which are in the form of newsletters, are generally allowed to circulate freely, but journalists exercise self-censorship.

Islam is the official state religion, but freedom of worship is respected, although the government discourages proselytizing. There was growing concern in 2001 about Djibouti's treatment of immigrants, who have been flooding the capital because of drought in the Horn region. Citing security concerns, authorities in December 2000 detained about 5,000 illegal immigrants and deported many of them.

Despite equality under civil law, women suffer serious discrimination under customary practices in inheritance and other property matters, divorce, and the right to travel. Women have few opportunities for education or in the formal economic sector. Female genital mutilation is almost universal among Djibouti's women, and legislation forbidding mutilation of young girls is not enforced. Women's groups are making efforts to curb the practice.

The formal sector in the largely rural agricultural and nomadic subsistence economy is small. Workers may join unions and strike, but the government routinely obstructs the free operation of unions. The General Union of Djiboutian Workers and the Union of Djiboutian Workers formed a confederation in 1995 and were gaining increasing support until the government took control of them in 1999.

## Dominica

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 100,000

PPP: \$5,040

Life Expectancy: 73

Ethnic Groups: Mostly black and mulatto, Carib Indian

Capital: Roseau

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 1

Status: Free



### Overview:

An August 2001 visit by Prime Minister Pierre Charles to dictator Muammar al-Qadhafi's Libya, where the Dominican leader and those of Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines received promises of financial support, came under close scrutiny after the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The trip revived U.S. State Department concerns about the island nation's sympathies first expressed in the 1980s, which focused on an opposition firebrand, Roosevelt Douglas, who died in October 2000 just months after becoming prime minister. The controversy came after the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) kept Dominica on its blacklist of countries it says is uncooperative in the fight against money laundering.

Dominica has been an independent republic within the Commonwealth since 1978. Internally self-governing since 1967, Dominica is a parliamentary democracy headed by a prime minister and a house of assembly with 21 members elected to five-year terms. Nine senators are appointed—five by the prime minister and four by the opposition leader. The president is elected by the house for a five-year term.

In 1993 Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of the Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) announced her intention to retire in 1995 after 15 years in power. External affairs min-

ister Brian Alleyne defeated three other candidates in a vote of DFP delegates to become the new party leader.

In June 1995, the United Workers Party (UWP) won a narrow majority, 11 of 21 seats, in parliamentary elections. Edison James, a former head of the Banana Growers' Association, became prime minister. The UWP victory marked a significant shift of power from the traditional establishment to a new and younger business class. The DFP and the Dominican Labour Party (DLP) won five seats each. The DFP's Alleyne and the DLP's Douglas reached an agreement to share the official opposition post by alternating each year. Alleyne assumed the post first. A high court, however, ruled that one of the winning DFP candidates was not qualified to sit in parliament since he still held a public service position. The ruling reduced the DFP's representation in parliament to 4 seats. Special elections, held in 1996, resulted in an additional seat for the UWP, raising its share to 12 of 21 seats. Douglas became the opposition leader. In early 1996 Alleyne resigned as head of the DFP and was replaced by former diplomat Charles Savarin.

Dominica's offshore business sector includes some 4,600 international companies, 5 offshore banks, and 5 Internet gambling companies. Offshore banking interests, in particular, have raised concerns about penetration by international organized crime, particularly Russian organizations. In March 1999, the U.S. State Department noted the rapid expansion of offshore businesses and expressed concern that "between 200 and 300 Russians have reportedly purchased citizenship." James's decision to call snap elections for January 2000 caught some observers off guard, and during the campaign the prime minister touted the island's 3.5 percent economic growth in 1999 as well as his government's record of building homes, schools, and water pipelines. James denied the DLP's charge that some of the estimated 1,000 foreigners who received passports were criminals.

The centrist opposition DLP swept to victory for the first time in 20 years in January 30, 2000, elections, winning 10 of 21 parliamentary seats and forging a coalition with the right-wing DFP. DLP leader and former left-wing activist Douglas came to power after charging that the incumbent UWP, headed by James, had sold hundreds of passports to wealthy foreigners who, according to the United States, included Russian gangsters and Chinese immigrant smugglers. After the January 2000 election, Douglas announced that Dominica's program of raising money by selling passports and "economic citizenship" would end. Douglas, who maintained close links to Cuba, also promised a business development that minimized environmental damage, and the former Marxist quickly moved to assure the business sector that his years as a radical were behind him. He died of a heart attack on October 1, 2000, and was replaced by Pierre Charles, who was his communications and works minister. Ian Douglas, the late prime minister's nephew, retained the parliamentary seat for the DLP in a December 11, 2000 by-election.

During 2001, Dominica's important banana-growing sector was told by senior government officials that it must quickly achieve commercial profitability if it is to survive the pending end of preferential access to the Economic Union. In June, the FATF announced that it was retaining Dominica on its blacklist, after the government failed to pass legislation on exchanging financial information with other countries and international agencies. After it was blacklisted in 2000, Dominica tightened up regulation of the offshore financial sector and created a financial intelligence unit as well as a money-laundering-tracking authority. However, lacking an exchange of information law, these measures were perceived as inadequate by the watchdog group. In June the government also admitted it had lost a seven-year campaign to keep the pink mealy bug, which

attacks a wide range of food crops, out of the island. Charles' August trip to Libya resulted in Dominica receiving an attractive financial assistance package, including \$1 million in grants and \$3 million in soft loans.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens are able to change their government through free and fair elections, as was the case with the January 2000 vote in which 60,000 people were registered to participate. There are no restrictions on political, civic, or labor organizations. Several civic groups emerged during the James administration to call for more accountability and transparency in government.

The press is free, varied, and critical. Television and radio, both public and private, are open to a variety of views. Since 1990, television has been used as an effective campaign tool by all parties. The government respects academic freedom and labor rights.

Freedom of religion is recognized. However, the small Rastafarian community has charged in the past that its religious rights are violated by a policy of cutting off the dreadlocks of those who are imprisoned, and that Rastafarian women are harassed by immigration officials who single them out for drug searches.

There is an independent judiciary, and the rule of law is enhanced by the court's subordination to the inter-island Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. However, the judicial system is understaffed, which has led to a large backlog of cases. The only prison on Dominica is plagued by overcrowding and sanitation problems.

The Dominica Defense Force was disbanded in 1981 after being implicated in attempts by supporters of former Prime Minister Patrick John to overthrow the government. John was convicted in 1986 for his role and given a 12-year prison sentence. He was released by executive order in 1990, became active in the trade union movement, and lost as a Dominica Labour Party candidate in the 1995 election. The Dominica police are the only security force. Occasional instances of excessive use of force by police are one of the few human rights complaints heard. In 1997 the commissioner and deputy commissioner of the police were forced to retire as a result of recommendations by a commission of inquiry that investigated allegations of mismanagement, corruption, and police brutality. Under new leadership, the police created the Internal Affairs Department to investigate public complaints against the police and to provide officers with counseling.

Workers have the right to organize, strike, and bargain collectively. Though unions are independent of the government and laws prohibit anti-union discrimination by employers, fewer than ten percent of the workforce are union members.

There are 3,400 indigenous Carib Indians, many of whom live on the northeast coast on a 3,783-acre reservation created in 1903 and expanded in 1997. The reservation is governed by the 1978 Carib constitution.

Inheritance laws do not fully recognize women's rights. When a husband dies without a will, the wife cannot inherit his property, though she may continue to inhabit their home. There are no laws mandating equal pay for equal work for men and women in private sector jobs. Government welfare officials have expressed concern over the growing number of cases of child abuse. Sexual harassment and domestic violence are common; however, there is no family court that specifically deals with domestic violence issues.

## Dominican Republic

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free

Population: 8,600,000

PPP: \$5,507

Life Expectancy: 69

Ethnic Groups: Mixed (73 percent), white (16 percent), black (11 percent)

Capital: Santo Domingo

Trend Arrow: Dominican Republic received a downward trend arrow due to increasing militarization of public security and an upsurge in narcotics related crime.



### Overview:

In 2001, an economic downturn, coming on the heels of an economic boom that, during the 1990s, was the envy of the Dominican Republic's neighbors, sparked an upsurge of social unrest that was taken advantage of by narcotics traffickers to settle scores and set boundaries for their illicit trade. Frequent power cuts due to insufficient energy resources resulted in a series of violent clashes between police and protestors. At midyear the government announced it was increasing the size of its special military riot unit from 150 to 600 members. Growing street crime and the protests are believed to have been responsible for a sharp downturn in the vital tourism industry before the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and these continued to hold travel down for the rest of the year. Although harshly criticized at home for its economic stewardship, the center-left government of Hipolito Mejía, which came into office in 2000, won significant international support after it pledged full cooperation with the United States and other countries in counternarcotics efforts. In December 2001, a maverick senator from Mejía's own party was murdered by unknown assailants. The night he was shot, the senate almost unanimously passed a bill setting up strict Penalties for drug-money laundering.

After achieving independence from Spain in 1821 and from Haiti in 1844, the Dominican Republic endured recurrent domestic conflict. The assassination of General Rafael Trujillo in 1961 ended 30 years of dictatorship, but a 1963 military coup led to civil war and U.S. intervention. In 1966, under a new constitution, civilian rule was restored with the election of the conservative Joaquin Balaguer.

The constitution provides for a president and a congress elected for four-year terms. The congress consists of a 30-member senate and, as a result of a recent census, a house that in 1998 went from 120 members to 149. Balaguer was reelected in 1970 and 1974, but was defeated in 1978 by Silvestre Antonio Guzman of the social-democratic Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD). The PRD was triumphant again in 1982 with the election of Salvador Jorge Blanco, but Balaguer, heading the right-wing Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC), returned to power in 1986 and was reelected in 1990 in a vote marred by fraud.

In the May 1994 election, the main contenders were Balaguer, fellow-octogenar-

ian Juan Bosch of the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), and the PRD's José Francisco Peña Gomez. The Balaguer machine attacked front-runner Peña Gomez, who was black, as a Haitian who secretly planned to unite the neighboring countries. Balaguer was declared the winner by a few thousand votes in an election rife with fraud and tinged with racial hatred. Amid street protests and international pressure, Balaguer agreed to hold new presidential elections in 18 months. The legislative results stood. The PRD and its allies took 57 seats in the house and 15 in the senate; the PRSC, 50 and 14; and the PLD, 13 and 1.

When congress convened, the PLD backed the PRSC's plan to lengthen Balaguer's shortened term from 18 months to two years, with elections in May 1996. In exchange, Balaguer made a PLD legislator president of the house. The PRD protested, but tacitly conceded by announcing that Peña Gomez would again be its standard-bearer in 1996.

Vice President Jacinto Peynado won the PRSC primary in 1995. The PLD's lavish spending campaign tended to confirm the view that the money was coming from Balaguer, who wanted to stop Peña Gomez, and thus avoid any future corruption investigation. In promoting its candidate, Leonel Fernandez, a U.S.-trained lawyer, the PLD took a page from the race-baiting book of the PRSC. In May 1996, Peña Gomez won 45.9 percent of the vote; Fernandez, 38.9 percent; and Peynado, 15 percent. Fernandez won 51.3 percent, and the presidency, in a May 16, 1996, runoff.

The May 1998 legislative and municipal elections were held for the first time since Balaguer was forced to cut short his term. The campaign was violent; more than a dozen people were killed, mostly in clashes between PRD and PRSC groups. Peña Gomez died of natural causes on election eve. Because of the resulting sympathy vote, the PRD made a clean sweep of the legislative contest, although the ruling PLD actually increased its parliamentary strength and maintained enough votes to uphold presidential vetoes.

Fernandez's program of economic liberalization spurred the fastest-growing economy in Latin America. His government also won plaudits for efforts to reach out beyond his party to create consensus around social issues and to improve the administration of justice. However, critics charged that a wave of foreign investments undertaken under his rule were mishandled.

In the May 16, 2000, presidential elections, Mejía, a former agriculture minister and a PRD outsider, struck a chord among those who felt left out of the economic prosperity, particularly the 20 percent who live below the poverty level. Mejía won 49.87 percent of the vote, compared with 24.9 percent for ruling party candidate Danilo Medina, and 24.6 percent for Balaguer, who was running for his eighth term in office. With Mejía coming within a hairs breadth of the 50 percent of the votes plus one needed to win an absolute majority in the first round of the presidential contest, Medina and Balaguer surprised the country by announcing, after a bitterly fought contest, they would not force a runoff vote.

Mejía named a cabinet containing both long-term PRD stalwarts and young reformers, and promised to make good on his pledges to fight graft, create jobs, and invest in housing and other public works projects. He crowned his party's virtual lock on power at all levels of government by promising to use the Dominican Republic's then seven percent annual economic growth rate to promote more social spending, and to review the privatizations undertaken by his predecessor, Fernandez.

Mejía's plans to harness economic growth to social reform were hard hit in 2001

by the slowdown created by energy problems, a downturn in tourism, and a spate of assaults, carjackings and kidnappings targeting prominent businessmen. On July 1, Balaguer reshaped the leadership of the PRSC to his liking and was proclaimed lifetime president of the political party. The assassination of Senator Dario Gomez came as several other legislators said that they also had received death threats. A controversial figure, Gomez had bucked his party's leadership in order to present a constitutional reform that would permit presidents to be reelected, rather than having to step down after serving one term.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of the Dominican Republic can change their government through elections. Although the country has a history of fraudulent elections and the run-up to the May 2000 presidential elections was marked by heightened tension and outbreaks of interparty violence, the balloting was considered by international observers to have been free and fair. At the end of 2001, the Dominican legislature approved constitutional changes allowing presidents to serve consecutive terms, as part of a package of electoral changes that also included reducing from 50 percent to 45 percent the minimum vote required to win presidential elections in the first round. The reforms also established direct election of the president, eliminating an electoral college system in which representative sectors chose the president based on popular votes.

Constitutional guarantees regarding free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties and civic groups are generally respected. Civil society organizations in the Dominican Republic are some of the most well-organized and effective in Latin America. However, the violent political campaigns, frequent government-labor clashes, and repressive measures taken by police and the military mean that free expression is somewhat circumscribed.

The media are mostly private. Newspapers are independent and diverse but subject to government pressure through denial of advertising revenues and the imposition of taxes on imported newsprint. Dozens of radio stations and at least six commercial television stations broadcast. In 1997 the National Commission on Public Events and Radio Broadcasting shut down dozens of programs with religious-magic content.

The judiciary, headed by a supreme court, is politicized and riddled with corruption, although significantly less so in recent years. The courts offer little recourse to those without money or influence, although reforms implemented of late show some promise in increasing citizen access to the courts. Prisons, in which nine out of ten inmates have not been convicted of a crime, are grossly overcrowded, with poor health and sanitary conditions, and violence is routine. Torture and arbitrary arrest lead the complaints against the security forces, which are militarized and sometimes operate outside the civilian chain of command. Extrajudicial execution of common criminals is a problem that remains largely unaddressed, in part because the government, the media, and others appear concerned that attention to the issue will negatively affect the key tourism industry. Police salaries are low, and there is a high level of corruption throughout the country's law enforcement institutions.

A major transit country for South American drugs to the United States, the Dominican Republic serves local, Puerto Rican, and Colombian drug smugglers as both a command-and-control center and a transshipment point, mostly for cocaine. The government estimates that some 20 percent of the drugs entering the country remain there

as "payment in kind." This phenomenon has contributed to increasing drug abuse and street crime.

In September 1997, then President Leonel Fernandez moved to clean up the country's antinarcotics forces and to restructure the supreme court in an effort to root out corruption and to reduce growing complaints of human rights abuses by the police. He led the effort in his role as chairman of the National Judicial Council, which oversees judicial appointments. Responsibility for appointing judges was in the past held by the senate, which tended to increase politicization and de-emphasize professional criteria. The supreme court has now assumed this role. However, to date the government has not prosecuted any senior official for engaging in, encouraging, or in any way facilitating the production or distribution of illegal drugs, or the laundering of proceeds from its sale.

Labor unions are well organized. Although legally permitted to strike, they are often subject to government crackdowns. Peasant unions are occasionally targeted by armed groups working for large landowners.

Haitian migration to the Dominican Republic has long been a source of tension between the two countries. Their shared border area lacks effective controls; drugs, arms and commercial contraband flow easily across it. An estimated one million Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent live in the Dominican Republic, where many work on sugar plantations and in construction. Haitians working in the Dominican Republic are subject to exploitation, harassment from the police, and deportation. Each year thousands of Haitians and their Dominican-born children are deported. Most of the deportations come after the military rounds up people with dark skin, since Dominicans tend to be lighter skinned than Haitians. Recent efforts by the Dominican authorities to improve control of cross-border migration have created resentment from Haitian workers seeking to escape the lack of opportunities in their own country. In July 2001, human rights groups complained that Dominican authorities had continued their policy of mass deportations despite assurances that they were trying to improve the situation.

Violence and discrimination against women is a serious problem, as are trafficking in women and girls, child prostitution, and child abuse. The Dominican Republic is primarily a source country for trafficked women between the ages of 18 and 25, and girls as young as 15. The women are trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation and domestic servitude to Europe, the Lesser Antilles, and in some cases, to Argentina and Israel. The trade with Argentina is also believed to be drug related.



## East Timor

Polity: International  
protectorate  
Economy: Capitalist-statist  
Population: 800,000  
PPP: na  
Life Expectancy: 48  
Ethnic Groups: Twelve ethnic groups, including Tetum,  
Mambai, Bunak  
Capital: Dili

Political Rights: 5\*  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Partly Free



**Ratings Change:** East Timor's political rights rating improved from 6 to 5 due to the elections for a constituent assembly.

### Overview:

Following elections for a constituent assembly in August 2001, East Timor prepared for full independence in May 2002. Mari Alkatiri, the secretary-general of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (*Fretilin*), was named to head a new council of ministers that will act as a cabinet. Fretelin won the most seats in the assembly. Late in the year, the United Nations was winding down its transitional administration that is preparing the former Indonesian territory for independence, while Jose Gusmao, the charismatic former guerrilla leader, was widely expected to win a presidential election that is likely to be held just before independence.

The Portuguese colonized the eastern part of Timor Island in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After Portugal abandoned its colony in early 1975, two armed Timorese groups, the leftist Fretelin and the right-wing Timorese Democratic Union, fought for control of the territory. Indonesia invaded in December 1975 and formally annexed East Timor in 1976 as its 27th province. Indonesian forces committed widespread abuses against the local population while waging counterinsurgency operations against Fretelin's armed wing, the East Timorese National Liberation Army (*Falintil*). By 1979, civil conflict and famine had killed up to 200,000 Timorese. For the next two decades, the poorly equipped Falintil waged a low-grade insurgency from the rugged interior.

In one of the bloodiest incidents under Indonesian rule, soldiers killed dozens of civilians in November 1991 who were holding a peaceful pro-independence march in the territorial capital of Dili. The 1996 Nobel Peace Prize went to Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo, the East Timor Roman Catholic bishop, and Jose Ramos Horta, the leading East Timorese independence activist. The award helped raise international awareness of Indonesian abuses in the territory.

East Timor's road to independence began in January 1999, when Indonesian President B. J. Habibie announced that he favored letting the East Timorese decide their political future in a referendum. This reversed the hardline integration policy of Habibie's predecessor, President Suharto. Yet Habibie had little control over the Indonesian military, which provided weapons to militias that began attacking pro-independence activists and suspected supporters. During the summer, militia fighters and soldiers forced some 40,000 to 60,000 villagers to flee their homes. Amid the violence, 78.5 percent of

participating voters in an August 30, 1999, referendum chose independence over autonomy. The turnout was 98.5 percent. In early September, militia fighters and Indonesian forces killed up to 1,000 civilians, drove more than 250,000 others into Indonesia's West Timor, and destroyed up to 70 percent of East Timor's roads and buildings. An Australian-led multinational force entered East Timor under UN auspices on September 20 and soon restored order. In October, Indonesia formally ceded East Timor to the UN.

Since relieving the Australian-led force in early 2000, a UN force of peacekeeping troops and civilian police has provided security in the territory. In the most serious threat to peace, UN troops fought a series of clashes with militia fighters near the border with Indonesia's West Timor in the summer of 2000 that killed at least three peacekeepers. The militia fighters operated out of East Timorese refugee camps in West Timor, where they harassed refugees and, in early September 2000, led a mob attack that killed four UN staff at a refugee office in Atambua. As of late 2001, an estimated 50,000 East Timorese, including some pro-Jakarta militia members, remained in West Timor. The UN is training a small East Timorese defense force, made up largely of former guerrillas, and is likely to maintain some troops in the country after independence on May 20, 2002, to help ensure the fledgling nation's security.

Fretilin's 55 seats in the August 30 elections left it short of the 60 seats it would need to dictate the terms of the constitution being drafted by the 88-member constituent assembly. Ending months of speculation, the popular Gusmao announced just days before the August vote that he would run for the presidency in 2002.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

East Timor is governed by an interim United Nations authority that has a Security Council mandate to set up a democratic government and prepare the territory for full independence. The authority, the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), is headed by Sergio Vieira de Mello of Portugal, a senior UN official. Many of the smaller parties accused Fretilin of widespread intimidation during the campaign for the constituent assembly elections.

UNTAET and East Timorese leaders have set up, from scratch, courts and other basic government institutions. The nascent judiciary, however, is "fragile and vulnerable to interference," with inexperienced judicial officials lacking support and training and being subjected to threats and intimidation, Amnesty International warned in July. Moreover, in some cases authorities have taken little or no action against criminal suspects who belong to unofficial security groups linked to political parties, former Falintil members, political leaders, or church officials, Amnesty said. In a further problem, legal officials are having difficulty recruiting enough qualified judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers, contributing to delays in most criminal cases.

In a major step toward bringing to justice those behind the 1999 violence, a UN tribunal in Dili sentenced a former pro-Indonesia militiaman to 12 years in prison in January for killing an independence supporter. The conviction, the first stemming from the 1999 atrocities, was followed by the February sentencing of a member of the pro-independence Falintil militia to seven years in prison for killing a pro-Indonesian militia member. Later in the year, the tribunal handed down its first verdict on crimes against humanity. It sentenced ten members of a pro-Indonesian militia to jail terms of up to 33 years. However, the tribunal's work was hampered by inadequate resources and

Jakarta's reluctance to extradite suspects to East Timor or allow UN investigators to question suspects in Indonesia. Investigations into hundreds of cases will not have been completed or even begun by the time UNTAET's mandate ends. The court, which has international and local judges, was set up by UNTAET in 2000 to try suspects accused of mass killings and other serious human rights violations in 1999.

The worst abuses in 1999 began immediately after the UN announced on September 4 that the East Timorese had voted overwhelmingly for independence from Jakarta. Indonesian soldiers and army-backed militias killed, raped, and tortured civilians and forced hundreds of thousands of people into the mountains or into West Timor and other parts of Indonesia, according to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other groups. Militia forces later seized control of most camps in West Timor and intimidated and in some cases killed, abducted, and raped refugees to prevent them from returning to East Timor. Prior to the referendum, militia fighters killed, raped, arbitrarily detained, tortured, and otherwise abused pro-independence activists and alleged supporters, as well as human rights monitors, journalists, humanitarian workers, and UN staff.

Denied voices or roles under the Indonesian occupation, numerous nongovernmental groups are now providing social services and monitoring and promoting human rights. Most are dependent on foreign aid. Domestic violence against women is a significant problem in East Timor, and traditional customs prevent women in some regions and villages from inheriting or owning property, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on human rights in East Timor in 2000. The report also noted that local gangs have harassed the tiny ethnic Malay Muslim minority, while some ethnic Chinese businessmen have faced extortion and harassment.

Under a treaty reached with Australia in June 2001 on sharing offshore oil and gas resources, Dili will receive 90 percent of the revenues from the production of oil and gas in the Timor Sea. In the two decades after 2004, the fields are expected to bring in \$180 million a year for East Timor. Until the revenues come on stream, the impoverished country is likely to continue depending on foreign aid for virtually its entire budget. Given this reality, the World Bank called on international donors in June to provide the balance of the \$170 million in aid pledged in 1999 to East Timor. Most of the money will be spent rebuilding roads, hospitals, and schools. The bank did not say how much aid has yet to be delivered. An estimated two-thirds to three-fourths of East Timor's labor force is engaged in subsistence agriculture, according to the U.S. State Department report.

## Ecuador

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 12,900,000  
 PPP: \$2,994  
 Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (65 percent), Indian (25 percent), white (7 percent), black (3 percent)

Capital: Quito

Trend Arrow: Ecuador received a downward trend arrow due to increasing reports of the training of Ecuadoran nationals by Colombian paramilitary forces and the growing militarization of northern border areas made insecure by the presence of both the paramilitaries and their guerrilla foes from Colombia.



### Overview:

In 2001, President Gustavo Noboa won plaudits for leading Ecuador out of its worst recession in 70 years, although the economic growth remained sluggish. Ecuador's political turmoil appeared unabated: the country's elite remained highly fractionalized, political party discipline was weak, and coalitions were largely ever-changing alliances at the mercy of charismatic leaders as well as current events. In January and February of 2001, mass protests by indigenous peoples demanding alleviation of poverty, respect for their lands and natural resources, the equitable administration of justice, and an end to official corruption rocked much of the country, including the capital. Demonstrators clashed with police, occupying buildings and blocking highways. For most of 2001, Noboa, whose term lasts until January 2003, faced ongoing grassroots rebellion against his proposed fiscal reforms. Meanwhile, both rural and urban crime rates—traditionally low—soared, and a feared spillover effect from neighboring Colombia's civil and drug wars appeared to be becoming a reality.

Established in 1830 after achieving independence from Spain in 1822, the Republic of Ecuador has endured many interrupted presidencies and military governments. The last military regime gave way to civilian rule when a new constitution was approved by referendum in 1978.

The constitution provides for a president elected for four years, with a runoff between two front-runners if no candidate wins a majority in the first round. The 77-member unicameral congress (National Chamber of Deputies) is composed of 65 members elected on a provincial basis every two years, and 12 elected nationally every four years.

The 1992 national elections were won overwhelming by Sixto Durán Ballen, whose Republican Union Party nonetheless earned only 13 of 77 legislative seats. Durán Ballen's term was marked by general strikes against his economic austerity measures, allegations of corruption, indigenous protests against business-backed land reform, and the impeachment of cabinet ministers by an opposition-controlled congress.

In the 1996 elections, Abdala Bucarám Ortiz, the flamboyant former mayor of Guayaquil known as "El Loco" (the Crazy Man), won 54 percent of the vote in runoff

elections, carrying 20 of Ecuador's 21 provinces. Once in office, Bucarám, who had previously fled the country twice under threat of prosecution for corruption, applied a stringent, market-oriented austerity program. The authoritarian flavor and frenetic corruption of his government sparked mass protests. In February 1997, a 48-hour general strike led by Indians and students prompted congress to depose Bucarám on grounds of "mental incapacity." Congressional speaker Fabian Alarcón was selected as his replacement after the military high command jettisoned its support for Bucarám's vice president and constitutionally mandated successor, Rosalía Arteaga.

In July 1997 Alarcón, himself accused of employing more than 1,000 no-show employees while speaker, dismissed the supreme court, ostensibly to carry out the "depoliticization" of the justice system mandated by the referendum, but in effect removing the chief judge, who was pressing to have the interim president investigated. Despite his efforts to be allowed to finish out Bucarám's four-year term, Alarcón was met with strong political and civic opposition.

In May 1998, Jamil Mahuad, the mayor of Quito, posted a first-place finish in presidential elections in which the runner-up was Alvaro Noboa, who, despite being the candidate of Bucarám's Partido Roldosista Ecuatoriano (PRE), promised that neither the party nor the former president would play any part in his campaign. Mahuad, a Harvard-educated lawyer, bested Noboa, a banana tycoon, 51 to 49 percent in the July 12 runoff election.

Mahuad faced Ecuador's worst economic crisis in decades. The government was torn by savage infighting and fallout from regional tensions, and often faced violent protests from students, transport workers, and rural Indians. After partially defaulting on its foreign debt in September, the government sought to restructure its external and internal debt through talks with creditors. In November the army high command denounced what it called irresponsible conduct by "certain leaders" that, it said, was threatening the existence of the country's democratic institutions. Citing jurisdictional issues, Mahuad refused to testify on charges he and various aides had kept \$3.1 million in campaign contributions for themselves.

Vice President Gustavo Noboa took over as president in January 2000 after demonstrators forced the unpopular Mahuad to step down. Protests by indigenous groups, reportedly manipulated by putschist senior army commanders, were joined by significant numbers of midlevel military officers, and Mahuad's fate was sealed when police refused to obey government commands to restore order. The junior officers, many of Native American ancestry, concerned that Mahuad's government was spending more and more money bailing out local banks while it reduced the armed forces budget, made common cause with indigenous leaders representing as many as four million of some of the country's poorest inhabitants in the effort to overthrow Mahuad. However, despite the protestors' acclamation of a three-person "junta" that included one senior military officer, congress met in emergency session in Guayaquil to ratify Noboa, who did not belong to any political party, as the new constitutional president.

In February, Gustavo Noboa, Ecuador's fifth president in three years, decorated the putschist General Carlos Mendoza for "professional excellence," in an apparent attempt to heal the schisms opened within the armed forces by the partially successful action against civilian rule. Official adoption by Ecuador of the U.S. dollar as its national currency—it was the first South American country to do so—was intended to put a break on a wild inflationary spiral and a further depreciation of the currency.

However, the dollarization gambit also made Ecuador more attractive to international money launderers and was the subject of continued protests by Indians and leftist-led labor unions throughout 2000, who claimed the move hurt the poor by causing prices to rise to international levels, while eliminating critical subsidies for basic food and services.

For most of August, the Ecuadoran congress split into two separate entities in a dispute over the privatization of 18 electricity companies and the state-owned oil company. In September 2000 Transparency International ranked Ecuador as Latin America's most corrupt nation. In late 2000, the Ecuadoran government sought to cope with tens of thousands of Colombian refugees seeking refuge from escalating warfare between guerrilla, paramilitary, and army forces in their own country.

Security along the border with Colombia, a major transit area for drugs, chemicals, arms, and munitions, continued to deteriorate throughout 2001. Because of the cocaine eradication program of the Colombian government's Plan Colombia targets Putumayo department, which lies to the north of Ecuador's Sucumbíos province, Colombian drug traffickers, coca farmers, and leftist guerrillas who work in the drug trade were forced to seek refuge in Ecuador. Right-wing paramilitary groups, seeking to destroy real and suspected guerrillas' links to local residents, also infiltrated northern Ecuador to target locals there who they believed might be cooperating with the guerrillas. In response, the government moved more than 10,000 troops to the northern border provinces. In June 2001 it was reported that residents in the troubled region were forming self-defense groups to protect themselves from the Colombians. That same month, the government announced that it would add 24,000 new officers to the National Police force by 2006. In September, Luis Maldonado became the first Native American ever to hold a major cabinet post—that of social welfare minister.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens can change their government through elections, although the January 2000 coup attempt represented a clear reversal of democratic trends in Ecuador. The 1998 campaign had seemed to mark a return to electoral means, rather than armed force, as a way of resolving political differences. Jamil Mahuad's presidential victory came after Alvaro Noboa ran what is believed to be the most expensive national campaign in Ecuadoran history. In 1998, the national constituent assembly decided to retain Ecuador's presidential system. It also mandated that in the year 2002, a presidential candidate will need to win 40 percent of valid votes in first-round balloting and exceed by 10 percent those received by the nearest rival in order to avoid a runoff.

Constitutional guarantees regarding freedom of expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties are generally respected. However, for several years Ecuador appeared to be virtually ungovernable as a result of near constant gridlock among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, particularly through the use, by congress, of easy and sometimes frivolous votes of censure and impeachment in order to block executive initiatives. In August 2001, President Gustavo Noboa unveiled a series of political reforms he said would modernize the country's political system in the run-up to the October 2002 elections.

The judiciary, generally undermined by the corruption afflicting the entire political system, is headed by a supreme court that, until 1997, was appointed by the legislature and thus subject to political influence. In reforms approved by referendum in May 1997, power to appoint judges was given over to the supreme court, with congress given a

final chance to choose that 31-member body based on recommendations made by a special selection commission. In a positive development, in July 2001, a new criminal justice procedural code entered into force that fundamentally changes Ecuador's legal system. The new code empowers prosecutors (*fiscales*) to investigate and prosecute crimes and alters the role of judges to neutral arbiters presiding over oral trials.

Evidence suggests that drug traffickers have penetrated the political system through campaign financing, and sectors of the police and military through bribery. Ecuador is a transshipment point for cocaine passing from neighboring Colombia to the United States and a money laundering haven. Widespread corruption in Ecuador's customs service led the government to privatize it in May 1999. New streamlined cargo-clearance procedures were implemented, and customs has also been increasingly cooperative with law enforcement agencies in exchanging information on inbound and outbound shipments. In 2000 the U.S. government terminated technical assistance to the chief prosecutor's office (*fiscalia general*) because of concerns about high-level corruption in cases involving politically powerful individuals accused of banking fraud and embezzlement. The dollarization of the Ecuadoran economy appears to have had the unintended effect of making the country more attractive for money laundering and other financial criminal activity. Although drug-money laundering is illegal under the 1990 narcotics law, the Ecuadorian government has no effective means of investigating or prosecuting such crimes.

In 1999, incursions from both Colombian guerrilla groups and their paramilitary enemies into Ecuadoran territory added to regional concern about the extent to which the neighboring country's civil war would affect public safety and the survival of democratic institutions. Violent crime has undermined public faith in the police to maintain order. In recent years a sharp increase was reported in the number of handgun licenses issued by the military. The military is responsible for a significant percentage of abuses, particularly when it is deployed during states of emergency. Abuses, including torture, are committed with relative impunity, with police and military personnel tried in military rather than civilian courts. Experts say that the confusion between military and police roles, justified as needed to confront the current situation of lawlessness facing the country, is unlikely to promote healthy professional relations between the two forces, will tend to demoralize the police, and will work against strategies to effectively involve the community in the fight against crime.

Ecuador has numerous human rights organizations, and despite occasional acts of intimidation, they report on arbitrary arrests and instances of police brutality and military misconduct, although in 2001 intimidation of rights monitors from a variety of sources was reported to be increasing.

Indigenous peoples are the frequent victims of abuse by military officers working in league with large landowners during disputes over land. A consequence of the continuing lack of access of Native Americans to effective systems of justice emerged in 1998, when Ecuadoran Indians held several U.S. oil company employees against their will, in support of a demand that the firm pay royalties to, and contribute to health care, education, and housing for, Indians. Vigilante acts committed in Native American communities also appear to be on the upswing in recent years. On a positive note, although Ecuador's large Native American communities had traditionally shunned participation in the national political system, their political involvement has increased dramatically in the last decade.

The media are mostly private and outspoken. The government controls radio frequencies. Labor unions are well organized and have the right to strike, although the labor code limits public sector strikes. Workers in the country's booming flower industry are routinely exposed to harmful pesticides.

Violence against women is common in Ecuador and frequently occurs on holidays, when alcohol is consumed in large quantities. The problem is particularly acute in Indian areas, where women often do not report abuse to the authorities in part because they are afraid of harming their community's reputation. Homosexuals are also often the victims of police brutality and harassment. Sixty-seven percent of Ecuadoran live in poverty, according to official statistics.

## Egypt

Polity: Dominant party (military-influenced)  
 Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 6\*  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Not Free  
 Population: 69,800,000  
 PPP: \$3,420  
 Life Expectancy: 66

Ethnic Groups: Eastern Hamitic stock [Egyptian, Bedouin, Berber] (99 percent), other (1 percent)

Capital: Cairo

Ratings Change: Egypt's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 because of increasing crackdowns on free expression and independent organizations, and mass trials of defendants before military courts.



### Overview:

International fear of terrorism following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States gave the government of Hosni Mubarak reason to increase its suppression of domestic opposition in 2001. Following the attacks, hundreds of civilians were rounded up and brought before military courts for alleged ties to militant Islamists. The crackdown signaled a departure from the relatively lenient official attitude toward groups such as the *Gamaat Islamiya* (Islamic Group), which has observed a ceasefire for the past three years.

Egypt gained formal independence from Great Britain in 1922, though the latter continued to exercise gradually dwindling control until its surrender of the Suez Canal Zone in 1956. Colonel Gamel Abdel Nasser became head of state in 1954, after leading a coup that overthrew the monarchy, and ruled until his death in 1970. A constitution adopted in 1971 under Nasser's successor, Anwar al-Sadat, grants full executive powers to the president, who is nominated by the 454-member People's Assembly and elected to a six-year term in a national referendum. Sadat was assassinated by Islamic militants in 1981 for making peace with Israel. Under Mubarak, the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) continues to dominate a tightly controlled political system.

In the early 1990s, the radical *Gamaat Islamiya* tapped into popular discontent with official corruption, high unemployment, and widespread poverty. In a campaign to



establish an Islamic republic by force, it escalated attacks on police, Coptic Christians, and tourists. The government's response has been the brutal repression of all forms of political dissent. Thousands of suspected militants have been tried and jailed without due process, and more than 70 political prisoners have been executed under special military courts set up to handle terrorist offenses. The nonviolent Muslim Brotherhood, a fundamentalist movement dating from the 1920s that is officially outlawed but generally tolerated, has been a particular target because of its popularity.

Years of repression and a relentless military campaign have largely eradicated the threat of Islamist violence. In addition, ideological rifts and policy disputes within the major extremist groups, Gamaat Islamiya and Islamic Jihad, have left both groups divided and ineffective. Still, the government uses the threat of extremism to justify its intolerance of all opposition. Mubarak has kept emergency law in place since he came to power, and authorities use it frequently to crack down on democratic opposition as well as suspected Muslim extremists.

Still, Mubarak makes certain concessions to Islamists. He has distanced himself from, and even apologized for, Sadat's peace with Israel, effectively maintaining a "cold peace." He allows Muslim clerics to ban books deemed heretical or insulting to Islam, and he encourages rabidly anti-Jewish and anti-American sentiment in educational curricula and media. Articles denying the Holocaust and defending Hitler appear in even the most "moderate" newspapers. Mubarak has also sanctioned severe repression against Egyptian Christians, who are occasionally massacred by Islamists while security forces look the other way. Such appeasement of Islamists, whose anger is directed mainly at the United States and Israel, serves to bolster Mubarak's religious legitimacy and to deflect criticism of Egypt's economic and social ills away from the government.

While anti-American and anti-Jewish incitement flourish under Egypt's version of free speech, the voices of democratic opposition face increasing repression. Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a prominent sociologist and the founder of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies, was sentenced to seven years' hard labor in 2001 for "defaming Egypt" and accepting unauthorized foreign funding. Ibrahim, a one-time friend and adviser to Mubarak, has criticized the government's failure to establish democracy, investigated and denounced discrimination against Egyptian Christians, advocated normalization with Israel, and monitored elections. Twenty-seven of his colleagues at the Ibn Khaldun Center received sentences ranging from one to five years, some suspended. In response to the international outcry from human rights groups over Ibrahim's arrest and sentencing, Mubarak asked, "Why is everyone so concerned about this stupid man?"

The economy continues to suffer from corruption and mismanagement. Unemployment is estimated at up to 20 percent and expected to rise as the job market fails to absorb hundreds of thousands of university graduates each year. Reforms aimed at liberalization, attracting foreign investment, and privatization have progressed slowly because of fears that restructuring might lead to layoffs. The British company Sainsbury invested \$140 million to set up a supermarket chain in Egypt, but pulled out because of protests and boycotts by Egyptians after a rumor began in late 2000 that the head of the company was Jewish. Tourism and foreign investment have both suffered because of regional violence and an increasingly tense domestic political climate.

Many worry that the Egyptian government's antidemocratic behavior, concessions to Islam, and failure to address poverty work to promote Islamic fundamentalism. Mean-

while, public hostility over perceived U.S. support for Israel against Palestinians and a U.N. sanctions policy that is believed to have caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children intensified as fighting between Palestinians and Israelis escalated during 2001. This hostility came into sharp focus after the September 11 attacks on America by terrorists apparently taking orders from Saudi-born terrorist-in-exile Osama bin Laden, and caused Mubarak to downplay his relationship with the United States. While the general consensus among Egyptians was that the United States should learn from the September 11 attacks and revise its policies in the Middle East, Mubarak denounced the attacks and pledged support for America's war on terrorism. However, he said that he would not commit troops to the effort, and he pushed for a stronger U.S. role in obtaining a just settlement for Palestinians.

Egypt continued to play the role of mediator in regional disputes. A Libyan-Egyptian initiative to end the civil war in Sudan continued, as did an Egyptian-Jordanian effort to bring Palestinians and Israelis to peace talks as the Palestinian uprising entered its second year.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Egyptians cannot change their government democratically. The constitution does not provide for a presidential election; instead, the elected People's Assembly nominates one candidate to be confirmed in a national referendum. The assembly, or lower house of parliament, has limited influence in economic, security, and foreign policy; almost all legislation is initiated by the executive. In July 2000, the constitutional court effectively invalidated the parliament elected in 1995 by ruling that the traditional system of interior ministry supervision of elections was unconstitutional, and that elections should be supervised by the judiciary. Consequently, general elections were held in three rounds during October and November 2000 so that a relatively small number of judges could supervise all polling stations. Despite this measure, the elections were regarded as neither free nor fair. One observer sent by Amnesty International was assaulted at a Cairo polling station, and there were credible reports that police used intimidation and roadblocks to keep people from voting. Eleven people died in election-related unrest.

The 264-member Shura Council, or upper house of parliament, has no legislative authority. Its role is restricted to issuing opinions on topics of its choosing. Two-thirds of its members are elected (one-third every three years) to terms of six years, and the president appoints one-third. Shura council elections in May and June 2001 were monitored by judges, which decreased vote rigging, but police harassed voters and blocked entry to polling stations. Riot police clashed with voters and used tear gas to disperse them.

The NDP dominates the People's Assembly, the Shura Council, and local government. Political opposition remains weak and ineffective. Requests to form political parties are routinely denied by the NDP-controlled Political Parties Committee (PPC), usually because their platforms are deemed unoriginal. The PPC has allowed the legal establishment of two political parties in the last 21 years, bringing the total to 16. In 2000, it froze the activities of the Islamist Labor Party in an apparent attempt to silence opposition prior to parliamentary elections. The popular Muslim Brotherhood may not compete in elections because of a ban on religion-based parties, but its members may run as independents. Muslim Brothers are frequently rounded up and arrested prior to elections. Still, they took 17 seats in the 2000 People's Assembly elections to become the largest opposition party in the assembly.

Emergency law has been renewed every three years since Mubarak took office. Its provisions allow for the arrest without charge of suspected opponents of the regime, as well as their families and acquaintances. The Anti-Terror Law criminalizes even suspected association with the Muslim Brotherhood. Torture, poor prison conditions, and lack of adequate food and medical care are pervasive in custody. In February 2001, Amnesty International issued a report describing torture and ill-treatment in Egyptian police stations and detention centers, including beatings, electric shocks, and threats of rape against detainees or their female relatives, as "widespread and indiscriminate." The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR) issued a similar report in June, entitled "Detention in Egypt Is a Crime against Freedom and Personal Safety." In a January 2001 report, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture cited 32 cases of death in custody due to torture between 1997 and 1999. Victims may receive financial compensation through civil courts, but authorities are rarely held responsible for abuse of detainees.

The judiciary operates with limited independence. The president appoints both the general prosecutor and the head of the court of cassation, Egypt's highest court. Under a 1996 law, the president may refer civilian cases to military courts. Since 1992, suspected Gamaat Islamiya and Muslim Brotherhood activists have been tried in military courts, where due process rights are severely curtailed. On November 18, 94 civilians appeared before a military court, charged with having connections to armed Islamist groups. Several of the defendants claimed to have been tortured while held in incommunicado detention. Another 170 defendants, some of whom had reportedly been held for years without trial, were also due in court, and 22 men, including doctors, professors, and engineers, were referred by presidential decree to a military court on charges of belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood. Amnesty International condemned the trials of civilians in military courts as a violation of international standards for a fair trial. There is no appellate process for verdicts by military courts; instead, verdicts are subject to review by other military judges and confirmed by the president. While Gamaat convicts have been executed frequently, no Muslim Brothers have been sentenced to death.

In May 2001, authorities arrested 52 allegedly gay men for immoral behavior and contempt of religion. One defendant, a 15-year-old, was tried separately because of his age and sentenced in September to three years' imprisonment. Fifty-one of the defendants were tried in state security courts, where verdicts may not be appealed. Twenty-three were convicted in November and sentenced to between one and five years' imprisonment. The remaining defendants were acquitted. Four more men were arrested on similar charges on November 10.

The Press Law, the Publications Law, the Penal code, and libel laws restrict press freedom. Criticism of the president, the government, and foreign heads of state may result in fines or imprisonment. The government owns stock in the three major daily newspapers, and the president appoints their editors in chief. Opposition parties publish newspapers with government subsidies. The Labor Party newspaper *al-Shaab*, which was closed in 2000 along with Labor's activities, remained closed in 2001 despite a court ruling authorizing its distribution. The government's Supreme Press Council decided that as long as Labor activities are frozen, the paper may not print. The government monopolizes newspaper printing and distribution. Debate on a draft law that would ban "any document whose distribution is likely to harm the nation's national security or its military, political, diplomatic, social, or economic standing" was postponed indefinitely in March.

Egypt has seen a recent increase in the censorship of books considered insulting or blasphemous to Islam. In January, the ministry of culture banned three books and fired the officials deemed responsible for their publication. The EOHR reported that numerous books and publications were banned from the Cairo International Book Fair in January and February 2001 for alleged indecency, and the writer Salah Abdel Mohsen, a novelist, was sentenced in January to three years' imprisonment-with-labor for "defaming Islam" and "disseminating extremist beliefs with the intention of causing religious upheaval." Feminist writer Nawal al-Saadawi was sued in April for apostasy by a conservative lawyer, who also called on the court to find her legally unfit to remain married to a Muslim. The case was thrown out in July.

Emergency law prohibits public meetings and election rallies. The sentencing of Saad Eddin Ibrahim and his colleagues from the Ibn Khaldun Center—which remains closed—is part of an ongoing campaign of harassment of nongovernmental organizations critical of the government. In 2000, the EOHR was refused legal registration and its secretary-general was charged with receiving unauthorized foreign funding. The Egyptian Bar Association, which was suspended in 1995 and then taken over by the government to limit Muslim Brotherhood influence, was allowed to elect its board in February 2001. The Muslim Brotherhood again won effective control of the union.

Women face discrimination in legal and social matters. Foreign-born husbands and children of Egyptian women are denied Egyptian citizenship and therefore lack the same rights to education and employment as Egyptians. A woman must have the permission of a male relative to travel abroad. A ban on female genital mutilation took effect in 1997, though it is reportedly not widely enforced. In 1999, the government repealed a law allowing a rapist to avoid punishment by marrying his victim. In a society that links a family's honor to the chastity of its women, a rape victim might consent to marry her attacker to avoid disgracing, or perhaps being murdered by, her family. "Honor killings" occur in both Muslim and Christian communities. A personal status law adopted in 2000 makes it easier for a woman to obtain a divorce and allows her to call upon the state to garnishee her husband's wages to help support her. In 2001, Muslim clerics banned surrogate motherhood.

Islam is the state religion. The *imams* (spiritual leaders) of licensed mosques are chosen and paid by the government, which also monitors sermons for extremist or other unauthorized content. Most Egyptians are Sunni Muslim. Orthodox and other Coptic Christians constitute about ten percent of the population. The Jewish community reportedly numbers about 200, and there are small numbers of Shiite Muslims and Bahais.

Muslims have murdered, kidnapped, raped, and forcibly converted scores of Copts in recent years, and burned or vandalized Copt homes, businesses, and churches. The government has seized church-owned land, has closed churches, and frequently uses an Ottoman-era law to deny permission to build or repair churches. In February 2001, a court in southern Egypt acquitted all but four of nearly 100 people charged in connection with several days of riots that killed at least 21 Copts and one Muslim in December 1999 and January 2000. The harshest sentence handed down was ten years' imprisonment for one man, who was charged with accidental homicide rather than murder. The supreme court ordered a retrial, which began in November.

The 1976 law on labor unions sets numerous restrictions on the formation and operation of unions, and the conduct of union elections. The government-backed Egyptian Trade Union Federation is the only legal labor federation. Emergency law and the

Penal code prohibit strikes. However, journalists staged a sit-in at the Cairo Journalists Union in March to protest their suspension from an economic daily for demanding employee rights. A bill currently under consideration would maintain the prohibition on strikes and the lack of trade union pluralism.

Child labor is a serious problem. By law, children under 14 are not permitted to work, except in agriculture, where they may take seasonal jobs at 12 as long as they do not miss school. The law is routinely ignored, however. Human Rights Watch issued a report in January 2001 criticizing child labor practices. According to the report, more than one million children under age 12 work in Egypt's cotton fields, where they work 11-hour days, are exposed to dangerous pesticides, and may be beaten by employers. With poverty and unemployment pervasive in Egypt, many children are encouraged to forego school and earn money for their families.

## El Salvador

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 6,400,000  
 PPP: \$4,344  
 Life Expectancy: 70  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (90 percent),  
 Indian and white (10 percent)  
 Capital: San Salvador



### Overview:

Public security and disaster relief headed up the list of most pressing issues in El Salvador in 2001, as rivalries between the country's powerful gangs and an upsurge in extortive kidnappings and murders, particularly in rural areas, appeared to be too much for the country's law enforcement agencies to handle. In early 2001, a series of earthquakes left nearly 2,000 people dead or missing, 25 percent of private homes destroyed or badly damaged, and 1.5 million homeless.

Independence from the Captaincy General of Guatemala was declared in 1841, and the Republic of El Salvador was established in 1859. More than a century of civil strife and military rule followed.

Elected civilian rule was established in 1984. The 1983 constitution, and subsequent reforms, provide for a president elected for a five-year term and an 84-member, unicameral national assembly elected for three years. More than a decade of civil war (which left more than 70,000 dead) ended with the United Nations-mediated peace accords signed in 1992 by the Frente Farabundo Marti (FMLN) guerrillas and the conservative government of President Alfredo Cristiani.

The FMLN participated in the 1994 elections, backing its former ally Ruben Zamora of the Democratic Convergence (CD) for president and running a slate of legislative candidates. The incumbent party, Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA), nominated San Salvador Mayor Armando Calderon Sol. The Christian Democrats (PDC)

nominated Fidel Cavez Mena. The PDC had previously held power under President Jose Napoleon Duarte (1984-1989). The well-oiled ARENA political machine sounded populist themes and attacked the FMLN as Communists and terrorists. The FMLN-CD coalition offered a progressive but moderate platform and called for compliance with the peace accords. Calderon Sol won just under 50 percent, setting up a runoff against Zamora, who had come in second with 25 percent. In the runoff, Calderon Sol defeated Zamora, 68 to 32 percent.

In the March 16, 1997, elections ARENA won 28 congressional seats, 11 fewer than in 1994, to the FMLN's 27, with other parties splitting the difference. The FMLN also dramatically improved its municipal presence, winning 2 of the 3 largest cities (in coalition with other parties), 6 of 14 departmental capitals, and 10 of the 19 municipalities in San Salvador department. At the same time, ARENA suffered significant reversals, reflected in its having won 35 percent of the vote, as compared with 45 percent in previous polls.

In 1998, the FMLN's electoral chances in the following year's elections appeared to dim, as the party split into hardline Marxist and reformist camps. Although social democratic leader Facundo Guardado, himself a former guerrilla leader and a leading reformist, emerged as the party's presidential nominee, business and social sectors worried that the FMLN was still committed to social revolution.

Francisco Flores, a 39-year-old philosopher, and former president of the legislature, the ARENA candidate, swept to victory in the March 1999 presidential elections, beating Guardado in the first round of voting, 51.4 to 28.9 percent, in contrast to the near tie voting two years earlier. After his inauguration, Flores promised that public security would be a priority in his administration; meanwhile, the FMLN fell back into crisis.

However, in 2000 the FMLN was able to consolidate its electoral gains by becoming the leading party in the Salvadoran legislature, after winning 31 seats in the national assembly in the March 12 legislative elections. Although ARENA remained dominant in the municipal contests, taking 124 mayoralties, the FMLN also improved its showing, winning 78 races, 24 more than it had in 1997. A more hardline faction headed by Shafick Handal regained leadership of the FMLN, whose electoral luster was enhanced by the performance of the mayor of San Salvador, Hector Silva. Meanwhile Flores had to pay the costs of public weariness with ARENA'S decade-long rule, and faced stiff protests against his government's free market policies, particularly the privatization of some of the country's health services.

Because the FMLN won the greatest number of legislative seats in the 2000 elections, it claimed the right to lead the parliament, in accordance with a previous multi-party agreement. ARENA, however, brokered a deal with another right-wing group—the National Conciliation Party (PCN), which held 14 seats—in order to set up an annually rotating leadership position within the FMLN. As a result, the first legislative president, elected in May 2000, was from the PCN. When his term expired in 2001, ARENA elected its party leader, Walter Araujo, as president. In October 2001, Guardado was expelled from the FMLN amid a deepening rift between the party's old guard and reformists, as the latter pushed for a review of voter rolls to guard against fraud.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government democratically. The 1999 elections were free and fair, although there were charges that hurricane relief funds were used by ARENA to elect

Flores, and abstentions reached a new high. The 2000 legislative and local elections, which the FMLN turned into something of a referendum on ARENA'S performance, actually drew a higher turnout than the 1999 vote.

The constitution guarantees free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties, civic groups, and labor unions. Random killings, kidnappings, and other crimes, particularly in rural areas, have reinforced the country's reputation as one of the most violent countries in Latin America. The 1992 peace accords have led to a significant reduction in human rights violations; nevertheless, political expression and civil liberties are still circumscribed by sporadic political violence, repressive police measures, a mounting crime wave, and right-wing death squads, including "social cleansing" vigilante groups. The crime wave has also been fed by the deportation of hundreds of Salvadorans with criminal records from the United States. In 1999, the national assembly approved a law that allows civilians to possess war weapons, such as AK-47s and M-16s, for their own defense.

The problem of gang membership continues to be one of the most pressing public safety issues in El Salvador, home to Central America's best-organized and most virulent juvenile delinquency. More than 30,000 youths, nearly 20 percent of Salvadoran adolescents between the ages of 9 and 15, are believed to belong to gangs, known in Spanish as *maras*. Now, a decade after the problem first came to the fore as a major public safety issue, and as the older gang members become adults, the inter-gang violence characteristic of past years has escalated into myriad acts committed against the public, including kidnappings, car thefts, commercial robberies, and murder.

The judicial system remains ineffectual and corrupt, and a climate of impunity is pervasive. A first step toward judicial reform came in 1994 with the naming by the new legislature of a more politically representative 15-member supreme court, which controls the entire Salvadoran judiciary. Poor training and a lack of sustained disciplinary action for judges, as well as continued corruption, a lack of professionalism, and a painfully slow system of processing cases, greatly undermine public confidence in the justice system.

Although El Salvador is one of the few Latin American countries to restrict military involvement in internal security, the army occasionally joins the police in patrolling San Salvador and some rural districts in crackdowns on gang violence. Following the successful end of peace negotiations that brought the country's decade-long civil war to a close, a new civilian police force was created to replace the discredited public security forces. First deployed in March 1993, the National Civilian Police (PNC) currently has more than 18,000 officers. However, the PNC, which incorporated some former FMLN guerrillas into its ranks, has proved unable to curb the country's rampant crime while protecting human rights. The United States, through its Justice Department's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), led international support for the PNC and the National Public Security Academy (ANSP), and has provided more than \$30 million in nonlethal equipment and training since 1992. However, a shift in U.S. policymakers' attention from policing in El Salvador to the task of creating a civilian police force in Haiti in the mid-1990s bled resources from the Salvadoran training program at a critical time.

As the crime situation deteriorated, U.S.-funded plans to start innovative community policing programs that attack the gang problem head on were delayed, as were the training of criminal investigators and improvements in the training of police supervisors. Nearly a decade after they were created, both the ANSP and the PNC are strug-

gling to develop more experience in police techniques and procedures, as well as to streamline their operations and administration. Complaints of police brutality and corruption are widespread; scores of policemen have been imprisoned on rights charges. In June 2000 Flores announced that 24 senior- and middle-ranking PNC officers were being cashiered because of their involvement with organized crime. Prisons are overcrowded, conditions are wretched, and up to three-quarters of the prisoners are waiting to be charged and tried. Dozens of inmates have been killed during prison riots.

The media are privately owned. Left-wing journalists and publications are occasionally targets of intimidation. Although the country is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, evangelical Protestantism has made substantial inroads, leading to friction.

Labor, peasant, and university groups are well organized. The archaic labor code was reformed in 1994, but the new code lacks the approval of most unions because it significantly limits the right to organize in some areas, including the export-processing zones known as *maquiladoras*. Unions that strike are subject to intimidation and violent police crackdowns. Child labor is a problem, as is violence against women.

El Salvador is also the source and transit country for trafficking in persons, primarily women and girls, who are sent to Guatemala and other Central American countries. Trafficking also occurs within El Salvador. Most trafficked victims from outside the country are from Nicaragua, Honduras, and South America. El Salvador's criminal code specifically prohibits trafficking in persons, and the Penalties for doing so are comparable to those for rape and forcible sexual assault. The government is making significant efforts to stem the commerce but has not prosecuted cases against traffickers, in part because the law is new and also because of a lack of resources. However, special units to investigate and prosecute cases of violence against women and children, including trafficking, have been created.

## Equatorial Guinea

Polity: Presidential (military-dominated)	Political Rights: 6*
Economy: Capitalist- statist	Civil Liberties: 6*
Population: 500,000	Status: Not Free
PPP: \$4,676	
Life Expectancy: 50	
Ethnic Groups: Fang (83 percent), Bubi (10 percent), other (7 percent)	
Capital: Malabo	



**Ratings Change:** Equatorial Guinea's political rights and civil liberties ratings changed from 7 to 6 due to an easing of restrictions on political parties, the abolishment of a requirement that employees in the oil sector be ruling party members, and a general easing of repression.

### Overview:

President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in 2001 made some moves towards easing political repression by allowing a



main opposition party, the Convergence for Democracy and Social Progress, led by Placido Mico Abogo, to hold a rally in February. Although the climate of fear has not entirely evaporated, members of the political opposition are more willing to speak out. Under pressure from U.S. oil companies, which have invested at least \$5 billion in Equatorial Guinea since the mid-1990s, petroleum workers no longer have to be members of the ruling Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE). The use of torture by security forces has abated, but widespread abuses are still committed. Equatorial Guinea called on the international community in 2001 to provide technical assistance to help strengthen its human rights institutions. However, it also failed to respond to requests for information by the United Nations on the human rights situation there and delayed a visit to the country by a UN special representative. The UN said there was no sustained rule of law in Equatorial Guinea and called on the government to guarantee basic freedoms.

Equatorial Guinea achieved independence in 1968 following 190 years of Spanish rule. It has since been one of the world's most tightly closed and repressive societies. President Obiang seized power in 1979 by deposing and murdering his uncle, Francisco Macias Nguema. Pressure from donor countries demanding democratic reforms prompted Obiang to proclaim a new "era of pluralism" in January 1992. Political parties were legalized and multiparty elections announced, but in practice Obiang and his clique wield all power. The right of people to freely elect the country's leaders does not exist.

Equatorial Guinea is the continent's third largest oil producer and boasts one of the highest figures for per capita gross domestic product in Africa. The International Monetary Fund estimated that Equatorial Guinea's economy could grow by more than 50 percent in 2001. The start of offshore oil production in 1995 helped replace subsistence farming and timber as the economic linchpins. Authorities have made some improvements to the country's infrastructure, and the oil sector has led to more jobs, but the lives of most people have yet to change. Obiang's family wields almost total power and any serious attempt to attack corruption would probably bring Obiang under pressure from the ruling elite that has benefited from the oil boom.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Equatorial Guinea's citizens are unable to change their government through peaceful, democratic means. The February 1996 presidential election was neither free nor fair, and was marred by official intimidation, a near total boycott by the political opposition, and very low voter turnout. The March 1999 parliamentary elections were also marred by intimidation and fraud and were neither free nor fair. Many opposition candidates were arrested or confined to their villages prior to the polls. The ruling Democratic Party of Equatorial Guinea (PDGE) won 75 of 80 seats. Led by the Convergence for Social Democracy and the Popular Union, seven opposition parties claimed massive fraud, demanding an annulment, and those that won parliamentary seats refused to take them up. Amnesty International said at least 90 opposition party activists were detained for short periods in 1999. The November 1998 legislative elections for the 85-member House of People's Representatives were also manipulated by the regime.

Opposition parties were widely believed to have won overwhelmingly in the September 1995 municipal elections. The regime's official results, released 11 days after balloting, reported an unconvincing but unsurprising landslide victory by the PDGE. Municipal elections held in April 2000 produced similar results. The government announced a turnout of 91 percent and that the ruling party had won 98 percent of the vote.

The mechanics of the poll, however, were slightly better than in previous years. Opposition representatives were reportedly present at some polling stations as observers.

President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo wields broad decree-making powers and effectively bars public participation in the policymaking process. The November 1991 constitution prohibits the impeachment of the head of state. Opposition parties, while legal, may not be organized on an ethnic, regional, or provincial basis.

With partial exception for members of legalized political parties, freedom of association and assembly is restricted. Authorization must be obtained for any gathering of ten or more people for purposes the government deems political. Freedom of domestic and international travel is also restricted.

The judiciary is not independent, and laws on search and seizure, as well as detention, are routinely ignored by security forces, who act with impunity. Civil cases rarely go to trial. A military tribunal handles cases tied to national security. Unlawful arrests remain commonplace, although the routine use of torture by soldiers and police to extract confessions has diminished. Prison conditions are extremely harsh. Abuse combined with poor medical care has led to several deaths. In some cases, people attempting to assist their relatives in prison have been detained themselves. There are no effective domestic human rights organizations in the country, and the few international nongovernmental organizations operating in Equatorial Guinea are subject to restrictions.

Press freedom is constitutionally guaranteed, but the government restricts those rights in practice. Nearly all print and broadcast media are state run and tightly controlled. A few small independent newspapers publish occasionally but exercise self-censorship, and all journalists must be registered. Mild criticism of infrastructure and public institutions is allowed, but nothing disparaging about the president or security forces is tolerated. Some underground pamphlets appear irregularly. Few foreign publications are available. In February 2001, the government closed the offices of the country's press association, where two private weeklies, *La Opinion* and *El Tiempo*, are published occasionally. The 1992 press law authorizes government censorship of all publications. The shortwave programs of Radio France Internationale have been received in Malabo since 1995. Radio Exterior, the international shortwave service from Spain, airs interviews with opposition politicians.

About 80 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. Freedom of individual religious practice is generally respected, although President Obiang has warned the clergy against interfering in political affairs. Monopoly political power by the president's Mongomo clan, of the majority Fang ethnic group, persists. Differences between the Fang and the Bubi are a major source of political tension that often has erupted into violence. Fang vigilante groups have been allowed to abuse Bubi citizens with impunity.

Constitutional and legal protections of equality for women are largely ignored. Traditional practices discriminate against women, and few have educational opportunities or participate in the formal economy or government. Violence against women is reportedly widespread. There is no child rights policy.

Steps have been made to reform the labor sector. The country's first labor union received legal recognition in 2000, and it is independent. Foreign oil companies have gotten more control over hiring to eliminate political bias. Employees no longer have to be a member of the ruling party to be hired, and recent legislation mandates that oil workers receive 60 percent of their wages. The government employment agency used to keep two-thirds of salaries.

## Eritrea

Polity: One party      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 6\*  
 Population: 4,300,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$880  
 Life Expectancy: 55  
 Ethnic Groups: Tigrinya (50 percent), Tigre and  
 Kunama (40 percent), Afar (4 percent), Saho (3 percent),  
 other (3 percent)  
 Capital: Asmara



**Ratings Change:** Eritrea's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to government suppression of the independent media and other non-state groups.

### Overview:

The government of President Isaias Afwerki cracked down on growing sentiment for political pluralism in 2001. Fifteen leaders of a movement calling for greater democratic accountability were arrested in September and the small independent media sector was shut down. Students protested enforced summer work camps in the countryside. National elections due in December were postponed.

Hostilities with Ethiopia ended, at least temporarily, with the signature of a ceasefire in June 2000 after an Ethiopian advance succeeded in making significant territorial gains. The agreement provided for a United Nations-led buffer force to be installed along the Eritrean side of the contested border and for further negotiations to determine the final boundary line. The war dominated the country's political and economic agenda and reflected deeper issues of nationalism and political mobilization by a government that has long used the presence of real or perceived enemies to generate popular support and unity. The war also served as an excuse for the ruling Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) to delay the development of a pluralist political system.

In 1950, after years of Italian occupation, Eritrea was incorporated into Ethiopia. Eritrea's independence struggle began in 1962 as a nationalist and Marxist guerrilla war against the Ethiopian government of Emperor Haile Selassie. The seizure of power by a Marxist junta in Ethiopia in 1974 removed the ideological basis of the conflict, and by the time Eritrea finally defeated Ethiopia's northern armies in 1991, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) had discarded Marxism. Internationally recognized independence was achieved in May 1993 after a referendum supervised by the UN produced a landslide vote for statehood.

The war with Ethiopia began in 1998. In May 2000 an Ethiopian military offensive succeeded in making significant territorial gains. Eritrea signed a truce with Ethiopia in June 2000 and a peace treaty in December 2000. A UN peacekeeping force is presently monitoring a 25-kilometer (15-mile) wide Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), a demilitarized buffer zone between the two armies.

Since 1993, Eritrea has engaged in hostilities with Sudan, Yemen, and in 1998, Ethiopia. It has also had strained relations with Djibouti. A constitution was adopted in May 1997, but many of its provisions have yet to be implemented. For example, national elections have yet to take place. Eritrea's proclivity to settle disputes by the force

of arms and its continued tight government control over the country's political life have dashed hopes, raised by President Isaias Afwerki's membership in a group of "new African leaders," who promised more open governance and a break with Africa's recent tradition of autocratic rule.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Eritrea has yet to create the framework for a democratic political system. Created in February 1994 as a successor to the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the Popular Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) maintains a dominance over the country's political and economic life that is unlikely to change in the near-to-medium-term future. Fifteen senior members of the PFDJ were imprisoned in September for making public calls for greater accountability and adherence to democratic principles by the country's leaders, including the President. National elections were scheduled for December, but implementing legislation had yet to be passed.

In 1994, a 50-member constitutional commission was established. In 1997 a new constitution authorizing "conditional" political pluralism with provisions for a multi-party system was adopted. The constitution provides for the election of the president from among the members of the national assembly by a vote of the majority of its members. The term of office is five years, for a maximum of two terms. The appointed national assembly is made up of 75 members of the PFDJ central committee, 60 members of the former Constituent Assembly, and 15 representatives of Eritreans residing abroad.

In 2000 the national assembly determined that the first elections would be held in December 2001 and appointed a committee that issued draft regulations governing political parties. These draft regulations remain under consideration; thus, independent political parties authorized by the constitution are not yet registered. In theory, polls were supposed to have been held in 1998, but they were postponed indefinitely following the outbreak of hostilities with Ethiopia.

Eritrea's political culture places priority on group interests over those of the individual. This view has been forged in part by years of struggle against outside occupiers and an austere attachment to Marxist principles. Eritrea's aggressive foreign policy has contributed significantly to regional instability and to a sense of victimization among Eritreans, which in turn has afforded a rationale for continued strong central government control.

The new constitution's guarantees of civil and political liberties are unrealized as pluralistic media and rights to political organization continue to be absent. A judiciary was formed by decree in 1993 and has yet to adopt positions that are significantly at variance with government perspectives. A low level of training and resources limits the courts' efficiency. Constitutional guarantees are often ignored in cases relating to state security. While free discussion in public forums may be tolerated, the dissemination of dissenting views is not. Government control over all broadcasting and pressures against the independent print media have constrained public debate. A 1997 press law allows only qualified freedom of expression, subject to the official interpretation of "the objective reality of Eritrea."

The government has maintained a hostile attitude towards civil society and has refused international assistance designed to support the development of pluralism in society. The government controls most elements of civil life, either directly or through affiliated organizations. The September 2001 "suspension" of the small but energetic

independent media and the absence of nongovernmental human rights organizations in turn have a dissuasive effect upon the potential development of other civil society groups. Official government policy is supportive of free enterprise, and citizens generally have the freedom to choose their employment, establish private businesses, and function relatively free of government harassment. Until recently, at least, government officials have enjoyed a reputation for relative probity.

The government finally adhered to the Geneva Convention in July 2000, permitting some independent monitoring of conditions in detention facilities and granting representatives of the International Committee for the Red Cross broad access to prisoners and detainees. Arbitrary arrest and detention are problems. The provision of speedy trials is limited by a lack of trained personnel, inadequate funding, and poor infrastructure, and the use of a special court system limits due process.

Women played important roles in the guerilla movement, and the government has worked in favor of improving the status of women. In an effort to encourage broader participation by women in politics, the PFDJ named 3 women to the party's executive council and 12 women to the central committee in 1997. Women participated in the constitutional commission (filling almost half of the positions on the 50-person committee) and hold senior government positions, including the positions of minister of justice and minister of labor.

Equal educational opportunity, equal pay for equal work, and Penalties for domestic violence have been codified, yet traditional societal discrimination persists against women in the largely rural and agricultural country. In general religious freedom is observed although Jehovah's Witnesses face some societal discrimination.

## Estonia

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 1,400,000

PPP: \$8,355

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Estonian (65 percent), Russian (28 percent),  
other (7 percent)

Capital: Tallinn

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

After more than half a year of relative calm in Estonia's political life, the last four months brought both immediate and imminent changes to the country's most prominent government posts. In September, former Soviet Estonian leader Arnold Ruutel staged a surprising political comeback with his victory in the country's presidential election, while longtime opposition leader Edgar Savisaar became the new mayor of the capital city of Tallinn on December 13. Just six days later, Prime Minister Mart Laar announced that he would resign his post in January 2002.

After gaining its independence from Russia in 1918, Estonia was occupied and annexed by the U.S.S.R. during World War II. Under Soviet rule, approximately one-tenth of Estonia's population was deported, executed, or forced to flee abroad. Subsequent Russian immigration substantially altered the country's ethnic composition, with ethnic Estonians constituting 88 percent in the 1930s and just over 61 percent in 1989. Estonia regained its independence with the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Estonia's second post-independence parliamentary elections in March 1995 saw a shift to the center-left Coalition Party/Rural Union (KMU) over the right-of-center Pro Patria/Estonian National Independence Party coalition. The results reflected popular dissatisfaction among the elderly and rural electorate, who were hardest hit by the previous government's market reforms. The KMU subsequently formed a majority coalition government with the leftist Center Party, which held until October 1995, when the Center Party left the coalition amidst a wiretapping scandal and was replaced by the right-of-center Reform Party. In February 1997, Prime Minister Tiit Vahi resigned following allegations of corruption and Mart Siiman of the Coalition Party was named the new prime minister.

In March 1999 parliamentary elections, the Center Party won the largest percentage of votes, with 23.4 percent, capturing 28 of 101 seats. However, the Reform Party, Pro Patria, and the Moderates, who together took 53 seats, subsequently formed a center-right majority coalition government, with Pro Patria's Mart Laar named prime minister. The Center Party and its leader, Edgar Savisaar, with whom various political forces expressed reluctance to cooperate, was effectively forced into the opposition. The other three parties that secured enough votes to enter parliament included the centrist Coalition Party, the left-of-center Country People's Party, and the United People's Party, representing some of the country's ethnic Russian population.

After two previous unsuccessful bids in 1992 and 1996, former Soviet Estonian leader Arnold Ruutel surprised many poll watchers by capturing the presidency in the September 2001 presidential election; Lennart Meri, who had held the post for the last nine years, was prohibited by the constitution from seeking a third consecutive term. When no single candidate received the required two-thirds of the vote in parliament, the poll was moved to an electoral college consisting of all of the members of parliament plus 266 local government representatives. Among the reasons cited for Ruutel's victory were increasing popular disenchantment with the government, owing in part to a number of scandals in recent years involving high-level state officials, growing economic hardship in small towns and rural areas (in which most of the municipal government representatives reside), and the failure of the three-party national ruling coalition to rally behind a single candidate. Despite speculation that the election of Ruutel might lead to some alteration in government policy, any changes are likely to be limited since the post of president is largely ceremonial.

In a dramatic year-end development, the Reform Party decided in early December to withdraw from its three-party ruling coalition with Pro Patria and the Moderates in the Tallinn City Council and form a coalition with the opposition Center Party. According to Reform Party leaders, the decision was made for reasons including a plan by Tallinn Mayor Tonis Palts of Pro Patria to borrow \$1.5 billion kroons (\$86 million) in 2002, which they claimed would put the country in debt. On December 13, Palts lost a no-confidence vote initiated by the Center Party, whose chairman, Edgar Savisaar, was elected mayor by Tallinn's city council later that day. Less than one week later, Prime

Minister Mart Laar of Pro Patria announced that he would resign in early January 2002. Laar explained his decision as the result of growing infighting among the national ruling coalition members, particularly following the Reform Party's break with the same coalition partners in Tallinn's City Council.

Estonia's economy continued to grow throughout 2001, although at a decelerated rate of five percent in the second quarter of the year. Privatization of the last major infrastructure and energy firms, which has been plagued by political and financial concerns, proceeded slowly. In April, the long-awaited and often scandal-ridden sale of 66 percent of Estonian Railways to a consortium of U.S., British, and Estonian investors was finalized. EU membership remained high on the country's political and economic agenda throughout the year, with Estonia having closed 19 of 31 negotiation chapters by late 2001.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Estonians can change their government democratically. However, the country's citizenship law has been criticized for disenfranchising many Russian speakers who arrived in Estonia during the Soviet era and are regarded as immigrants who must apply for citizenship. Although noncitizens may not participate in national elections, they can vote, but not serve as candidates, in local elections. In November 2001, parliament approved the abolition of Estonian language requirements for candidates to parliament and local councils. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe cited this development as a key factor in the group's decision to end its nine-year mission in Estonia at the end of 2001. Parliament also adopted legislation in late 2001 making Estonian the official working language of both parliament and local councils, although the government may grant local councils the right to use another language if it is the language of the majority of permanent residents in that locality. The 1992 constitution established a 101-member unicameral legislature elected for four-year terms, with a prime minister serving as head of government and a president as head of state. After the first president was chosen by popular vote in 1992, subsequent presidential elections reverted to parliamentary ballot. According to international observers, the 1995 and 1999 parliamentary elections were free and fair.

The government respects freedom of speech and the press. There are three national television stations, including two in private hands, that broadcast both Estonian and Russian-language programs. Dozens of independent newspapers and radio stations offer diverse viewpoints. Religious freedom is respected in law and practice in this predominantly Lutheran country.

The constitution guarantees freedom of assembly, and the government respects this provision in practice. Political parties are allowed to organize freely, although only citizens may be members. Workers have the right to organize freely, to strike, and to bargain collectively, and the main trade unions operate independently of the state.

While the judiciary is independent and generally free from government interference, the quality of some court decisions and the heavy workloads of many judges continue to be areas of concern. There have been reports that some police officers physically or verbally abuse suspects. Despite ongoing improvements in the country's prison system, overcrowding, a lack of financial resources, and inadequately trained staff remain problems.

Of Estonia's population of 1.4 million, more than 1 million are Estonian citizens,

of which some 115,000 have been naturalized since 1992. Although the exact number of illegal aliens is unknown, an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 individuals are thought to be living in Estonia without proper documentation, including temporary or permanent residence permits. In May 2001, parliament adopted legislation setting out specific requirements of Estonian language proficiency for private sector employees, such as pilots, rescue workers, and teachers; the law built upon a previous amendment to the language law passed in June 2000 requiring that Estonian be used in areas of the private sector in which it would be in the public interest, such as health or safety.

Although women enjoy the same legal rights as men, they continue to be underrepresented in senior-level business positions and the government.

## ↓ Ethiopia

Polity: Dominant party    Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Mixed statist    Civil Liberties: 5  
 Population: 65,400,000    Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$628

Life Expectancy: 52

Ethnic Groups: Oromo (40 percent), Amhara and Tigrean (32 percent), Sidamo (9 percent), other (19 percent)

Capital: Addis Ababa

Trend Arrow: Ethiopia received a downward trend arrow due to the government's response to civil unrest that has included heightened restrictions on freedom of assembly and organization.



### Overview:

The year 2001 was marked by conflict within what has traditionally been a highly polarized political environment. The central committee of the key member of the ruling coalition, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF), split between hardliners and reformers. Kinfu Gebre-Medfin, the country's top intelligence official, was assassinated. State President Negaso Gidada resigned, citing interference from Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. The president of the lower house of parliament also resigned, citing a lack of political freedom. Local elections in March were boycotted by the seven main opposition parties.

In April students went on strike at the leading institution of higher education, Addis Ababa University, to protest the government's repressive policies and to seek an end to police brutality. Those strikes, and the subsequent response by security forces, resulted in more than 40 deaths and 200 injuries. Hundreds were arrested, including leading human rights leaders.

The provisions of a United Nations-supervised peace treaty with Eritrea, which was signed in 2000, was generally respected. The hostilities with Eritrea had proven an effective tool of political mobilization for the government of Prime Minister Meles, since opposition to policies pursued by the government could be equated with a lack of patriotism, or even treason. With the end of fighting, internal tensions rose again to the surface.

Ethiopia is the third most populous country in Africa, with a mixed ethnic makeup



reflecting its imperial heritage. The Ethiopian Coptic Church is influential, particularly in the north. There is a large Muslim community in the south, made up mainly of Arabs, Somalis, and Oromos. Christians and Muslims each account for approximately 40 percent of the population, with the remaining 20 percent largely animists.

Ethiopia's long tradition of imperial rule ended in 1974, when Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown in a Marxist military coup. Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam subsequently became the leader of a brutal dictatorship that lasted until it was overthrown by a coalition of guerilla groups in 1991. These groups were spearheaded by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), itself an alliance of five parties.

The EPRDF government instituted a transition period that resulted in the establishment of formal democratic institutions. There are currently more than 60 legally recognized political parties active in Ethiopia, although the political scene continues to be dominated by the EPRDF. Opposition parties claim that their ability to function is seriously impeded by government harassment, although observers note that these parties are often reluctant to participate in the political process. There is a small but growing civil society, which has been subjected to some restrictions by the government.

A constitution adopted in 1994 established a federal system of government, with power vested in a directly elected 548-member body, the Council of People's Representatives. The first official multiparty elections to the council in 1995 were boycotted by the opposition. The 2000 legislative elections resulted in the ruling EPRDF coalition winning 472 seats. A second chamber of parliament, the 117-member Federal Council, represents ethnic minorities and professional groups. Ethiopia is made up of nine federal regions.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** In principle, the 1995 constitution is an extremely progressive document. The government has devolved some power to regional and local governments and courts.

The constitution provides for a broad range of democratic institutions and political activity, including the right of secession. As with many elements of the Ethiopian political system, however, the reality differs from what is constitutionally mandated. The EPRDF today controls all of the elected regional councils directly or with coalition partners. The government uses divide-and-rule strategies to minimize the influence of larger ethnic groups. It is highly unlikely that any region would in fact be allowed to secede.

Executive power is vested in a prime minister, who is selected by the Council of People's Representatives. As expected, the EPRDF gained a landslide victory against a weak and divided opposition in the 2000 legislative balloting. A handful of opposition candidates were elected, but the parliament subsequently reelected Prime Minister Meles to another five-year term.

Opposition parties and some observers criticized the government's conduct of the May 2000 legislative elections. They stated that the polls were subject to government interference, that the opposition was denied some access to the media, and that opposition supporters were subject to harassment and detention. The Ethiopian government continues to selectively harass opposition parties and impede their ability to participate in the political process. However, the opposition was able to engage in some criticism of the government in the media during the official election campaign, and a series of unprecedented public debates was broadcast over state-run radio and television during the electoral campaign.

Opposition parties also bear some responsibility for limiting in practice the right of Ethiopian people to express their political preferences. Until the 2000 elections, many parties refused to participate openly in the nation's political life. One key party, the All Amhara People's Organization (AAPO), made clear that it was only taking part because it would lose its legally constituted status if it failed to take part in two consecutive elections. Some parties have supported, either directly or indirectly, armed resistance to the government. A rebellion in the south by the banned Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) and the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromia, for example, continues at a low level. Oromos constituted percent of Ethiopia's population of 65 million. OLF supporters have been imprisoned or detained without trial.

Events in 2001 demonstrated that the government places clear limits on the freedom of association. Two leading human rights advocates were arrested on charges of "inciting students" following a meeting to discuss human rights attended by a large number of students from Addis Ababa University. Following the arrest, the offices of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council were shut down by armed police for ten days with no reason given. More than 100 members of the opposition Ethiopian Democratic Party, and 30 members of the AAPO were arrested. By November, 326 out of a total of 1,114 of those being held in prison had been sentenced to jail terms ranging from four to ten months. Some 417 people, including 164 police officers, were injured in the riots, up to 100 of them seriously.

Human Rights Watch has accused the Ethiopian authorities of using "brutal violence" at Addis Ababa University, stating that the government used "the ensuing crisis to justify a general crackdown on figures critical to the government." In August the respected Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association was suspended by the government. In a letter, the ministry of justice stated that the association had been suspended as it was found to be engaged in activities that were "outside its established objectives."

A 1992 law guarantees freedom of the press. However, it also forbids publishing articles that are defamatory, threaten the safety of the state, agitate for war, or incite ethnic conflict. Journalists can also be jailed for publishing secret court records. Limits on the freedom of the press were clearly reflected in the government's response to the April 2001 unrest, in which journalists were arrested. Broadcast media remain under close scrutiny by the government. Harassment and intimidation of the independent print media have led to significant self-censorship. The press continues to be faced with direct and indirect government intimidation. Reporters Sans Frontieres protested against the remaining in detention of Merid Zelleke and Mengistu Wolde Selassie, editors in chief of the weeklies *Satanaw* and *Moged*, respectively, published in Amharic, and against the recent wave of arrests among the privately owned press.

A number of recent press freedom violations, reported by both the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association and the Committee to Protect Journalists, suggest that the Ethiopian government is continuing its crackdown on the media. CPJ expresses "alarm over the fact that press freedom abuses have increased sharply in recent weeks, after a brief period of relative calm."

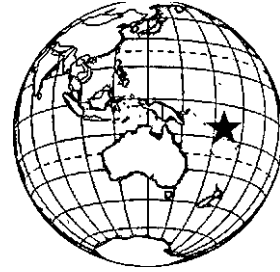
Women traditionally have few land or property rights and, especially in rural areas, few opportunities for employment beyond agricultural labor. Violence against women and social discrimination are reportedly common despite legal protections. Trade union freedom to bargain and strike has not yet been fully tested. Religious freedom is generally respected. Privatization programs are proceeding, and the government has

undertaken a major financial liberalization reform program to attract foreign investment. The judiciary is officially independent, although there are no significant examples of decisions at variance with government policy.

## Fiji

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 800,000  
PPP: \$4,799  
Life Expectancy: 67

Political Rights: 4\*  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Partly Free



Ethnic Groups: Fijian [Melanesian-Polynesian] (51 percent),  
Indian (44 percent), other (5 percent)

Capital: Suva

Ratings Change: Fiji's political rights ratings improved from 6 to 4 due to the country's return to civilian rule.

### Overview:

Fiji returned to rule by the ballot box following elections in September 2001, but the South Pacific island country faced continued political and economic uncertainty. Few of the land and other resource grievances that fueled a coup attempt in 2000 in the name of indigenous Fijian rights have been addressed. Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase, an indigenous Fijian who headed an interim government following the putsch, pledged to resolve native land grievances. At the same time, he promised not to curb the rights of Fijians of Indian descent, who make up an economically powerful minority, when his government reviews Fiji's multiracial constitution in 2002.

Fiji's paramount chiefs ceded sovereignty over their islands to London in 1874. Five years later, the British began bringing in Indian laborers to work on plantations. At independence in 1970, the indigenous-Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities were roughly equal in size.

Following 17 years of rule by the indigenous-Fijian Alliance Party, the 1987 elections brought to power a government made up largely of Indo-Fijians. Backed by indigenous Fijian hardliners, Sitiveni Rabuka, a senior army officer, seized power in coups in May and September. Rabuka and his supporters were concerned with the growing clout of the Indo-Fijian community, which already dominated agriculture and business.

Rabuka played a pivotal role in Fijian politics for more than a decade, forming governments following elections in 1992 and 1994. Those elections were held under a constitution that guaranteed indigenous Fijians a parliamentary majority and required the prime minister to be an indigenous Fijian. Amid a continuing exodus of thousands of skilled Indo-Fijians, parliament amended the constitution in 1997 to remove these guarantees.

The first elections under the amended constitution, in March 1999, brought to power a multiracial coalition government under the Fiji Labor Party (FLP) of Mahendra Chaudhry. A former labor leader, Chaudhry became Fiji's first prime minister of In-

dian descent. He soon angered many indigenous Fijians with his policies on land and logging. He pressured indigenous-Fijian landowners to renew expiring 30-year leases held by Indo-Fijian tenant farmers without much of an increase in rents. Indigenous Fijians own roughly 83 percent of the land, while Indo-Fijian tenant farmers are the main producers of sugar and other commodities. The government, moreover, gave a contract for logging on indigenous-Fijian land to a British company rather than accepting a more lucrative American bid.

Calling for greater indigenous-Fijian rights, George Speight, a businessman, together with an armed gang that included more than 50 rebel soldiers, held Chaudhry and other officials in the parliament building in Suva for 56 days in mid-2000. After defusing the crisis, the military installed Qarase, a banker, to lead an interim government and arrested Speight and more than 300 of his supporters. Capping a tumultuous year, some 50 pro-Speight soldiers mutinied on November 2, leaving at least eight soldiers dead. Speight is expected to be tried for treason in 2002.

Qarase retained his post as prime minister after leading his new Fiji United Party (FUP), a moderate indigenous-Fijian group, to victory in elections held between August 25 and September 2, 2001. The election was called after the court of appeal in March upheld a November 2000 high court ruling that Qarase's interim government was illegal and the 1997 constitution was still in force. Final results gave the FUP 32 seats; the FLP, 27; and the new Conservative Alliance, an indigenous-Fijian party, 6. Three minor parties and two independents took the remaining 6 seats. In addition to his pledge to assess whether the constitution provides enough protection for indigenous-Fijian rights, Qarase also promised to set up a tribunal to deal with native land grievances. In another development, the Great Council of Chiefs in March named Ratu Josefa Iloilo, the acting president, to a five-year term as president.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Fiji returned to elected civilian rule in 2001, but Fijians face limits on their choice of leaders. In the aftermath of the 2000 coup attempt, it seems doubtful that a government led by Indo-Fijians could survive.

The constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and cabinet. The 1997 constitutional amendments ended the guaranteed parliamentary majority enjoyed by indigenous Fijians but kept some voting along ethnic lines. The 71-seat house of representatives has 25 seats open to all races, 23 reserved for indigenous Fijians, 19 for Indo-Fijians, 3 for "general electors" (mainly whites and East Asians), and 1 for voters on Rotuma Island. The unelected Great Council of Chiefs, a traditional indigenous-Fijian body, appoints the largely ceremonial president, who in turn appoints the 32-member senate.

Some Fijian media and nongovernmental groups have criticized provisions of the 1998 Emergency Powers Act that allow the government to restrict civil liberties. The act allows parliament, during a state of emergency, to censor the press, ban public meetings, and authorize searches without warrants and the seizure of private property. The act gives the president the authority to declare a state of emergency.

The judiciary bolstered its longstanding reputation for independence in March 2001, when the appeals court upheld a 2000 high court ruling declaring the military-backed interim government illegal. The ruling forced the government to submit to elections. Police and soldiers sometimes abuse suspects and detainees and reportedly at times

use excessive force while apprehending and interrogating suspects, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Fiji's human rights record in 2000. Authorities have punished some officers for these offenses. Fiji's prisons do not meet international minimum standards, with inmates receiving inadequate food and sanitation, the U.S. State Department report said.

Some soldiers who took part in the coup attempt and subsequent army mutiny in 2000 faced retribution at the hands of their comrades. Soldiers in 2000 beat to death five rebel soldiers implicated in the mutiny and abused several other detained rebel supporters, the U.S. State Department report said. Indo-Fijians also suffered during the turmoil. During and immediately after the 56-day standoff at the parliament building, indigenous Fijians looted and burned many Indo-Fijian shops and homes on the two largest islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

Fiji's private media vigorously report on alleged official corruption and ethical violations, although journalists practice "considerable self-censorship," according to the U.S. State Department report. The Qarase government generally has respected press freedom. By contrast, the ousted Chaudhry government was frequently hostile to the press. It criticized political coverage in Fiji's newspapers, took several journalists to court over their reporting, and refused to renew the work permit of the *Fiji Times's* editor in chief, a foreign national, on the grounds that local journalists could fill his shoes.

No government has used the Press Correction Act, which authorizes officials to arrest anyone who publishes "malicious" material, or to order a publication to publish a "correcting statement" to an allegedly false or distorted article. Both the Rabuka and Chaudhry governments, however, brought actions against newspapers over their parliamentary coverage under the Parliamentary Privileges and Powers Act. The journalists ultimately were not punished under the act, which authorizes jail terms of up to two years for breaches of parliamentary privilege.

Fiji has both public and private radio stations, and they generally provide objective news coverage. Television service is limited, making radio a key source of information on Fiji's remote outer islands. The provincial governments hold a majority stake in Fiji One, the lone noncable national television station. It generally provides balanced news coverage.

Fijians have enjoyed greater freedom to hold marches and demonstrations since the nation returned to elected rule. The interim Qarase government denied all requests to hold political protests. Before that, the Chaudhry government often denied permits for large outdoor political meetings and demonstrations.

Credible accounts suggest that ten percent of Fijian women have been abused in some way, according to the U.S. State Department report. Fiji's women's rights movement has called for more serious punishments for rape than those often handed down either by the courts or under traditional practices. The practice of *bulubulu* (traditional reconciliation) allows the offender to apologize to a victim's relatives to avoid a felony charge. Spousal abuse is also a problem, and police have responded by prosecuting domestic violence cases even when the victim does not want to press charges. Women are underrepresented in government and politics, although they have made significant inroads in the civil service and professions.

Fijian trade unions are independent and vigorous. An estimated 55 percent of the workforce is unionized. Factory conditions, however, are often poor, particularly in

the garment and canning industries. The number of tourists visiting Fiji tumbled 41 percent in the year following the May 2000 coup attempt, but tourist arrivals picked up toward the end of this one-year period, the Fiji Visitors Bureau said in July. Tourism contributes about 20 percent of Fiji's gross domestic product and is the top foreign exchange earner.

## Finland

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 5,200,000

PPP: \$23,096

Life Expectancy: 77

Ethnic Groups: Finnish (93 percent), Swedish (6 percent), other,  
including Lapp [Saami] (1 percent)

Capital: Helsinki

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 1

Status: Free



### Overview:

While an economic downturn highlighted Finland's heavy dependence on a single industry—telecommunications—Finland was buoyed after receiving the "least corrupt country" rating by Transparency International in 2001. Finns continued to debate the merits of joining NATO during the year.

The achievement of Finnish independence followed some eight centuries of foreign domination, first by Sweden (until 1809) and subsequently as a Grand Duchy within the pre-Revolutionary Russian Empire.

Finland's current constitution, issued in July 1919, was amended in February 1999 and came into force in 2000. The amended constitution diminishes the power of the president, which was unusually broad under the former constitution, while increasing the power of the parliament. The parliament has greater sway over calling elections and can appoint national representatives to international gatherings, include European Union meetings. Finland joined the European Monetary Union in 1999.

In February 2000, Finns, for the first time in their nation's history, elected a woman president, Taija Halonen, a left-leaning member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP). Her election marked only the second direct popular vote for president in Finland, where presidents are elected to six-year terms.

Halonen's victory followed the reelection one year earlier of Finland's fragile coalition government, led by Paavo Lipponen of the SDP. Although the SDP lost 12 of the 63 seats it had held since the 1995 elections, the coalition (including the SDP, the National Coalition Party, the Left Alliance, the Greens, and the Swedish People's Party) won more than half the seats in Finland's 200-seat unicameral parliament, the *Eduskunta*.

After an economic boom in the late 1990s, Finland experienced slower growth in 2001. Reduced export demand and unmet earnings projections led to significant cutbacks at Nokia, a major mobile-phone producer. Layoffs announced at Sonera, Finland's

largest mobile-phone network provider, further raised fears that the country's economy is not sufficiently diversified. The mobile-phone sector has replaced forestry as Finland's biggest industry.

Finland still remains outside of NATO. A majority of Finns continued to oppose NATO membership. Skittish of their close proximity to Russia, most feel full membership would impact negatively on relations with their eastern neighbor. Finland is part of NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Finns can change their government by democratic means. The Aland Islands, populated mainly by Swedes, have their own provincial parliament. The local Liberal Party won the elections that took place in mid-October 1999. The result seems to have been something of a blow to earlier demands for even greater autonomous powers in Aland, as the Liberals do not share the Free Conservative and Center Party belief that the current system is inadequate.

Finland has a large variety of newspapers and magazines and is ranked among the highest in terms of Internet users per capita in the world. Newspapers are privately owned, some by political parties or their affiliates; many others are controlled by or support a particular party; a law grants every citizen the right to publish.

The rights of ethnic and religious minorities are protected. The Saamis (Lapps), who make up less than one percent of the population, are guaranteed cultural autonomy by the constitution.

Both Finnish and Swedish are official languages of the country. In recent years, concern has risen about increasing instances of racist and xenophobic behavior. Finland receives on average 700 to 900 asylum seekers per year. To facilitate their absorption, the government has revised Finland's Aliens Law and adopted a new law promoting the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. Both laws took effect on May 1, 1999. Further reforms took place in 2000, allowing for more rapid processing of asylum claims filed by refugees from the so-called safe countries of Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Bulgaria.

Finns enjoy freedom of religion, and both the predominant Lutheran Church and the smaller Orthodox Church are financed through a special tax from which citizens may exempt themselves. The archbishop and the bishops of the Lutheran Church are appointed by the president.

Finnish workers have the right to organize, bargain collectively, and strike, and an overwhelming majority belong to trade unions. The 1.1 million-member Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, which is linked to the SDP, dominates the labor movement.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, consisting of the supreme court, the supreme administrative court, and the lower courts. The president appoints supreme court justices, who in turn appoint the lower court judges.

Gender-based equality is guaranteed by law. In 1906, Finland became the first country in Europe to give women full political entitlement, including the right to vote and hold office. Women hold an exceptionally high proportion of parliamentary seats.

## France

**Polity:** Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
**Economy:** Mixed capitalist

**Political Rights:** 1  
**Civil Liberties:** 2  
**Status:** Free

**Population:** 59,200,000

**PPP:** \$22,897

**Life Expectancy:** 79

**Ethnic Groups:** French, regional minorities (Corsican, Alsatian, Basque, Breton), various Arab and African

**Capital:** Paris



### Overview:

Allegations of corruption continued to taint the French political establishment in 2001. Among several cases of reported impropriety, new evidence emerged implicating President Jacques Chirac in an alleged kickback scandal while he served as Paris mayor. A high court ruled against a magistrate's request to have President Chirac testify in the case, thereby preventing possible impeachment proceedings. France's right-wing parties registered significant gains in municipal elections in March. More powers were devolved to Corsica, granting greater autonomy to the separatist-leaning French island. New security laws came into effect in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, granting police sweeping new search and seizure powers. French-British relations suffered a setback as increasing numbers of illegal immigrants sought entry into Great Britain through the Channel Tunnel. Disabled people earned the right to sue doctors over having been born.

After World War II, France established a parliamentary Fourth Republic, which was governed by coalitions and ultimately failed because of the Algerian war. The Fifth Republic began in 1958 under Prime Minister (and later President) Charles de Gaulle. Election of the president by popular suffrage began in 1965. In 1992, French citizens narrowly approved European political and economic union under the Maastricht Treaty. Prime Minister Jospin, of the *Partie Socialiste* (Socialist Party), entered a government of "cohabitation" with President Chirac, a conservative, after winning an upset election in 1997. In October 2000, French voters went to the polls approving a referendum to cut short the presidential term from seven years to five, marking the most radical change to the French constitution in 40 years. The shorter term now puts parliamentary and presidential elections on the same schedule, reducing or potentially eliminating the awkward cohabitation arrangement, which often features a president and a prime minister from different parties, often at odds over official policy.

Municipal elections held in March saw significant right-wing inroads in many towns and cities, while a left-leaning government remained in Paris.

A mounting corruption scandal dogged President Chirac throughout the year, albeit not at the expense of his popularity. In June, the National Assembly debated a bill that would have stripped Chirac of his presidential immunity after new evidence arose implicating him in an alleged kickback scandal. A judicial probe preceded the National Assembly debate examining why Chirac paid cash for twenty personal foreign trips,



made while mayor of Paris in the mid-1980s. Speculation abounded that the cash was drawn from a substantial slush fund setup to funnel bribes from public works contracts. While Chirac admitted to paying cash for the trips for him and his family, he maintained he did so for security reasons. The fund, he explained, was legal, and not part of a vast bribery system in which illegal commissions were channeled to his RPR party. Chirac steadfastly refused to testify before a magistrate, citing presidential immunity. In October, France's highest appeals court ruled the president remained immune from questioning while in office.

In November, in what was seen as a calculated political counterpoint to Chirac's refusal to face authorities, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin offered to appear as a witness in a separate illicit funding case. Evidence emerged that his Socialist Party allegedly received illegal funding from supermarket chains ten years ago.

France was rocked by other corruption scandals throughout the year, including an illegal arms trafficking scandal involving Jean-Christophe Mitterand, the son of the late president, Francois Mitterand. Another involved the formerly state-run Elf oil company, from which government appointees allegedly siphoned more than \$250 million. In May, former foreign minister Roland Dumas received a six-month jail sentence in the case. He had illegally benefited from a \$9 million-a-year job he had arranged for his mistress with the giant oil concern.

In October, Transparency International ranked France 23rd on its corruption index, far behind most northern European countries. Toward the end of the year, the government moved to abolish the secret cash funds available to government ministers to use at their discretion.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** French citizens can change their government democratically by directly electing the president and national assembly. The constitution grants the president significant emergency powers, including rule by decree under certain circumstances. The president may call referenda and dissolve parliament, but may not veto its acts or routinely issue decrees. Decentralization has given mayors significant power over housing, transportation, schools, culture, welfare, and law enforcement. The judiciary is independent.

Municipal elections held in March were conducted under new parity legislation. Towns with more than 3,000 people must now present candidate lists with equal numbers of men and women.

A 1999 law sets maximum limits on detention of suspects during a criminal investigation. Also included in the bill was the formation of "detention judges" to rule on the justification of incarceration. Additionally, those being held for interrogation must have immediate access to an attorney. However, public security laws allow police far-reaching powers to tap telephones, carry out searches, and jail terror suspects without trial for up to four years.

In October, following the terrorist attacks on the United States, French police arrested nine people with reported links to the Al-Qaeda terror network on suspicion of plotting terrorist attacks in France. In November, Parliament adopted new anti-terror legislation. Police are now able to search cars with the authorization of a prosecutor, a right previously prohibited. Police can also search private property without warrants. They also have greater access to private telephone conversations and e-mail. Judges can now demand that phone and Internet companies save messages for up to one year.

The new measures are to stay in effect until 2003. Members of the Green Party criticized the new legislation, calling it an attack on civil liberties.

France has drawn criticism for its treatment of immigrants and asylum seekers. Despite legal provisions authorizing refugee seekers to cross the border without visas or identity papers, border guards have occasionally used excessive force to discourage crossings.

In February, nine hundred Kurds arrived in the French Riviera after their ship ran aground. They were given eight days to file for political asylum to avoid becoming illegal immigrants. Critics said the short timeframe would force some Kurds underground or encourage them to seek entry into other European countries.

In March, the interior ministry launched an inquiry into cases of alleged beatings of asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo. They were beaten while police tried to forcibly remove them from the country, despite the fact that their asylum applications had not yet been registered.

A dispute with Great Britain emerged during the year as more and more illegal immigrants sought access to England via France. Thousands of immigrants had amassed on the French side of the English Channel, attempting to cross into Britain via the tunnel connecting the two countries. Britain accused France of encouraging cross-border immigration by providing the asylum seekers with shelter adjacent to the tunnel entrance. In December, more than 500 asylum seekers stormed through fences surrounding a Red Cross refugee camp on the French side of the tunnel. French and British police caught them in the tunnel as they tried to make their way to Britain.

The National Front and other far-right groups have gained popularity by blaming immigrants for high unemployment. In fact, the jobless rate of immigrants is generally much higher than that of the native French. Approximately 4 million Muslims live in France, many in ghetto-like neighborhoods and with limited access to quality schooling.

In August, Algerian exiles living in France announced their intention to sue the French government over crimes against humanity. They accuse France of abandoning 150,000 Algerians who died at the hands of Algeria's National Liberation Front (FLN) during that country's civil war from 1958-62. They also accuse the French government of herding survivors of the war into camps in France. Most now live with their families in run-down suburbs. Two-hundred-thousand Algerians fought with the French against the FLN.

The press in France is free, although the government's financial support of journalism and the registration of journalists have raised concerns about media independence. Publication of opinion poll results is prohibited in the week preceding any election. In 2000, in accordance with French anti-hate laws, the government banned Internet auctions of Nazi memorabilia. French authorities occasionally question reporters covering separatist violence, pressing them to reveal their sources. Press freedom groups routinely criticize these attempts.

France devolved more powers to the French island of Corsica during the year. The island has in the past been a hotbed of separatist violence. There were 135 bomb attacks and 28 murders during the year. Despite the ongoing sporadic violence, the National Assembly in May passed a bill that guarantees the teaching of the Corsican language in primary schools and hands over environmental powers to the island. This marked the first phase in a transition period that will eventually culminate in the ability of the Corsican Assembly to pass its own laws, and implement the more widespread

teaching of the Corsican language. In December, the French Parliament approved an autonomy bill, which granted Corsica's regional assembly the right to amend some national legislation. The bill also permitted using the Corsican language in the curriculum of all schools. Implementation of the second phase, to take place throughout 2003 and 2004, is dependent on the success of the first phase and the total absence of violence, and would necessitate reform of the French constitution.

Despite open suspicion toward Muslims and prohibitions against wearing religious garb or symbols in state schools, religious freedom is protected. In June, Parliament adopted a bill allowing courts to ban groups considered sects.

Labor rights in France are respected in practice, and strikes are widely and effectively used to protest government economic policy. The government acted to further entrench the shortened workweek during the year, originally adopted in October 1999. Women enjoy equal rights in France.

A dramatic December ruling in France's highest appeals court granted children with Down syndrome the legal right to have never been born. Doctors are subject to lawsuits if they do not sufficiently inform mothers of prenatal warning signs, thus denying them the opportunity to have an abortion.

## Gabon

Polity: Dominant party      Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist        Civil Liberties: 4  
 Population: 1,200,000      Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$6,024  
 Life Expectancy: 52  
 Ethnic Groups: Bantu, other Africans, Europeans  
 Capital: Libreville



### Overview:

President Omar Bongo's Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) overwhelmingly won the first and second round of parliamentary elections in December 2001. A divided opposition and low voter turnout, as well as government interference in the polls, helped assure the PDG victory. Provisional results indicated that ruling party candidates won 84 seats compared to 14 for opposition and independent candidates. A third round of voting was to be held in January 2002 in some areas of the country where there was an outbreak of the Ebola virus during the December election period. In addition, polls are to be held again in other areas where opposition protesters had smashed ballot boxes and burned polling stations. One group of opposition parties boycotted the elections, accusing the government of inflating voter registration lists, while other opposition parties participated.

Straddling the equator on central Africa's west coast, Gabon gained independence from France in 1960. Bongo, whom France raised from soldier to president in 1967, completed the consolidation of power begun by his predecessor, Leon Mba, by officially outlawing the opposition. France, which maintains marines in Gabon, has intervened twice to preserve Bongo's regime. In 1990, protests prompted by economic duress

forced Bongo to accept a conference that opposition leaders hoped would promote a peaceful democratic transition. However, Bongo retained power in rigged 1993 elections that sparked violent protests, which were repressed by his presidential guard.

Although Gabon has more than 40 ethnic groups, it has escaped the ethnic strife of its neighbors. The country's human rights record has improved in recent years with the easing of press repression and attacks on African immigrants, but arbitrary detention and abuse of detainees continues.

Gabon's capital, Libreville, ranks among the most expensive cities in the world; one-third of the population has migrated here. Three decades of autocratic and corrupt rule have made Bongo among the world's richest men, while some money has trickled out to rural areas and contributed to education. Oil accounts for 80 percent of the country's exports. State institutions are influenced or controlled by Bongo and a small elite, with strong backing by the Gabonese army and France. The highly profitable French Elf Aquitaine oil company plays a dominant role in the country's economic and political life. Oil revenues have declined in recent years as a result of the depletion of the country's petroleum resources.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Gabon's citizens have never been able to exercise their constitutional right to change their government democratically, despite a gradual political opening since 1990. There are numerous political parties, but the Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG) has ruled since President Omar Bongo created it in 1968. The 1994 Paris accords claimed to institute true democratic reforms, but Bongo's electoral victory in 1998, with 61 percent of the vote, followed a campaign that made profligate use of state resources and state media. The polling, which was partially boycotted by the opposition, was marked by serious irregularities, including incomplete and inaccurate electoral lists and the use of false documents to cast votes. The National Election Commission proved neither autonomous nor competent. Legislative elections in 1993 and 1996 were also seriously flawed.

Following the 1996 local government elections, which gave the opposition several victories, the government transferred key electoral functions to the interior ministry, taking them from the electoral commission.

President Bongo was granted judicial immunity by parliament in 2000; immunity lasts beyond the expiration of the presidential term. The judiciary suffers from political interference. Rights to legal counsel and public criminal trials are generally respected. Judges may deliver summary verdicts, and torture is sometimes used to produce confessions. Prison conditions are marked by beatings and insufficient food, water, and medical care. Arbitrary arrests and long periods of pretrial detention are common.

The rights of assembly and association are constitutionally guaranteed, but permits required for public gatherings are sometimes refused. Freedom to form and join political parties is generally respected, but civil servants may face harassment based on their associations. Nongovernmental organizations operate openly, but local human rights groups are weak and not entirely independent.

A government daily and at least one dozen private weeklies, which are primarily controlled by opposition parties, are published. At least six private radio and television broadcasters have been licensed and operate, but their viability is tenuous. The state is authorized to criminalize civil libel suits.

While no legal restrictions on travel exist, harassment on political and ethnic bases

has been reported. Discrimination against African immigrants, including harassment by security forces and arbitrary detention, has diminished. Most of Gabon's several thousand indigenous Pygmies live in the forest and are largely independent of the formal government. Religious freedom is constitutionally guaranteed and respected. An official ban on the Jehovah's Witnesses is not enforced.

Legal protections for women include equal-access laws for education, business, and investment. In addition to owning property and businesses, women constitute more than 50 percent of the salaried workforce in the health and trade sectors, and women hold high-ranking positions in the military and judiciary. Women continue to face legal and cultural discrimination, particularly in rural areas, and are reportedly subject to widespread domestic violence.

Gabon has come under international scrutiny for its exploitation of thousands of child laborers who are sent from other central or west African countries to work in agriculture or as domestic servants. The government has cooperated with the international organizations to fight child trafficking, but it has not ratified the International Labor Organization's convention on the worst forms of child labor.

The constitution recognizes the right to form unions, and virtually the entire formal private sector workforce is unionized. Strikes are legal if they are held after an eight-day notice advising that outside arbitration has failed. Collective bargaining is allowed by industry, not by firm. Public sector employees may unionize, but their right to strike is limited if a strike could jeopardize public safety.

## The Gambia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 5\*  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 1,400,000  
 PPP: \$1,580  
 Life Expectancy: 52  
 Ethnic Groups: Mandinka (42 percent), Fula (18 percent), Wolof (16 percent), Jola (10 percent), Serahuli (9 percent), other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Banjul



**Ratings Change:** The Gambia's political rights rating improved from 7 to 5, and its status changed from Not Free to Partly Free, due to the holding of elections that were considerably more fair than previous polls, and to the government's lifting of a controversial decree barring some of its opponents from political activity.

**Overview:** President Yahya Jammeh defeated opposition leader Ousainou Darboe in presidential elections in October 2001 that were generally accepted by the international community but questioned by the opposition. Jammeh, of the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction, won 53 percent of the vote compared with 33 percent for Darboe, a human rights lawyer who headed a three-party opposition coalition. Three other candidates won a combined total of 14 percent. Although observers from the European

Union and the Commonwealth declared the elections generally free and fair, there were lingering concerns about Jammeh's commitment to democracy when more than a dozen opposition supporters, journalists, and a human rights worker were detained after the polls. Darboe initially commended the Independent Electoral Commission for its work, but later raised questions when allegations surfaced that Jammeh's party had brought in members of his ethnic group living in neighboring Senegal, and issued them voter cards.

After receiving independence from Britain in 1965, The Gambia functioned as an electoral democracy under President Sir Dawda Jawara and his People's Progressive Party for almost 30 years. A 1981 coup by leftist soldiers was reversed by intervention from Senegal, which borders The Gambia on three sides. The two countries formed the Confederation of Senegambia a year later, but it was dissolved in 1989. Senegal declined to rescue the Jawara government again when Jammeh struck in 1994. The leaders of the 1994 coup denounced the ousted government's alleged corruption, promising transparency, accountability, and early elections. Instead, they quickly imposed draconian decrees curtailing civil and political rights and the free media.

Jammeh in July 2001 repealed the repressive Decree 89, which had prohibited any former ministers from participating in political activity or taking up a government post until 2024. Civil liberties suffered in 2001 when authorities increased immunity from prosecution for the country's security forces. Parliament passed a law giving amnesty "for any fact, matter or omission of act, or things done or purported to have been done during any unlawful assembly, public disturbance, riotous situation or period of public emergency." The legislation was backdated to April 2000, when security forces had cracked down on demonstrators, killing 16 people, including 6 children.

The Gambia is a poor, tiny country with few natural resources that depends on its exports of peanuts and other commodities.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The Gambia's citizens were granted their right to choose or change their government for the first time in several years in 2001, despite sporadic violence preceding the polls. The opposition was given free airtime on state-controlled radio and television. The Independent Electoral Commission was under some pressure by the ruling party but generally operated freely. The country's 1996 presidential and 1997 legislative elections were neither free nor fair. A new constitution, adopted by a closely controlled 1996 referendum, allowed Yahya Jammeh to transform his military dictatorship into a nominally civilian administration. Legislative elections are scheduled for January 2002.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary. While lower courts are sometimes subject to executive influence, the judiciary in general has demonstrated its independence on several occasions, at times in significant cases. There are a number of judges from Nigeria, Ghana, and other African countries, who tend to operate fairly and vigorously. Local chiefs preside over courts at the village level. The judicial system recognizes customary law, or *Sharia* (Islamic law), primarily in marriage matters.

Although the Jammeh regime has made some steps towards political openness, it still has extensive repressive powers. A 1995 decree allows the National Intelligence Agency to cite "state security" in order to "search, arrest, or detain any person, or seize, impound, or search any vessel, equipment, plant, or property without a war-

rant." In such cases, the right to seek a writ of habeas corpus is suspended. Torture in jails and barracks has been reported. The International Committee of the Red Cross and human rights groups have been allowed to visit prisons, where life threatening conditions prevail.

Human rights groups and other nongovernmental organizations generally operate freely, but a prominent human rights activist was detained after the October presidential election. The local representative of the London-based rights group Amnesty International, Mohammed Lamin Sillah, was detained for questioning and held incommunicado for four days. Amnesty said at least 13 others were also detained for "unclear reasons" following the elections.

The government relaxed limits on freedom of assembly during the campaign period leading up to the elections in 2001. Press freedom is guaranteed, but harassment and self-censorship sometimes inhibit free expression of the country's vibrant, independent print media. Private broadcasters and newspapers struggle with the exorbitant licensing fees they are required to pay. A reporter with the *Independent* newspaper was briefly detained in November, reportedly for an article questioning the validity of Jammeh's election victory. The article alleged that thousands of Senegalese had been added to voter lists.

State-run Radio Gambia broadcasts only tightly controlled news that is also relayed by private radio stations. A single government-run television station operates. Citizen FM, which the government closed in February 1998, began broadcasting again in late 2000 following a court judgment in its favor. Citizen FM broadcasts in a number of indigenous languages and is an important source of independent information for rural Gambians. It was shut down again after the October election when authorities accused its owner of tax evasion, which he denied.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed, and the government respects this right. Religious and traditional obstacles to the advancement of women are being addressed by both the government and women's organizations. Higher education and wage employment opportunities for women are still far fewer than those for men, especially in rural areas. Sharia provisions regarding family law and inheritance restrict women's rights. Female genital mutilation is widely practiced, but women's groups are working to eliminate it.

Gambians, except for civil service employees and members of the security forces, have the right to form unions, strike, and bargain for wages under the 1990 Labor Code. There are two main labor unions, and about ten percent of the workforce is unionized.

## Georgia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist - statist (transitional)  
 Population: 5,500,000  
 PPP: \$2,431  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Georgian (70 percent), Armenian (8 percent), Russian (6 percent), Azeri (6 percent), Ossetian (3 percent), Abkhaz (2 percent), other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Tbilisi



**Overview:** An attempted government raid on a popular independent television station in late 2001 led to mass public demonstrations and the subsequent replacement of several top officials in President Eduard Shevardnadze's government. Relations with Russia were strained over delays in Russian troop withdrawals from Georgia and charges that Chechen rebels were using Georgian territory as a base of operations. At year's end, a final settlement to the protracted conflicts in the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia remained elusive.

Absorbed by Russia in the early nineteenth century, Georgia gained its independence in 1918. In 1922, it entered the U.S.S.R. as a component of the Transcaucasian Federated Soviet Republic, becoming a separate union republic in 1936. An attempt by the region of South Ossetia in 1990 to declare independence from Georgia and join Russia's North Ossetia sparked a war between rebels and Georgian forces. Although a ceasefire was signed in June 1992, the territory's final political status remains unresolved.

Following a national referendum in April 1991, Georgia declared its independence from the Soviet Union. Nationalist leader and former dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected president in May, but his authoritarian and erratic behavior resulted in his overthrow in January 1992 by opposition forces, led by Mkhedrioni paramilitary group leader Dzhaba Ioseliani and National Guard commander Tengiz Kitovani. In 1992, former Georgian Communist Party head and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze returned from Moscow to become president of Georgia. Parliamentary elections held the same year resulted in more than 30 parties and blocs gaining seats, although none secured a clear majority.

In 1993, Georgia experienced the violent secession of the long-simmering Abkhazia region and armed insurrection by Gamsakhurdia loyalists. Although Shevardnadze blamed Russia for arming and encouraging Abkhazian separatists, he legalized the presence of 19,000 Russian troops in Georgia in exchange for Russian support against Gamsakhurdia, who was defeated and reportedly committed suicide. In early 1994, Georgia and Abkhazia signed an agreement in Moscow that called for a ceasefire, the stationing of Commonwealth of Independent States troops under Russian command along the Abkhazian border, and the return of refugees under United Nations supervision. Parliamentary elections in November and December 1995 resulted in the Shevardnadze-



founded Citizens' Union of Georgia (CUG) winning the most seats, while a concurrent presidential poll saw Shevardnadze secure victory with 77 percent of the vote.

The ruling CUG repeated its victory four years later in the October 1999 parliamentary election, capturing 132 seats. The opposition Revival Party led by Shevardnadze's archrival Aslan Abashidze, the leader of the autonomous republic of Ajaria, came in second with 58 seats. Election observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) concluded that despite some irregularities, the vote was generally fair. In the April 2000 presidential poll, Shevardnadze easily won a second five-year term with a reported 81 percent of the vote. His closest challenger, former first secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee and leader of the parliament minority, Dzhumber Patiashvili, received only 17 percent of the vote. While Shevardnadze's win was widely anticipated, the large margin of his victory led to accusations of electoral fraud. Election monitors noted numerous and serious irregularities, including the stuffing of ballot boxes, the presence of police in polling stations, a lack of transparency in the vote tabulation process, inflated voter turnout figures, and a strong pro-Shevardnadze bias in the state media.

In late 2001, Georgia's government faced a deepening political crisis amid mass public protests. On September 17, Shevardnadze announced that he was resigning as CUG chairman, a move which many interpreted as a sign that the president was distancing himself from the growing "young reformers" movement within the ruling party. Just two days later, justice minister and member of the reformist group, Mikhail Saakashvili, resigned, citing the government's failure to battle corruption; he subsequently created a new political movement pushing for greater political reform. On October 30, tax police conducted a failed raid on the independent television station, Rustavi-2, which was well known for its reports on government corruption. The incident was broadcast live, prompting thousands of protestors to take to the streets with demands including the resignation of Shevardnadze and his cabinet. Although the president refused to step down, several members of his government eventually were replaced. The crisis also prompted the speaker of parliament, Zhurab Zhvania, one of the leaders of the "young reformers," to resign.

Georgia's tense relations with Russia continued to be strained over Moscow's accusations that Georgia was harboring Chechen rebels in the Pankisi Gorge region, a largely lawless area bordering Russia that is home to drug smugglers and criminal gangs responsible for numerous kidnappings, as well as to 7,000 Chechen refugees. Shevardnadze had repeatedly denied these accusations until September 2001, when for the first time he admitted that Chechen guerillas might be living in the Pankisi Gorge. In November, Russian military airplanes reportedly violated Georgian airspace and bombed a Georgian village in the area in an apparent attempt to flush out Chechen fighters; Georgian government officials termed the attack a "provocation." Subsequently, Russia reinforced its contingent of troops along its border with Georgia.

During a November 1999 OSCE meeting in Istanbul, Moscow agreed to close two of its four military bases in Georgia by mid-2001. While Russia completed its withdrawal from the Vaziani base near Tbilisi in late June 2001, Russian troops reportedly pulled out of the Gudauta base in the separatist region of Abkhazia in late October, about four months behind schedule. The fate of the other two bases in Batumi, one located in the autonomous region of Ajaria, and one in the predominantly ethnic Armenian area of Akhalkalaki, remained inconclusive at year's end.

Long-standing demands of greater local autonomy continued unresolved throughout the year. Nine years of peace talks between South Ossetia and Georgia have failed to find a solution to the territorial status of the region, which has maintained de facto independence from Tbilisi since 1992. In December 2001, Russian businessman and former Communist youth leader Edward Kokoev was elected president of South Ossetia, which he insisted should become part of the Russian Federation. In the southwestern region of Ajaria, Aslan Abashidze exercises almost complete control over the territory, which has retained considerable autonomy since 1991. A final agreement to the protracted conflict in Abkhazia remained elusive, as leaders in Tbilisi and Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia, continued to disagree on key issues, including the territory's final political status. In late 2001, ethnic Chechen and Georgian guerillas reportedly launched a series of armed incursions into the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia. Separatist troops, whom Tbilisi maintains were assisted by Russian air support, eventually forced them to retreat.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** While Georgians can formally elect their government democratically, the most recent presidential election in April 2000 was marred by examples of serious electoral fraud, including inflated voter turnout figures and an unrealistically wide margin of victory for Shevardnadze. The 1999 parliamentary vote was deemed to be generally fair, although observers cited numerous irregularities, including the stuffing of ballot boxes and intimidation of precinct election commission members. Widespread fraud was noted in the autonomous republic of Ajaria, while no voting took place in the separatist territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which remained largely outside central government control.

While the country's independent press often publishes discerning and critical political analyses, economic difficulties limit the circulation of most newspapers, particularly outside the capital. Independent newspapers and television stations face harassment by the authorities, while journalists in government-controlled media frequently practice self-censorship. In July 2001, journalist Georgy Sanaya of the independent television station Rustavi-2 was found shot dead in his apartment. His colleagues maintained that Sanaya's murder was the result of his work at the station, which is known for its investigative reporting on corruption in Georgia. Tens of thousands of mourners attended his funeral.

Although freedom of religion is respected for the country's largely Greek Orthodox population, members of "nontraditional" religions and foreign missionaries face harassment and intimidation by police and certain Greek Orthodox practitioners. Defrocked Georgian Orthodox priest Vasili Mkalavishvili has been responsible for leading numerous attacks against Jehovah's Witnesses and members of other faiths, including the May 2001 burning of a home of Jehovah's Witnesses in Tbilisi. According to Human Rights Watch, in most cases police either failed to punish those responsible or else actively participated in some of the attacks.

National and local governments often restrict freedom of assembly, particularly concerning supporters of the late President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. In 2001, continued shortages of electricity prompted a number of street protests in Tbilisi.

The judiciary is not fully independent, with courts influenced by pressure from the executive branch. The payment of bribes to judges, whose salaries remain inadequate, is reportedly common, while strong clan-based traditions encourage the granting of

personal favors. Police frequently beat prisoners and detainees to extract confessions and fabricate or plant evidence on suspects. Prison conditions, which continue to be abysmal, suffer from overcrowding and inadequate sanitation, food, and medical care. The constitution and Law on Trade Unions allow workers to organize and bargain collectively and prohibit anti-union discrimination, and these rights are generally respected. The Amalgamated Trade Unions of Georgia, the successor to the official Soviet-era union, is the country's main trade union confederation and has no official affiliation with the government.

Ethnic conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as an influx of thousands of refugees from neighboring Chechnya, have led to a serious refugee problem, with repatriation efforts having proceeded slowly.

The government initiated a high-profile campaign in 2000 to eliminate corruption, which remains endemic throughout all levels of Georgian society. Although President Eduard Shevardnadze chaired the first formal session of a 12-member anticorruption council in September 2002, Justice Minister Mikhail Saakashvili resigned the same month after Shevardnadze refused to support an anticorruption bill requiring government officials to disclose all sources of income. The country's economy continued to suffer from problems including high rates of unemployment, sporadic payment of government pensions, and seasonal energy shortages. In May 2001, hundreds of national guardsmen seized an interior ministry troop base near Tbilisi to protest poor living conditions in the military, including inadequate food and equipment and the nonpayment of wages. They agreed to return to their barracks after meeting with Shevardnadze, who promised to address their grievances.

Most women work in low-paying occupations and continue to be underrepresented in parliament and other government organs. Social taboos limit the reporting and punishment of rape and spousal abuse, and the trafficking of women abroad for prostitution remains a problem.

## Germany

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy (federal)  
Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 82,200,000

PPP: \$23,742

Life Expectancy: 78

Ethnic Groups: German (92 percent), Turkish (2 percent), other (6 percent)

Capital: Berlin

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 2  
Status: Free



### Overview:

The opposition center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has been largely unable to revive its fortunes after damaging revelations about questionable campaign financing during Helmut Kohl's 16 years as chancellor emerged last year. Meanwhile, the government, led by the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of Gerhard Schroeder, scored im-

portant political and economic successes throughout 2001. After the September 11 attacks against the United States, Schroeder affirmed Germany's willingness to take on a greater international role, and in November the cabinet approved the deployment of troops to assist the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan. Faced with some protests at the decision within his coalition government, Schroeder called for and narrowly survived a parliamentary vote of confidence in mid-November.

Germany was divided into Soviet, U.S., British, and French occupation zones after World War II. Four years later, the Allies helped to establish the democratic Federal Republic of Germany, while the Soviets oversaw the formation of the Communist German Democratic Republic (GDR). The political division of Berlin was reinforced by the 1961 construction of the Berlin Wall. After the collapse of Erich Honecker's hardline GDR regime in 1989 and the destruction of the wall in 1990, citizens voted in the GDR's first free parliamentary election, in which parties supporting rapid reunification prevailed.

Schroeder's SPD defeated Kohl's CDU in the September 1998 elections, ending Kohl's 16-year rule. The SPD formed a coalition with the Green Party, which was given three ministerial-level positions in the new government. Despite criticism of his economic policies and defeats in several state elections in 1999, Schroeder successfully pushed a major tax reform bill through the opposition-controlled *Bundesrat*, or upper house of parliament, in July 2000. Favored by economists, big business, trade union leaders, and foreign investors, the bill contains Germany's most radical tax reform since World War II.

A parliamentary committee investigating unreported political contributions to the CDU under Kohl's administration has encountered resistance from the former chancellor, who admits receiving more than \$1 million from secret benefactors but refuses to name the donors. In July, his lawyers successfully blocked the public release of files from the former East German secret service, the *Stasi*, which reportedly contain recorded telephone conversations in which CDU officials refer to secret party funds. Kohl's refusal to cooperate with investigators has drawn criticism from within the CDU, which forced him to resign as honorary chair of the party. He retains his seat in parliament, however, and therefore his immunity from prosecution.

In March 2000, CDU Secretary-General Angela Merkel became the first woman and former East German elected to lead the party. Her political credentials and her criticism of Kohl early in the finance scandal earned her the confidence of the party and its supporters. However, she has since been beset by party infighting and has been criticized for being weak, indecisive, and lacking in coherent policy ideas. In June, a CDU-led coalition government in Berlin collapsed following a financial scandal, and the party suffered a decisive defeat in the October mayoral election for the city-state.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Germans can change their government democratically; the next federal elections are scheduled for the fall of 2002. The federal system provides for considerable self-government in the 16 states. The country's judiciary is independent.

The German press and broadcast media are free and independent, offering pluralistic views. However, Nazi propaganda and statements endorsing Nazism are illegal, with violators facing fines or jail terms of up to three years. Germany has exceeded other countries' practices in its attempts to police the Internet by blocking access to

obscene, violent, or "dangerous" material. The government has brought charges against service providers and individual users. In December 2000, the supreme court ruled that individuals outside Germany who post Nazi propaganda aimed at Internet users inside Germany could be prosecuted under German law. However, it is unlikely that the ruling can be enforced in practice. In April 2001, police opened a wide-ranging investigation into the sale of neo-Nazi music on the Internet, raiding 103 homes and questioning 106 suspects.

Freedom of assembly and association is guaranteed. Public rallies and marches require official permits, which are routinely denied to right-wing radicals. In September 2000, the government banned the German branch of Blood and Honor, an international skinhead group. Individuals are free to form political parties and to receive federal funding as long as the parties are democratic in nature. Both houses of parliament filed a request with the Federal Constitutional Court in March 2001 to ban the far-right National Democratic Party (NPD). A fringe party with some 6,000 members, the NPD advocates pro-German policies and opposes immigration, and its members have been blamed for inciting violence against foreigners.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed by the Basic Law (constitution). State governments subsidize church-affiliated schools and provide religious instruction in schools and universities for those of the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish faiths. Scientologists, who claim 30,000 adherents in Germany, have been at the center of a heated debate over the group's legal status. Major political parties exclude Scientologists from membership, claiming that the group does not constitute a religion, but rather a for-profit organization based on antidemocratic principles. New anti-terror measures passed in November 2001 lifted the constitutional protection of religious organizations; religious groups can now be banned if they are suspected of inciting violence or undermining democracy. In December, Germany banned more than 20 Islamic groups and carried out raids on their premises.

The Basic Law gives ethnic Germans entering the country unrestricted citizenship immediately upon application. Parliament passed a law in 1999 granting automatic citizenship to the children born in Germany to foreign immigrants. Foreign adults can now receive citizenship after living in Germany for eight years. The law also allows dual citizenship for the first time in German history, although only until age 23, when dual citizens must choose between either their parents' or German nationality. In July 2001, an immigration commission concluded that Germany would have to accept up to 50,000 immigrants every year to support its economy by rectifying acute domestic skills shortages. However, initiatives to grant work permits to foreigners have met with resistance from opposition politicians.

Germany has no antidiscrimination law to protect immigrants, and even ethnic German immigrants face hostility from citizens, particularly in the east, who attribute the country's social and economic woes to immigration. In early July, the Council of Europe criticized the government for failing to curb an increase in racist and anti-Semitic attacks, noting that such attacks had increased by nearly 60 percent in 2000 to a total of 16,000 attacks. The rising tide of racist violence led the government to announce measures to crack down on neo-Nazis, including the allocation of new funds for an educational effort to fight racism and for victims of violence.

In the wake of lawsuits filed by Holocaust survivors against German companies, Germany established a fund in 1999 to compensate nearly 1.5 million Nazi-era slave

laborers who were forced to work for German manufacturers. Half of the money is to come from German industry, the other half from the government. In June, the lower house of parliament overwhelmingly approved a compensation package worth \$4.6 billion.

Trafficking in women is a serious problem, according to reports by the U.S. State Department. Some 80 percent of these come from Eastern Europe and the former U.S.S.R. Laws against trafficking have been modified to address the problem more effectively, and they currently provide Penalties of up to ten years in prison. In October, the parliament approved a law improving the status of prostitutes. The law removed some of the Penalties linked to prostitution, as well as giving an estimated 400,000 prostitutes new rights, including their entitlement to pensions and health and unemployment insurance. In August, a new law giving legal recognition to same-sex relationships came into effect, although the measure was opposed by the conservative states of Bavaria and Saxony.

Labor, business, and farming groups are free, highly organized, and influential. Trade union federation membership has dropped sharply in recent years, however, as a result of the collapse of industry in the east and layoffs in the west.

## ↑ Ghana

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free

Population: 19,900,000

PPP: \$1,881

Life Expectancy: 58

Ethnic Groups: Akan (44 percent), Moshi-Dagomba (16 percent),

Ewe (13 percent), Ga (8 percent), other (19 percent)

Capital: Accra

Trend Arrow: Ghana received an upward trend arrow due to the repeal of a criminal libel law and a general easing of pressure on the country's media.



### Overview:

The first year into the presidency of John Kufuor went relatively smoothly as the new leader sought to make good on campaign promises. Among his first measures was the repeal of Ghana's criminal libel law. Repression of the media that had occasionally occurred under former President Jerry Rawlings diminished in 2001. Kufuor has called for setting up the Commission on National Reconciliation to settle past political and human rights grievances. The government also said it would set up a commission to investigate clashes that occurred in the north in December 2001 between two ethnic groups. At least 50 people were killed and 150 others were injured in three days of unrest. Troops were deployed to the region.

Once a major slaving center and long known as the Gold Coast, the former British possession became black Africa's first colony to achieve independence. After the 1966

overthrow of its charismatic independence leader, Kwame Nkrumah, the country was wracked by a series of military coups for 15 years. Successive military and civilian governments vied with each other in both incompetence and mendacity.

In 1979, Right Lieutenant Rawlings led a coup against the ruling military junta and, as promised, returned power to a civilian government after a purge of corrupt senior army officers. However, the new civilian administration did not live up to Rawlings's expectations, and he seized power again in December 1981 and set up the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC). The radically socialist, populist, and brutally repressive PNDC junta banned political parties and free expression. Facing a crumbling economy, Rawlings, in the late 1980s, transformed Ghana into an early model for the structural adjustment programs urged by international lenders. A new constitution adopted in April 1992 legalized political parties, and Rawlings was declared president after elections that were deemed neither free nor fair.

The 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections were hailed in Africa and abroad as a successful test of Ghana's democracy. The election was the first time in Ghana's history that one democratically elected president was succeeded by another democratically elected leader. The military has pledged its loyalty to the Kufuor government, and officials have publicly warned against coups.

Ghana continued efforts to improve its respect for human rights, although problems with arbitrary arrest, abuse of detainees, and excessive force continued. There were also reports in 2001 of indiscriminate police raids on homes, which opposition politicians claimed were tantamount to political harassment. Violence flared briefly in May, when youths attacked police following a soccer stampede at a sports stadium in the capital, Accra, that claimed 130 lives. The stampede was sparked when police fired tear gas into an unruly crowd.

Ghana's economy has suffered in recent years as the result of a fall in the world prices of cocoa and gold, which are among the country's main foreign exchange earners. Kufuor in 2001 promised to create more than 70,000 jobs during the next four years through cassava starch production and the export of garments and textiles.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

The December 1996 presidential and parliamentary elections under Ghana's 1992 constitution allowed Ghanaians their first opportunity since independence to choose their representatives in genuine elections. A broad civic education campaign and international assistance with registration and other electoral procedures preceded voting. However, the elections were also marked by the former ruling party's extensive use of state media and patronage to support incumbents. President Jerry Rawlings's five percent reelection victory, which extended his 16-year rule, was also assured by opposition disunity.

About 200 international observers monitored voting in the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections and hailed the process as free and fair. The opposition, led by John Kufuor, of the National Patriotic Party (NPP), alleged intimidation and other irregularities as the second round of voting in the presidential polls began, but those claims dissipated as the polling proceeded and his looming victory became apparent. Kufuor won soundly with 57 percent of the vote in the second round of polling, compared with 43 percent for Vice President John Atta Mills. Kufuor had led the seven candidates in the first round of voting. The opposition also broke the stranglehold of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) on parliament, with the NPP winning 99 of the 200 seats

available, compared with 92 for the NDC, which had previously held 133 seats. Smaller opposition parties and independents won the remainder of seats.

Ghanaian courts have acted with increased autonomy under the 1992 constitution, but are still occasionally subject to executive influence. Traditional courts often handle minor cases according to local customs that fail to meet constitutional standards. Scarce judicial resources compromise the judicial process, leading to long periods of pretrial detention under harsh conditions. Ghana's Prison's Service said in 2001 that conditions had deteriorated in the country's jails because of inadequate funding.

The right to peaceful assembly and association is constitutionally guaranteed, and permits are not required for meetings or demonstrations. Numerous nongovernmental organizations operate openly and freely. Freedom of expression is constitutionally guaranteed and generally respected. Fulfilling a campaign promise, the Kufuor government in 2001 repealed Ghana's criminal libel law and otherwise eased pressure on the press. A politically provocative television talk-show host who had been sidelined in 1998 by the Rawlings administration returned to the airwaves in 2001.

Religious freedom is respected, but there is occasional tension between Christians and Muslims and within the Muslim community itself. Communal violence occasionally flares in Ghana. Members of the Mamprusi and Kusasi ethnic groups clashed in northeastern Ghana in December 2001. More than 50 people were killed and 5,000 others were displaced.

Ghanaian women suffer societal discrimination that is particularly serious in rural areas, where opportunities for education and wage employment are limited, despite women's equal rights under the law. Women's enrollment in universities, however, is increasing. Domestic violence against women is said to be common, but often remains unreported. Legislation in 1998 doubled the prison sentence for rape. Efforts are under way to abolish the *tro-kosi* system of indefinite servitude to traditional priests in rural areas, and the practice of sending young girls to Penal villages in the north after they are accused of practicing witchcraft.

Ghana has been coordinating with regional countries and the International Labor Organization to create a comprehensive plan to address the growing problem of child trafficking and child labor.

The government has not interfered with the right of workers to associate in labor unions, but civil servants may not join unions. The Industrial Relations Act demands arbitration before strikes are authorized. The Ghana Federation of Labor was inaugurated in 1998 and is intended to serve as an umbrella organization for several other labor unions. There were more than 20 industrial actions in 2001.



## Greece

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 10,900,000  
 PPP: \$15,414  
 Life Expectancy: 78  
 Ethnic Groups: Greek (98 percent), other, including Macedonian and Turkish (2 percent)  
 Capital: Athens



### Overview:

The ruling party, the Pan Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), suffered major political setbacks in 2001 resulting from the failure to meet economic objectives and pledges for reform. However, Prime Minister Costas Simitis' approval rating improved drastically after the September 11th attacks in the United States. The factious PASOK party set aside its anti-U.S. sentiments and united behind the prime minister. Following his reelection as head of PASOK in October and, in an effort to push ahead with economic reforms and with preparations for the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Prime Minister Simitis overhauled his cabinet, increasing its membership to 49, making it the largest cabinet ever under PASOK rule.

The socialists were narrowly reelected in the parliamentary elections in April 2000. The PASOK has ruled Greece since 1981, except for 1990 to 1993, when the conservative New Democracy Party (ND) held power.

In June, the government passed an antiterrorist law on the anniversary of the assassination of British defense attaché, Brigadier Stephen Saunders, by the November 17 urban guerilla group. The law is designed to give police broader powers for surveillance and investigation. It also provides the first protection programs for witnesses and judges and limits the use of juries in terrorism-related trials. Thousands protested the new law, stating that the new antiterrorist law infringes upon individual rights. As a NATO member, Greece offered the full use of its military facilities and airspace to the international coalition against terrorism after the terrorist attacks in the United States in September.

Greece gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1830. The ensuing century brought continued struggle between royalist and republican forces. Occupation by the Axis powers in 1941 was followed by a civil war between non-Communist and Communist forces that lasted until 1949. A military junta came to power as the result of a coup in 1967 and ruled until 1973, when naval officers failed to oust the junta and restore the monarchy. The failed 1973 coup led, however, to the formal deposition of the monarch and the proclamation of a republic. The current constitution, adopted in 1975, provides for a parliamentary system with a largely ceremonial president.

Greece continued to improve its relations with Turkey. Prime Minister Simitis announced in April that Greece would cut military spending by postponing the purchase of new air force planes, estimated to cost \$4.5 billion, and instead will overhaul the pension and welfare systems. Greece and Turkey simultaneously signed the Ottawa

Convention in 2001, an agreement that requires signatories to destroy their land mines and prohibits their use and production. The European Court of Human Rights condemned the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 as a violation of human rights.

Greece adopted the euro as of January 1, 2001, at a rate of 340.75 drachmas per euro, after huge efforts to meet the criteria. The majority of the population supported membership to the European Monetary Unit (EMU). Greece continues to be under pressure from the European Union (EU) to accelerate structural reform and reduce public debt.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Greeks can change their government democratically. The Greek parliament has 300 members, elected for four-year terms by a system of proportional representation. Voting is compulsory for citizens between the ages of 18 and 70. The president is elected for a five-year term by parliament.

Although the constitution guarantees freedom of expression, the government often infringes upon that right. In March, the government closed 66 radio stations in Athens, citing their interference with frequencies used by the new airport that had opened. Government officials denied they were trying to stifle freedom of expression. An Aromanian (Vlach) activist was convicted of "disseminating false information" in a leaflet on minority languages in January. Greece does not recognize the presence of national minorities and does not recognize minority languages. Greece is a member of the EU and NATO, and in 1997 signed and ratified the Convention for Protection of National Minorities.

The judiciary is independent. The constitution provides for public trials, and trial court sessions are usually open to the public.

Greece has a long history of jailing conscientious objectors to military service. In 1997, however, the government passed a new law to allow objectors to perform alternative, civilian service. The measure requires objectors to serve twice as long as military conscripts and was therefore criticized by Amnesty International as "punitive."

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) reported that Roma (Gypsies) living in camps, face extremely harsh living conditions. Systematic abuse against Roma by law enforcement continues, and forced evictions of Roma from these settlements, without alternative housing provided, have frequently been reported. The United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT) expressed concern about the excessive use of force by law enforcement against ethnic and national minorities and foreigners.

Ninety-eight percent of the population belongs nominally to the state-sponsored Greek Orthodox Church. Orthodox bishops have the privilege of granting or denying permission to other faiths to build houses of worship in their jurisdictions. Many Greek Orthodox Christians protested Pope John Paul's visit in May, the first visit by a Roman pontiff to Greece since the Schism in 1054. In an attempt at reconciliation between the two churches, the pope began his visit by asking forgiveness for sins committed by Catholics against Orthodox Christians since 1054.

Greeks enjoy freedom of association, and all workers except military personnel and the police have the right to form and join unions, which are usually linked to political parties. A government's proposal in late April, to revamp the social security system by raising the retirement age and doing away with a number of special categories of pensions, resulted in a general strike called by the Greek General Confederation of

Labor (GSEE), Greece's largest labor group, that paralyzed Athens. The government did freeze the pension reforms after Greece was crippled by the strikes. Another major strike in May paralyzed public transport, businesses, and civil services. In April journalists as well went on strike to demand better working conditions.

The U.S. State Department issued the *Trafficking in Persons Report* in 2001, which stated that Greece had failed to end the problem of human trafficking. The report described Greece as a transit and destination point and said that Greece had not acknowledged publicly that trafficking is a problem.

There are no restrictions on women's participation in government, yet they are underrepresented in Greece's politics, holding only 26 of the 300 seats in the unicameral parliament.

## Grenada

**Polity:** Parliamentary democracy

**Economy:** Capitalist-statist

**Population:** 100,000

**PPP:** \$6,330

**Life Expectancy:** 65

**Ethnic Groups:** Black (82 percent), white and South Asian (18 percent)

**Capital:** St. George's

**Political Rights:** 1

**Civil Liberties:** 2

**Status:** Free



### Overview:

In early 2001, Grenada announced plans to crack down on its offshore financial sector. However, in September, the country was nonetheless placed on a revised list of governments considered by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which issues advisories to companies and governments in developing countries, to be uncooperative in the fight against money laundering. The action came in the wake of a controversial August visit by Prime Minister Keith Mitchell to Libya, a move that seemed particularly ill-advised a month later, when terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. In October, Grenada announced that it had suspended a controversial program allowing foreigners to buy Grenadian passports, saying the practice was too risky after the terrorist attacks in the United States.

Grenada, a member of the Commonwealth, is a parliamentary democracy. The British monarchy is represented by a governor-general. Grenada, which gained independence in 1974, includes the islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The bicameral parliament consists of a 15-seat house of representatives and a 13-seat senate, to which the prime minister appoints 10 senators and the opposition leader, 3.

Maurice Bishop's Marxist New Jewel Movement seized power in 1979. In 1983 Bishop was murdered by New Jewel hardliners Bernard Coard and Hudson Austin, who took control of the country. A joint U.S.-Caribbean military intervention removed Coard and Austin, who along with two others were originally sentenced to death, only to have their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. In the 1984 elections, the New

National Party (NNP), a coalition of three parties, won the majority of seats. Herbert Blaize became prime minister until his death in 1989, when Deputy Prime Minister Ben Jones replaced him.

In the 1990 elections the NNP coalition unraveled, and there were five principal contenders: The National Party (TNP), headed by Jones; the centrist National Democratic Congress (NDC), led by Nicholas Braithwaite, head of the 1983-1984 interim government; the NNP, headed by Keith Mitchell; the leftist Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM), led by Terry Marryshow; and Eric Gairy's rightist Grenada United Labour Party (GULP).

The NDC won 7 seats and took in a defector from the GULP, and Braithwaite became prime minister with a one-seat majority. After implementing unpopular economic reforms, the aging Braithwaite stepped down in early 1995 in favor of Agricultural Minister George Brizan.

The 1995 campaign was a raucous affair. Brizan sought to retain power by pointing to the improved economy. The other candidates accused the ruling NDC of corruption and harped on high unemployment.

The NNP startled local observers by winning 8 of 15 seats. The NDC won 5 seats and the GULP, 2. Mitchell became prime minister. Afterwards, NDC deputy leader Francis Alexis split off to form the Democratic Labour Party (DLP), in a move that underscores the fractious nature of Grenadian politics.

In his first months in office, Mitchell was accused by opposition leader Brizan and others of censoring news unfavorable to the government in state-run television and radio broadcasts, and of purging civil servants appointed during the NDC administration. Mitchell denied the allegations. In 1996 Mitchell's reorganization of the state-owned Grenada Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) was viewed by some as another attempt to fill political positions with NNP supporters and to control the dissemination of information at GBC. In 1997 the NDC charged the government with granting a casino license to a foreign company that the NDC alleged had gangster connections.

In May 1998, former Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Preudhomme was elected leader of the bitterly divided GULP, a year after Gairy died. The ruling NNP was plunged into crisis over the resignation of its foreign minister, whose loss left it with only 7 of 15 parliamentary seats. Grenada's parliament was dissolved in December 1998, paving the way for elections in 90 days. In 1999, the NNP made a sweep of all but 1 of 15 seats in parliament. Opposition complaints of alleged corruption seemed to miss the mark, as the NNP entered into the electoral fray boasting an enviable economic record; in four years, unemployment had plummeted from 25 to 14 percent, and the economy posted a strong performance. Mitchell was also aided by a divided political opposition which, after the crushing defeat, seemed in danger of disappearing altogether.

Mitchell announced in February 2000 a "zero tolerance" anticrime crackdown in the wake of growing concerns over an upswing of violent, often drug-related, delinquency. In August, the First International Bank of Grenada collapsed, leaving thousands of depositors—mostly U.S. citizens—facing a combined loss of millions of dollars. That same month, Mitchell reshuffled his cabinet, a move the lone opposition deputy blasted as an attempt to deflect attention from the First International scandal, as the bank admitted contributing thousands of dollars to the NNP's 1999 election campaign.

The crisis created by the government takeover of the First International came after a local auditor warned that the bank, which had increased its assets from \$110,000 to

\$14 billion in one year, was "in complete violation" of Grenadian offshore laws. However, Mitchell had been warned possibly 17 months earlier that the bank was in serious difficulty. Grenada's strict bank secrecy regulations and offers of citizenship, complete with passports issued together with a new name, created worries of "one-stop shopping" for international criminals. The relatively few protests about the bank's failure heard from depositors in the United States and Canada very likely reflected their wish not to advertise themselves as tax evaders in their own countries.

During the first eight months of 2001, the government had pushed to improve Grenada's framework for regulating the offshore financial center, including measures to improve its transparency. The FATF's ruling made it harder for the country to attract foreign investors and business partners.

Mitchell's August 2001 trip to Libya, made together with the heads of Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, resulted in Grenada receiving an attractive financial assistance package, including \$1 million in grants and some \$9 million in soft loans. Officials said most of the money would be used to promote micro-enterprises, economic diversification, and worker training. The visit to a country accused of sponsoring international terrorism received additional criticism after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The end of Grenada's "economic citizenship" program, introduced in 1998, in which foreigners could purchase passports for \$19,000, came in reaction to those attacks. Grenada Finance Minister Anthony Boatswain said, announcing the move, "Grenadian passports can end up in the wrong hands and be used for purposes other than for that which they were intended."

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens are able to change their government through democratic elections, and the 1999 elections were considered free and fair, although in light of the 2000 banking scandal, a lack of credibility was added to complaints of questionable contributions to the NNP. Many political parties exist, and few obstacles face those establishing new parties. However, there has been a decline in turnout, as young people, in particular, appear to have lost confidence in a system riddled with fragmented politics and allegations of corruption. Following the crushing defeat suffered by Grenada's opposition parties, their role as alternatives in future elections was seriously in doubt.

The independent, prestigious judiciary has authority generally respected by the 750-member Royal Grenada Police Force. There are no military or political courts. In 1991 Grenada rejoined the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States court system, with the right of appeal to the Privy Council in London. Detainees and defendants are guaranteed a range of legal rights that the government respects in practice. Like many Caribbean-island nations, Grenada has suffered from a rise in violent, drug-related crime, particularly among increasingly disaffected youth. Prison conditions are poor, though they meet minimum international standards and the government allows human rights monitors to visit.

Newspapers, including four weeklies, are independent and freely criticize the government. Television is both private and public, and the main radio station—there are six in the country—is part of the Grenada Broadcast Corporation, a statutory body not directly controlled by the government. Since the 1995 elections, a number of new radio and television stations, not one of which is aligned with the NNP, were issued licenses to operate. In October 1999, the arrest of two journalists critical of the government caused an uproar among the opposition and human rights groups.

Constitutional guarantees regarding the right to organize political, labor, and civic groups are respected. The free exercise of religion and the right of free expression are generally respected.

Numerous independent labor unions include an estimated 20 to 25 percent of the workforce. A 1993 law gives the government the right to establish tribunals empowered to make "binding and final" rulings when a labor dispute is considered of vital interest to the state. The national trade union federation claimed the law was an infringement on the right to strike. Workers have the right to organize and to bargain collectively.

Women are represented in the government, though in greater numbers in the ministries than in parliament. No official discrimination takes place, but women generally earn less than men for equal work. Domestic violence against women is common, and sexual harassment in the workplace is a problem. Police say that most instances of abuse are not reported, and that others are settled out of court.

## ↓ Guatemala

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free

Population: 13,000,000

PPP: \$3,674

Life Expectancy: 66

Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (55 percent), Indian (43 percent), other (2 percent)

Capital: Guatemala City

Trend Arrow: Guatemala received a downward trend arrow down due to increased reliance on the military during key congressional voting, rampant corruption, and an upsurge in mob lynchings.



### Overview:

The patience of the international community and of ordinary Guatemalans appeared to be drawing thin in 2001, as President Alfonso Portillo's government was beset with criticism. Promises in areas ranging from military restructuring to reforms leading to increased political participation, particularly of the country's majority Indian population, remained unrealized. Frustration over Portillo's failure to forge a fiscal pact that effectively helped to finance the implementation of the peace accords was compounded by growing threats to citizen security, including an upsurge in gang violence, narcotics trafficking, and domestic drug consumption, the latter the focus of an aggressive official demand-reduction program. Rampant official corruption and the often violent harassment and intimidation by unknown assailants of rights activists, judicial workers, journalists, and witnesses to human rights trials further muddied Guatemala's path to democratic development, as did a noticeable increase in instances of vigilante justice.

In March, rumors that Portillo, who had veered towards a course of authoritarianism and lacked a positive political message, had resigned and had sought exile in a neigh-

boring country added to fears of growing instability caused by rampant public disaffection. In July, the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the international money-laundering watchdog, announced that Guatemala was being placed on its blacklist of countries deemed uncooperative with global efforts to stamp out such financial transactions, because of its excessive banking secrecy and failure to participate in information exchanges with other countries.

The Republic of Guatemala was established in 1839, 18 years after independence from Spain. The nation has endured a history of dictatorship, coups, and guerrilla insurgency, with only intermittent democratic government. A 36-year civil war formally ended with the signing of a peace agreement in 1996. The country has had elected civilian rule since 1985. As amended in 1994, the 1985 constitution provides for a four-year presidential term and prohibits reelection. An 80-member unicameral congress is elected for four years.

A conservative businessman, Jorge Serrano, became president in 1991 after winning a runoff election. In 1993 Serrano tried to dissolve the legislature, but was sent into exile after the military, which had initially supported him, changed course as a result of mass protests and international pressure. The government's human rights ombudsman, Ramiro de León Carpio, was chosen by congress as his replacement.

Once in power, de León Carpio was unable to halt human rights violations by the military or to curb its power as final arbiter in national affairs. After United Nations-mediated talks were launched between the government and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) guerrillas, the latter called a unilateral truce for the 1995 election, throwing its support to the left-wing New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG). Former Guatemala City mayor Alvaro Arzú, of the National Advancement Party (PAN), and Alfonso Portillo Cabrera, of the hard-right Guatemalan Republic Front (FRG), battled it out as front-running presidential contenders. (FRG founder and military dictator Efraín Ríos Montt—accused of genocide during his own 1982-1983 presidency—was constitutionally barred from running.) Arzú won with 36.6 percent of the vote; Portillo Cabrera had 22 percent. In the January 7, 1996, runoff Arzú defeated Portillo, 51.2 percent to 48.8 percent.

Soon after taking office, Arzú reshuffled the military, forcing the early retirement of generals linked to drug trafficking, car-theft rings, and human rights abuses. The purge had the backing of a small but influential group of reformist officers who dominated the military high command. In December 1996, a peace agreement was reached following a preliminary accord on the return of rebel forces to civilian life and a permanent ceasefire.

Arzú's government made important advances in carrying out the peace process. These included the demobilization of the URNG guerrillas and their political legalization, the retirement of more than 40 senior military officers on corruption and narcotics charges, and the reduction of the army's strength by one-third. A UN-sponsored truth commission mandated by the peace accords began receiving tens of thousands of complaints of rights violations committed during the 36-year internal conflict. By 1999, however, it was clear that the government had stalled on implementing those reforms meant to correct the social and economic inequalities that had led to the conflict. These included ending the military's political tutelage and legal impunity, recognizing the rights of the Maya Indians, and reforming taxation to pay for health, education, and housing programs for the poor. In February 1999 the truth commission said that state security

forces had been responsible for 93 percent of human rights abuses committed in a civil war that incurred as many as 200,000 deaths. High-ranking officials, it reported, had overseen 626 massacres in Indian villages.

In 1999, Guatemala held its first presidential elections since the end of the country's 36-year civil war. In a May referendum, voters rejected a package of 50 amendments to the constitution, approved by congress a year earlier, that had been prepared in accordance with the UN-brokered peace plan, in an election that was characterized by a high degree of abstentions. The presidential election saw former Marxist guerrillas participate openly for the first time, as part of a left-wing coalition.

Before the first-round voting in November, Portillo, who had campaigned on a human rights and development platform, admitted to having killed two men in Mexico 17 years earlier, in self-defense, he said. The FRG standard-bearer also successfully dodged the accusation he was merely a surrogate candidate for Ríos Montt, his father-in-law, and was able to moderate the party's ideological hard line. He went on to beat the PAN candidate, former Guatemala City Mayor Oscar Berger, 48 to 30 percent. Alvaro Colom, of the New Nation Alliance (ANN), which included the former guerrillas, drew a mere 12 percent. In the December 26 runoff, Portillo, who had campaigned on a populist platform of fighting crime, reducing unemployment, and aiding the poor, overwhelmed Berger, 68 to 32 percent.

In 2000, Portillo began his presidency with an unprecedented shake-up of the military high command, claiming for himself the lead role in restructuring and modernizing the armed forces. However, throughout the year the army continued a pattern of interference with civilian institutions, particularly the police. Faced with opinion polls that showed his popularity, as well as his reputation for leadership, plummeting as a result in large part of worries over crime, Portillo replaced his internal security minister with an FRG deputy and retired army major with a controversial rights record. In August Ríos Montt, who had been elected to a congressional seat and then to the presidency of the congress, was accused by opposition lawmakers of altering an alcohol tax after its approval by congress and before its publication, at the urgings of powerful liquor interests. A UN report issued in that same month blamed the government for dozens of politically motivated slayings; death threats against judges, journalists, and lawmakers; and hundreds of wrongful arrests. In October, a long-awaited presidential report on the 1998 slaying of human rights activist Bishop Juan Gerardi offered no new information and was deemed useless by those pressing for a more thorough investigation of the case. Two days before his death, Bishop Gerardi had released a report blaming the military for 90 percent of the rights abuses committed during the civil war.

In 2001, vigilante killings in rural areas whose residents are mostly Indian continued to be partly blamed on the government, with the new, but badly recruited and trained, National Civil Police (PNC) singled out as responsible for some of the most serious cases of extrajudicial execution and torture. The surge in crime has affected not only the lives of Guatemalans, but also the country's tourism sector, an important foreign exchange earner. In May, Ríos Montt was cleared of all charges in the political scandal known as "Guategate." In June, 11 Indian communities filed genocide charges against Ríos Montt for this role in a series of army massacres carried out during his presidency in which 1,200 Native Americans died. One a positive note, in July three former military officers were convicted in the killing of Bishop Gerardi, in a country where no officer had ever been successfully prosecuted for human rights abuses. However, that



same month, Portillo put security forces on alert and barred senior government officials from leaving the country as congress prepared to debate a major tax increase. In December, Amnesty International criticized Portillo's decision to name retired General Eduardo Arevalo Lacs, a former defense minister accused of rights violations during the civil war, as the country's law enforcement minister. The move was justified by Portillo's defenders as allowing the president to move against two lower-ranking ministry officials considered as having an even more shadowy record.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their governments through elections. In the run-up to the November 2000 elections, which were largely free and fair, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal conducted an energetic voter turnout campaign among the country's 4.4 million registered voters. The constitution guarantees religious freedom and the right to organize political parties, civic organizations, and labor unions. However, despite increasing freedoms, Guatemala has yet to end a tradition of military dominance; recommendations by the truth commission for the purging of senior military commanders involved in atrocities have been largely ignored. The rule of law is undermined by the systemic corruption that afflicts all public institutions, particularly the legislature and the courts.

Despite Penal code reforms in 1994, the judicial system remains ineffectual for most legal or human rights complaints; it suffers from chronic problems of corruption, intimidation, insufficient personnel, lack of training opportunities, and a lack of transparency and accountability. The new police force lacks effective internal accountability that could curb corruption and abuses of human rights. Drug trafficking is a serious problem, and Guatemala remains a warehousing and transit point for South American drugs going to the United States.

Human rights organizations are targets of death threats and the victims of frequent acts of violence, suggesting that a parallel power structure still operates with impunity in Guatemala.

Native Americans are largely shut out from the national justice system. Although indigenous languages are now being used in courtrooms around the country, support for traditional justice systems relying on customary law (*derecho consuetudinario*) receive only lip service from Guatemalan authorities. Similarly, cursory recruitment efforts have resulted in only a handful of Native American recruits for the new civilian police and, once these graduate from the police academy, they are rarely deployed in their own communities, where their language skills and knowledge of local customs could make a difference.

Guatemala remains one of the most violent countries in Latin America. Many Guatemalan businesses reportedly spend up to 15 percent of their budgets on private security. Even the smallest companies in Guatemala City are protected by heavily armed guards, and many of these are Native Americans from rural areas who lack little security or firearms training. Weapons proliferation is also a problem, as there is easy access to arms left over from the civil war, and criminals frequently have greater firepower than police or private security guards. Outside the capital, there is a substantial risk of highway robbery, assault, kidnapping, or other violence related to ethnic divisions.

The closing of military barracks throughout the country—the armed forces were the one Guatemalan institution with a truly national presence—while the PNC was being

created and deployed created a noticeable vacuum in which criminal interests were free to operate. One result was an upsurge of vigilantism and lynchings. Guatemala's well-armed criminals know that there is little chance that they will be apprehended, prosecuted, and punished for their crimes. Vigilante violence has become commonplace since the mid-1990s, with as many as 100 people accused of wrongdoing killed annually by angry mobs fueled, in part, by rage at the ineffectiveness of the justice system. In June 2000, Portillo called out 4,000 army troops to assist the PNC in patrolling urban areas. In June 2001, more than 70 of Guatemala's most dangerous criminals escaped from a maximum-security facility in Escuintla. In response, the government suspended for 30 days several constitutional guarantees, including protection from arrest without warrant and the right to enter and exit the country freely. By the end of 2001, only about half of those who had escaped had been recaptured.

In 1998 the first convictions on war crimes charges were handed down in November, when three progovernment paramilitary force members were sentenced to death for their roles in a 1982 massacre of Indian peasants. In August 1999, 12 soldiers, including one officer, were given five-year sentences, with the possibility of parole, for the killing of 11 returned indigenous refugees, including two children, in 1995.

The press and most of the broadcast media, including several independent newspapers and dozens of radio stations, are privately owned. Five of the six television stations are commercially operated. However, journalists remain at great risk. In recent years, more than a dozen Guatemalan journalists have been forced into exile. The 1993 murder of newspaper publisher Jorge Carpio Nicolle, a former presidential candidate, remains unsolved. In September 2001, the host of a Guatemalan radio talk show that aired citizens' complaints against provincial officials was murdered after facing a flurry of death threats.

Some 32 percent of the population are illiterate; this rate of illiteracy is the highest in the Americas after Haiti. Eighty percent live below poverty levels, and infant mortality among the Maya is among the highest on the continent.

The Rujel Junam Council of Ethnic Communities (CERJ) represents the interests of the country's Indians, a majority of the population, who have faced severe repression and violence by the army and allied paramilitary organizations, as well as being manipulated for propaganda purposes by the URNG guerrillas. In 1996, Indians showed signs of flexing some political muscle. Indian candidates won control of an estimated 40 urban areas, including Guatemala's second largest city, and ten percent of congressional seats. Under a new law, Maya descendants are allowed to seek office as independents, and not as representatives of the national political parties that have ignored their needs. In 2001, a number of clashes were reported in Indian communities between the traditional Catholic majority and evangelical Christians, whose number has swelled in recent years.

Workers are frequently denied the right to organize and are subjected to mass firings and blacklisting, particularly in export-processing zones, where a majority of workers are women. Existing unions are targets of systematic intimidation, physical attacks, and assassination, particularly in rural areas during land disputes. According to a UN report issued in December 2000, Guatemala has the highest rate of child labor in the Americas, with one-third of school-age children forced to work on farms or in factories. Use of Guatemala as a transit point for illegal aliens, particularly from Asia, frequently leads to abuses, including death. On a positive note, during the period 1999-

2001, a national commission helped to reunite some 444 families in which children had been separated from their parents during the civil war.

## Guinea

Polity: Dominant party (military-influenced)  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 7,600,000  
 PPP: \$1,934  
 Life Expectancy: 45  
 Ethnic Groups: Peuhl (40 percent), Malinke (30 percent), Soussou (20 percent), other (10 percent)  
 Capital: Conakry

Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

It looked like the beginning of political reconciliation in May 2001 when President Lansana Conté pardoned the country's main opposition leader, Alpha Condé. A former presidential candidate, Condé had served half of a five-year sentence on sedition charges stemming from a trial that international observers said was unfair. However, six months after the pardon, the Conté government held a referendum on extending presidential terms from five to seven years, allowing for unlimited terms in office, and eliminating presidential age limits. The provisions in the referendum were approved in a flawed vote that was boycotted by members of the opposition, despite government claims of a turnout of nearly 90 percent. There is little doubt that Conté will run for president again when his current term expires in 2003. Violence preceded the November referendum when security forces forcibly prevented opposition demonstrations and meetings, and detained dozens of opposition members.

Under Ahmed Sékou Touré, Guinea declared independence from France in 1958. Alone among France's many African colonies, it rejected the domination of continued close ties with France. Paris retaliated quickly, removing or destroying all "colonial property" and enforcing an unofficial but devastating economic boycott. Sékou Touré's one-party rule became highly repressive, and Guinea was increasingly impoverished under his Soviet-style economic policies. Lansana Conté seized power in a 1984 coup and was nearly toppled by a 1996 army mutiny. Amidst general looting in Conakry, he rallied loyal troops and reestablished his rule.

Serious human rights abuses continued to be perpetrated against Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees residing in Guinea in 2001. Violations included arbitrary detention by Guinean authorities and vigilantes, as well as beating, torture, and sexual assault. However, aid agencies during the year successfully moved refugees further inland for protection from cross-border incursions from Liberia and Sierra Leone. Fighting had abated towards the end of 2001.

Guinea's economy has suffered from a world drop in the price of bauxite. The country is the world's second largest producer of the mineral and is also rich in gold, diamonds, and iron ore.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The Guinean people's constitutional right to freely elect their government is not yet respected in practice. Guinean politics and parties are largely defined along ethnic lines. Electoral manipulation and fraud in the 1993 presidential polls made a mockery of the vote. Lansana Conté was returned to office in a December 1998 presidential election that lacked credible opposition, as state patronage and media strongly backed the incumbent. His reelection to another five-year term, with 54 percent of about 2.7 million votes reported, was unconvincing, although broad manipulation of the electoral process and opposition disunity probably made more blatant forms of vote rigging unnecessary. The Higher Council on Electoral Affairs was neither autonomous nor powerful enough to level the electoral landscape, although the polls were an improvement over past elections. Hundreds of people, however, were arrested after the election, including the official third-place finisher, Alpha Condé.

The June 1995 national assembly elections were more open. A total of eight opposition parties won just enough seats to deny the ruling Progress and Unity Party the two-thirds majority required to enact constitutional changes; but the ruling party's share of seats in the 114-member assembly was probably fraudulently inflated far above the proportion of votes it received. The president retains decree power that could eviscerate the parliamentary process. Despite cumbersome requirements for official recognition of political parties, about 50 are recognized. New legislative elections have been postponed indefinitely because of insecurity in the country. There was a low turnout in the June 2000 municipal elections. The opposition claimed fraud, and protests followed. The November 2001 referendum not only allowed Condé to potentially extend his presidential term indefinitely, it also granted him the power to appoint local officials and supreme court judges.

While nominally independent, the judicial system remains infected by corruption, nepotism, ethnic bias, and political interference, and lacks resources and training. Minor civil cases are often handled by traditional ethnic-based courts. Arbitrary arrests and detention are common, and persistent maltreatment and torture of detainees is reported. Prison conditions are harsh and sometimes life threatening.

Several statutes restrict freedom of association and assembly in apparent contravention of constitutional guarantees. The government may ban any gathering that "threatens national unity." Several human rights groups and many nongovernmental groups operate openly.

The government has wide powers to bar any communications that insult the president or disturb the peace. All broadcasting, as well as the country's largest and only daily newspaper, are state-controlled, and offer little coverage of the opposition and scant criticism of government policy. The print media have little impact in rural areas, where incomes are low and illiteracy is high. Several weekly newspapers in Conakry offer sharp criticism of the government despite frequent harassment. A restrictive press law allows the government to censor or shutter publications on broad and ill-defined bases. Defamation and slander are considered criminal offenses. Two journalists for the independent newspapers *L'Observateur* and the *Nouvel Observateur* were jailed in 2001.

Constitutionally protected religious rights are respected in practice, although the main body representing the country's Muslims, who constitute more than 80 percent of the population, is government controlled.

Women have far fewer educational and employment opportunities than men, and many societal customs discriminate against women. Constitutionally protected women's rights are often unrealized. Violence against women is said to be prevalent. Spousal abuse is a criminal offense, but security forces rarely intervene in domestic matters. Female genital mutilation is illegal; women's groups are working to eradicate the practice, but it is still widely carried out.

The constitution provides for the right to form and join unions. However, about 80 percent of Guinea's seven million people are subsistence farmers. Only a very small formal sector exists, and about 160,000 workers are unionized. Several labor confederations compete in this small market and have the right to bargain collectively.

## ↓ Guinea-Bissau

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy Political Rights: 4  
Civil Liberties: 5  
Economy: Mixed statist (transitional) Status: Partly Free

Population: 1,200,000

PPP: \$678

Life Expectancy: 45

Ethnic Groups: Balanta (30 percent), Fula (20 percent),  
Manjaca (14 percent), Mandinga (13 percent),  
Papel (7 percent), other (16 percent)

Capital: Bissau

Trend Arrow: Guinea-Bissau received a downward trend arrow because of the general deterioration in civil liberties linked to the government's increasing instability and attempts to retain its grip on power.



### Overview:

President Kumba Yala increasingly exhibited authoritarian tendencies during the year, although his supporters contend that he is rooting out endemic corruption and threats to democratic rule. More than two dozen people were detained, including two former senior military officers, in December after what the government said was a coup attempt. No shots were fired and opposition members of parliament, who are in the majority, demanded proof of a plot to overthrow Yala. They also demanded the release of the supreme court's president and vice president, who were detained in November in connection with allegations of misappropriation of funds. Yala at one point threatened to sack most civil servants and replace them with members of his own ethnic group. United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned in October that Guinea-Bissau had become "dangerously unstable." He recommended the extension of the UN peace-building office in Guinea-Bissau until December 2002.

Guinea-Bissau won independence from Portugal in 1973 after a 12-year guerrilla war. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) held power for the next 13 years. Luis Cabral became president in 1974 and made Joao Bernardo Vieira his prime minister, but Vieira toppled Cabral in 1980. Con-

stitutional revisions in 1991 ended the PAIGC's repressive one-party state. Vieira won the country's first free and fair presidential election in 1994, but he eventually came to be seen as the leader of a corrupt ruling class.

An army mutiny broke out in 1998 after Vieira sacked General Ansumane Mané, accusing him of smuggling arms to rebels in the southern Casamance region of neighboring Senegal, which for years had complained that Guinea-Bissau was backing the rebels. Encouraged by France, about 3,000 troops from Senegal and Guinea intervened on behalf of Vieira. They were eventually replaced by fewer than 600 unarmed West African peacekeepers, which made Vieira vulnerable to his overthrow in May 1999 by Mané. Legislative and presidential elections were held in November 1999, and populist Kumba Yala won the second round of voting for the presidency. However, fighting broke out in 2000 between military supporters of Yala and those of Mané, who was considered a hero in the country's independence struggle, after Mané declared himself the head of the armed forces and revoked military promotions that Yala had made; Mané was killed.

The vast majority of Guinea-Bissau's one million citizens survive on subsistence farming. Cashew nuts are a key export. There are hopes for substantial oil reserves offshore.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

The people of Guinea-Bissau were able to choose their government freely for the first time in 1994, and both direct presidential polls and legislative elections were judged free and fair by international observers. Voting in the November 1999 legislative and presidential elections was declared free and fair by international observers despite widespread delays, isolated cases of violence, and other voting irregularities. The January 2000 runoff pitted Yala, of the Social Renewal Party (PRS), against Malam Bacai Sanha, of the PAIGC. In legislative voting, the opposition PRS obtained 38 of the 102 seats, followed by the Resistance of Guinea with 29 and the PAIGC with 24. The 11 remaining seats went to five of the ten other parties that fielded candidates.

Freedom of the judiciary suffered an apparent setback in 2001. President Yala dismissed four members of the supreme court in September and detained two of them after the court ruled as unconstitutional Yala's expulsion of senior members of a moderate Muslim group. The members were from Pakistan. The sackings led to a month-long strike by judges and a ten-day strike by prosecutors. Judicial performance is often unpredictable owing to political interference, poor training, and scant resources. Traditional law usually prevails in rural areas. Police routinely ignore rights of privacy and protections against search and seizure. Severe mistreatment of detainees is reported.

Freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are constitutionally guaranteed and generally respected. Freedom of speech and of the press is constitutionally guaranteed, but journalists practice self-censorship. There are several private and community radio stations. Few private newspapers publish, and the lack of vibrant independent media may be more due to financial constraints than to government interference. Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières in November 2001 said press freedom was deteriorating in Guinea-Bissau. The daily *Diário de Bissau* and the weekly *Gazeta de Noticias* were closed in October after journalists were accused of threatening peace and stability after published reports linked Yala with corruption. The director of *Diário de Bissau* was detained in November.

Religious freedom suffered a setback in 2001 when President Yala ordered the expulsion of the Pakistani leaders of the Ahmadiyya Muslim group, whom he accused of contributing to political instability. The supreme court ruled the expulsions unconstitutional. About half of Guinea-Bissau's population is Muslim. While official registration is required, no religious group has been denied registration since 1982.

Women face some legal and significant traditional and societal discrimination, despite constitutional protection. They generally do not receive equal pay for equal work and have fewer opportunities for education and jobs in the small formal sector. Domestic violence against women is common, and female genital mutilation is widespread. The government has formed a national committee to discourage the practice.

Eleven labor unions operate, and workers have the right to organize and to strike with prior notice. Most people, however, work in subsistence agriculture. Wages generally are established in bilateral negotiations between workers and employers.

## Guyana

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 700,000  
 PPP: \$3,640  
 Life Expectancy: 65  
 Ethnic Groups: East Indian (49 percent), black (32 percent), mixed (12 percent), Indian (6 percent), white and Chinese (1 percent)  
 Capital: Georgetown



**Overview:** Incumbent President Bharrat Jagdeo was reelected on March 19, 2001, after 90 percent of eligible voters turned out to cast their ballots in voting that showed the country's continuing deep divisions along racial lines. Pronounced by international observers to be free and fair, the elections nonetheless were held amid great tension and marred by some administrative irregularities. Jagdeo's first initiative upon being declared the winner was to make a televised national appeal to his countrymen to begin a process of national healing. In mid-2001, violence erupted in several small towns in protest against crime, poverty, and poor public services. Indigenous rights continued to be one of the country's main human rights concerns.

Guyana is a member of the Commonwealth. Indo-Guyanese outnumber Afro-Guyanese, 52 percent to 36 percent. From independence in 1966 until 1992, Guyana was ruled by the autocratic, predominantly Afro-Guyanese, People's National Congress (PNC). The 1980 constitution provides for a strong president and a 65-seat national assembly elected every five years. Twelve seats are occupied by elected local officials. The leader of the party winning the plurality of parliamentary seats becomes president for a five-year term. The president appoints the prime minister and cabinet.

The first free and fair elections were held in 1992, and 80 percent of the eligible

population voted. The PNC lost to an alliance of the predominantly Indo-Guyanese People's Progressive Party (PPP) and the Civic party. PPP leader Cheddi Jagan, having moderated his Marxism since the collapse of communism, became president with 52 percent of the vote; PNC leader Desmond Hoyte took 41 percent. A third candidate from the Working People's Alliance (WPA), the only mixed-race party in the country, won less than 2 percent. In the legislature, the PPP won 36 of 65 seats; the PNC, 26; the WPA, which campaigned on a platform of multiracial cooperation, won 2 seats; and the centrist United Force took 1.

Fear and distrust of the Indo-Guyanese ruling party continued among Afro-Guyanese, despite Jagan's record of governing in a relatively evenhanded manner. He was slow to move on promised constitutional and electoral reforms, but in 1995 got to work with an eye towards the next elections, due in 1997.

Jagan's work was cut short by his death in March 1997. He was replaced by Samuel Hinds, a member of Civic, the PPP's coalition partner. Hinds called elections for December 15, 1997. Cheddi Jagan's widow, Janet, beat the PNC's Hoyte by a 5 to 4 margin, or roughly 60,000 votes. The vote was bitterly disputed as rigged. The army was called upon to help quell civil disturbances, even after a special commission sent by the Caribbean Community (Caricom), the regional multilateral group, found no evidence of election fraud. In 1998, progress was made on constitutional reform as parliament began the process of setting up a broad-based committee to oversee changes in the 1980 constitution.

Ill health forced Janet Jagan to resign in August 1999, and she was replaced by Finance Minister Bharrat Jagdeo, who promised to heal racial and political divides and to welcome foreign investment. In 2000, President Jagdeo paved the way for general elections to be held in January 2001, although these were eventually postponed until March. Jagdeo also urged action to implement the recommendations for reform of the 1980 constitution that were submitted to parliament by a constitution reform commission.

In the run-up to the 2001 elections Hoyte, at the head of a PNR/Reform coalition, alleged that the government had sought to disenfranchise as many of his supporters as possible. In the aftermath of the bitterly-fought contest, retired General Joe Singh said that the country's updated electoral register had been 95 percent accurate. However, Singh added that the electoral process then in place was "archaic, bureaucratic and fraught with potential errors," and for that reason should be replaced. In December, Venezuela and Guyana agreed to re-launch a high-level bilateral commission on mutual cooperation, despite remaining at odds over the exploitation of natural resources in Essequibo—a mineral- and forest-rich region to which Venezuela maintains over a century-old claim.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through direct, multi-party elections. The 2001 elections generated a broader consensus about the importance of election reform to the democratic process. Despite some technical problems, there was no repetition of the irregularities that marred the 1997 contest and resulted in two years of political and social turmoil. In January 2001, a judge ruled that the irregularities from the 1997 elections had rendered that poll null and void; however she also noted that the problems detected would not have changed the final result. The Guyana Elections Commission (Gecom) ordered a review of the March 13 elections as a preliminary step to reform of the entire electoral system.



Under the 1980 constitution, the president has wide powers and immunities. Because the constitution lacks explicit guarantees, political rights and civil liberties rest more on government tolerance than institutional protection. The rights of free expression, freedom of religion, and freedom to organize political parties, civic organizations, and labor unions are generally respected.

Several independent newspapers operate freely, including the daily *Stabroek News*. Only two radio stations operate; both are government owned. The government owns one television station. Seventeen privately owned television stations freely criticize the government.

The judicial system is independent; however, due process is undermined by the shortage of staff and funds. Prisons are overcrowded and conditions poor. Guyana is the only Caribbean country to have cut all ties to the Privy Council of London, the court of last resort of other former colonies in the region. Guyanese officials have complained that U.S. efforts to deport Guyanese from the United States to Guyana caused an upsurge in violent crimes such as carjackings and shootouts with police. Indigenous peoples are routinely denied the right to a fair trial and due process of law, due in particular to the failure to provide translation services at trial and the absence of defense counsel.

The Guyana Defence Force and the Guyana Police Force are under civilian control, the latter invested with the authority to make arrests and maintain law and order throughout the country. Guyana's porous and largely unpatrolled borders have made the country an increasingly attractive transshipment route for South American cocaine, which, together with a small domestic cultivation of marijuana, has caused local consumption of illegal drugs to increase markedly. Guyana's counternarcotics agencies are believed to interdict only a small percentage of the Peruvian and Colombian cocaine and coca paste that enters the country. Antidrug efforts, including the apprehension and prosecution of drug traffickers, are hampered by an antiquated judicial structure and an outdated legal framework, as well as inadequate resources dedicated to law enforcement.

The Guyana Human Rights Association, an autonomous, effective group backed by independent civic and religious groupings, has charged the police with frequent recurrence to excessive force, sometimes causing death. In August 2001, Amnesty International said that the killing of three smuggling suspects, including a 15-year-old boy, by Guyanese police, and the fatal shooting of two people protesting the deaths, were "part of a pattern of extrajudicial executions and excessive use of force by law enforcement." Although authorities have taken some steps to investigate extrajudicial killings, and charges against some officers have been brought, abuses are still committed with impunity. The police are also prone to corruption, particularly so given the penetration by the hemispheric drug trade.

Labor unions are well organized. In 1995 the government sought to dilute the right to strike among some public sector unions. Companies are not obligated to recognize unions in former state enterprises sold off by the government.

Racial clashes have diminished within the last decade; however, long-standing animosity between Afro- and Indo-Guyanese remains a concern.

There are nine indigenous peoples in Guyana numbering approximately 80,000 people, more than ten percent of the population. Human rights violations against them are widespread and pervasive, particularly concerning the failure of the state to ad-

equately respect indigenous land and resource rights. Logging and mining concessions, which cover vast areas of Guyana, often cause substantial environmental degradation, which in turn causes a decline in indigenous subsistence resources and health. As indigenous land and resource rights are fundamentally related to cultural rights, the latter are also curtailed when the former are violated. Indigenous attempts to seek redress through the courts have been met with unwarranted delays by the judiciary. Legislation pertaining to indigenous peoples is outdated and discriminatory, vesting in government ministers arbitrary and far-reaching powers that do not apply to other Guyanese citizens. Intergovernmental oversight bodies have criticized this legislation and recommended its revision on a number of occasions to no avail. There is widespread discrimination with regard to the provision of education and health services in indigenous communities and disregard for their customary laws and institutions of governance.

Domestic violence against women is troubling, as is the government's reluctance to address the issue. There is no legal protection against sexual harassment in the workplace.

## Haiti

Polity: Dominant party      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Capitalist-      Civil Liberties: 6\*  
 statist                              Status: Not Free

Population: 7,000,000

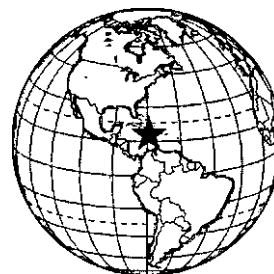
PPP: \$1,464

Life Expectancy: 49

Ethnic Groups: Black (95 percent), mulatto  
 and white (5 percent)

Capital: Port-au-Prince

**Ratings Change:** Haiti's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6 due to increases in political and street violence and President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's call for citizens to take the law into their own hands.



### Overview:

A December 2001 attempted coup against President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and violence by his supporters in the wake of the assault on the National Palace, appeared to be the result of what one observer called "a damaging game of attrition [that] characterizes negotiations to resolve Haiti's political stalemate." Throughout the year Haiti was wracked by political and social unrest, in large part the fallout from disputed national and local elections held late the previous year, in which Aristide and his Lavalas Family party swept to power. As a result, the largest benefactors in the international donor community announced that they were withholding \$500 million in aid until the government took the steps needed to normalize the country—a move that damaged Haiti's precarious, poverty-stricken economy even further. Haiti's U.S. Justice Department-trained national police force proved incapable of stemming increasing criminal anarchy, and Aristide's call for people to take violence into their own hands legitimized an already vigilante-minded public's view of crime control.

Since gaining independence from France in 1804 following a slave revolt, the Re-

public of Haiti has endured a history of poverty, violence, instability, and dictatorship. A 1986 military coup ended 29 years of rule by the Duvalier family, and the army ruled for most of the next eight years. Under international pressure, the military permitted the implementation of a French-style constitution in 1987. It provides for a president elected for five years, an elected parliament composed of a 27-member senate and an 83-member house of representatives, and a presidentially appointed prime minister.

In the 1990 elections, Aristide, a charismatic left-wing priest, won in a landslide over conservative Marc Bazin. Aristide sought to establish civilian authority over the military; he also railed against corruption. When Haiti's elite and the military conspired to overthrow him, Aristide overstepped the constitution by calling on supporters to defend the government by violent means. He was overthrown in September 1991. Aristide was replaced by a military triumvirate headed by General Raoul Cedras. Tens of thousands of paramilitary thugs terrorized the populace, and the regime was steeped in narcotics trafficking. The United States and the United Nations imposed trade and oil embargoes. In September 1994, facing an imminent U.S. invasion, the military dictatorship agreed to relinquish power. U.S. troops took control of the country, and Aristide was reinstated and his security guaranteed by U.S. and UN forces. Aristide dismantled the military before the June 1995 parliamentary elections got underway, and their internal security functions were eventually handed over to the new Haitian National Police (PNH). International observers questioned the legitimacy of the June election, and Aristide's supporters fell out among themselves. The more militant Lavalas movement remained firmly behind him. However, the National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD), a leftist coalition that had backed him in 1990, claimed fraud and boycotted the runoff elections. In the end, Lavalas won an overwhelming parliamentary majority.

In the fall Lavalas nominated René Preval, Aristide's prime minister in 1991, as its presidential candidate. With Aristide backing him and the FNCD and most other major opposition parties boycotting, the result of the December 17, 1995, election, which opposition politicians claimed was marred by serious irregularities and fraud, was a forgone conclusion. Preval won about 89 percent in a turnout of less than one-third of those eligible.

Preval took office February 7, 1996. The UN had planned to withdraw its troops by the end of the month. The new U.S.-trained PNH, however, clearly lacked the competence to fill the void. At Preval's urging, the UN extended its stay, but by June cut its presence to 1,300. The final U.S. combat force had withdrawn two months earlier.

In September 1996, Preval purged much of his security force, which, according to U.S. officials, had been involved in the murders a month earlier of two politicians from the right-wing Mobilization for National Development (MDN) party, which counted on heavy support from former soldiers. Senate elections held in April 1997 were fraught with irregularities, and the resulting ongoing election dispute meant that parliament would not approve a new prime minister to replace Rosny Smarth, who resigned in June 1997 following growing criticism of the government's economic policies. In September Aristide announced an alliance with other congressional groups to oppose Preval's economic reform plans.

The next two years were marked by political violence, including the murder of an opposition senator. It was also a time of growing corruption, politicization, and frequent indiscipline of members of the new police force, which had been created from scratch in a country with tenuous civic traditions and where the sustainability of post-

Cedras administration of justice reform was always in doubt. In August 2000, the U.S. Justice Department announced that it was ending its long-running, scandal-ridden police and prosecutorial training effort in Haiti, without giving a reason for its decision.

Aristide, revered by some as a defender of the powerless and Haiti's first democratically elected president, swept to victory in a November 2000 presidential contest boycotted by all major opposition parties and held against a backdrop of widespread civil unrest and voter intimidation. Running on a populist platform of economic reactivation in the hemisphere's poorest country, Aristide's nearly 92 percent of the vote in the presidential election was mirrored in contests for nine senate seats—all won by his Lavalas Family party—giving his new government all but one seat in the upper house. In elections, held in three stages in May, June, and July of 2000, which opponents claimed were rigged, the Lavalas Family also won 80 percent of the seats in the lower house.

A recent departure of UN teams designed to monitor the performance of Haiti's relatively new civilian police force and its compliance with human rights standards left the Aristide government with a free hand to carry out its campaign against the opposition. Senior opposition figures said they feared what they said was the incipient creation of a one-party state. In December 2000, opposition political parties said that they would work to create an alternative government before Aristide was sworn in on February 7, 2001. Proceeds from narcotics trafficking have corrupted large sectors of the police force, and knowledgeable sources say that several national legislators elected in 2001 are in the pay of the Colombian drug cartels. In response to the fraudulent election, a 15-party opposition alliance, called the Democratic Convergence, named a 75-year-old human rights activist, Gerard Gourgue, to the symbolic post of provisional president.

Throughout 2001, the Democratic Convergence kept up the pressure on Aristide to resign and capitalized on popular anger with the lack of government services and the state of the collapsing economy. The arrests of prominent opposition figures and attacks on their followers have doomed efforts to bring about a reconciliation among the warring political factions, despite several high-profile efforts by the Organization of American States (OAS) to coax the parties into agreement. In early 2001, Gourgue led more than 1,000 members of Haiti's military, disbanded following the U.S. invasion, in a march through downtown Port-au-Prince, demanding the reestablishment of the army and Aristide's resignation. (The military had fallen into deep discredit as the result of its service under several harsh dictatorships that ruled Haiti before 1994.) In July, men in army fatigues killed four police officers when they stormed a police academy and a police station, demanding loyalty to the (nonexistent) army. The attackers then fled to three towns in a central province, where they killed two more policemen. The small but growing demand that the army be reconstituted reflects the state of collective insecurity felt by Haitians, and popular disenchantment with the ineffectiveness of the PNH. In November, a general strike by the political opposition shut down Haiti's second largest city, Cap Haitien, and reflected unrest throughout the country. On December 17, 30 armed gunmen tried to storm the presidential palace, only to be repelled by police and palace security guards. At least 13 people were killed in the attack and subsequent mob violence by Aristide supporters, while authorities launched a manhunt for the former Cap Haitien police chief accused of leading the coup attempt.

Faced with a spiraling crime wave in 2001, Aristide also appeared to condone mob rule. In June, he declared that people caught committing crimes did not need to go to

court to be judged. "If a hoodlum stops a vehicle in the street and takes the keys ... he is guilty," Aristide told a group of police officers. "It is not necessary to bring him to court to have him judged. Zero tolerance for criminals. Period." Although Aristide defenders denied the call was a blank check for summary executions, human rights advocates pointed out that lynch-mob-style killings climbed in the aftermath of the speech. Police said that street crime had also dropped by 60 percent.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Alleged irregularities in the May 2000 parliamentary elections caused Haiti's opposition parties to boycott the November presidential contest. The credibility of the charges raised against Aristide's Lavalas Family party machine were such that the United States, Canada, and the European Union—all of which provided significant financial and technical support to Aristide's government after he was returned to power in 1994—refused to send observers to the sham November elections. According to the Aristide-dominated Provisional Electoral Council, the former president won 92 percent of 2.87 million votes cast, or 61 percent of eligible voters. However, most independent observers say the turnout was significantly lower. Opposition politicians claimed that ballot boxes had been stuffed and tally sheets tampered with in order to inflate the turnout figures.

The constitution guarantees a full range of political rights and civil liberties. The protection of such rights in 2000, however, remained precarious, as the rule of law was tenuous at best, and the situation was aggravated by a yawning security vacuum.

The judicial system remains corrupt, inefficient, and essentially dysfunctional, particularly in rural areas, and U.S. reform efforts, tainted by allegations of corruption involving U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Justice Department contractors and others, were abruptly brought to a halt in mid-2000. The legal system is also hampered by a large case backlog, an outdated legal code, poor facilities, and the fact that business is conducted in French, rather than Creole, Haiti's majority language. Haiti's 19 Penal institutions are uncommonly harsh, and in a country that has no death Penalty, getting thrown into one of them is often considered a death sentence. The largest prison, the Penitencier National, built in 1918 during a period of U.S. occupation and designed to accommodate no more than 1,000 prisoners, holds 2,100. A severe backlog of cases means hundreds suffer lengthy pretrial detention periods. In March of 2001, it was estimated that only 818 men out of the 3,063 held in Haiti's prisons had been convicted of a crime, compared to 23 out of 167 women jailed, and 14 minors out of 79 in detention. On a positive note, in 2000 two landmark trials convicted leaders of the former military and police officers accused of grave rights violations.

Following the U.S.-led invasion of Haiti in 1994, a first-ever civilian police force was created. Trained by the U.S. Justice Department in conjunction with UN authorities, the Haitian National Police (PNH) has proved to be an overwhelming disappointment, as corruption is pervasive and adherence to modern police practices and procedures is uneven at best. The police force has proved to be no match for traffickers in Colombian cocaine, who move an estimated one-fifth of the total entering into the United States through Haiti. Drug corruption and penetration of law enforcement by the narcotics lords is one of the most serious issues facing the PNH today and accounts for part of the increasing mistrust Haitians feel towards the police.

Mob violence and armed gangs posed severe security threats in urban areas. Former

soldiers and others linked to the former military regime and common criminals were responsible for much of the violence, including political assassinations. Break-ins and armed robberies, rare a few years ago, are now commonplace, and many observers tie the growing violence directly to increases in both the drug trade and local narcotics consumption. Haitian officials also say that the rise in crime is due to the repatriation of convicted criminals from other countries, particularly the United States. Turf wars between rival drug gangs have resulted in the killing of scores of people, including several policemen. Private security forces that carry out extralegal search and seizure are flourishing.

A number of independent newspapers and radio stations exist. Outlets critical of the government remain targets of official intimidation, including mob attacks. Television is state run and strongly biased toward the government. In December 2001, Brignol Lindor, news director of Radio Eco 2000, was stoned and hacked to death by an allegedly pro-Aristide mob. The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres accused Aristide supporters of frequent harassment of journalists, and accused Aristide of obstructing justice in the investigation of the April 2000 assassination of outspoken radio journalist Jean Dominique. The first investigative judge to take on the case quit under pressure, while a second was forced to send his family into exile. One of the suspects under investigation for Dominique's murder was Aristide confidant Senator Dany Toussaint, a former military officer with his own political power base among the poor.

Labor rights, as with all other legally sanctioned guarantees, are essentially unenforced. Unions are generally too weak to engage in collective bargaining, and their organizing efforts are undermined by the high unemployment rate. In July 2001, Haitian human rights activists charged that authorities in the Dominican Republic had continued mass deportations of Haitian immigrants, despite assurances that they were trying to improve the situation. Some one million Haitians work in the Dominican Republic, primarily on sugar plantations and in construction.

HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death in Haiti, where adult prevalence rates for HTV are above four percent.

Trafficking of children within Haiti occurs primarily for purposes of prostitution or labor. Haiti is to a lesser extent a country of origin for trafficked men and women to the United States, Europe (mainly France), Canada, and the Dominican Republic. The government has acknowledged its internal trafficking problem and, despite severe resource constraints, is making significant efforts to address it. There is no Haitian law that specifically prohibits the trafficking in persons.

## ↓ Honduras

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 6,700,000  
 PPP: \$2,340  
 Life Expectancy: 66

Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (90 percent), Indian (7 percent), black (2 percent), white (1 percent)

Capital: Tegucigalpa

Trend Arrow: Honduras received a downward trend arrow due to an increase in the use of military patrols to quell rampant street crime, and to government indifference to the **killings** of 800 street children during the last three-and-a-half years.



### Overview:

On November 25, 2001 conservative businessman Ricardo Maduro, candidate of the opposition Nationalist Party (PN), bested Liberal Party (PL) contender Rafael Pineda to win the presidency by a 52-43 margin in a contest in which Honduras' spiraling street crime was the major issue. Maduro, a former Central Bank president and advocate of educational reform, promised a New York City-style crackdown on the tens of thousands of gang members who frequently stage bloody turf fights and traffick in narcotics. Maduro's own son was killed by gunmen in 1997. In November, the Central American Court of Justice ruled against Honduras in a two-year-long border dispute with Nicaragua in which, by means of a treaty signed with Colombia, Honduras dismissed Nicaragua's claims to about 52,000 square miles of the Caribbean.

The Republic of Honduras was established in 1839, eighteen years after independence from Spain. It has endured decades of military rule and intermittent elected governments. The last military regime gave way to elected civilian rule in 1982. The constitution provides for a president and a 130-member, unicameral congress elected for four years.

The two main parties are the center-left PL and the conservative PN. In the 1993, the PN nominated Oswaldo Ramos Soto, an outspoken right-winger. The PL, which held power during most of the 1980s, nominated Roberto Reina, a 67-year-old progressive and a former president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Reina won with 52 percent of the vote. The PL won 70 seats in congress, the PN, 56. Two small left-wing parties took the remaining 4.

Reina promised a "moral revolution" and greater civilian control over the military. His administration had a positive, if mixed, record. The size of the military was reduced greatly, although its spending remained secret, and officers suspected of rights offenses protected. The process of separating the police from the military was undertaken following the December 1996 approval by congress of a constitutional amendment to place the police under civilian control.

However, a virulent crime wave, believed to be, in part, the work of former and serving military and intelligence officers, continued unabated. Several leaders of Indian and Garifuna minority groups attempting to defend their land from encroachments by non-Indian landowners were murdered.

On November 30, 1997, PL presidential candidate Carlos Flores, a U.S.-trained engineer and newspaper owner, won a resounding, 54 to 41 percent victory over PN candidate Nora Melgar. Flores immediately announced that civilian control of the armed forces would be strengthened by the creation of a functional defense ministry and the newly civilianized police would enjoy an increased budget. He also appointed five women to high-level posts, including that of minister of security, the portfolio in charge of the new civilian national police. In September 1998, congress voted to end more than 30 years of military autonomy by suppressing the post of commander in chief of the armed forces, a move that created unrest in the barracks. Flores also governed through some of the most trying times in Honduran history after Hurricane Mitch devastated the country in 1998, killing thousands and causing billions of dollars in damage.

In May 1999 a civilian judge ordered the arrest, for abuse of authority, of the general who had retired at the end of the previous year as commander in chief of the armed forces. A July 1999 crisis within the army, which brought a drastic reorganization of the military high command, was apparently the result of efforts by the civilian defense minister to audit the military's lucrative pension fund and holding company. The crisis was resolved only after Flores granted concessions to the rebellious officers in secret negotiations. In August 2000, in a move many hailed as a blow to military impunity, the former chief of the armed forces and nine other retired officers, including two generals, were accused in civilian court of embezzling \$349,000.

In August 2001, more than 3,000 army troops and heavily armed police searched for youth gangs in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula in an effort to clamp down on street violence that has killed more than 800 children and teenagers since 1998. Flores ordered the deployment after rival gangs clashed in downtown Tegucigalpa, leaving one person dead and seven injured. During the same month a retired U.S. police officer living in Honduras was murdered, the 14th American killed in Honduras since 1997. Transparency International has called Honduras one of the most corrupt countries in the world.

Also in August 2001, the United Nations called on the Honduran government to protect children and teenagers from extrajudicial executions, often at the hands of the police. More than 800 children and young people are believed to have been killed in the period running from 1998 to mid-2001. Police say many of the killings were the result of rivalries between young gang members; Honduras, with as many as 30,000 youths belonging to 475 gangs, ranks second only to El Salvador in gang numbers and violence in Central America. Human rights groups say many of the killings are committed by death squads linked to the police.

In the 2001 elections, the 54-year-old Maduro faced the 71-year-old Pineda, president of the congress, who promised greater spending on education and improved public services, paid for by a crackdown on tax evaders. After his election Maduro said his most immediate concerns included reactivating an economy still prostrate after Hurricane Mitch, a crippling drought, and a tropical storm in 2001, a drop in world coffee prices and a recession in the United States—Honduras' main trading partner. Some critics of his "get-tough" anti-crime platform said that only solutions that addressed the country's wide gap between the 80 percent of Hondurans who live in poverty and the small number of wealthy who live in heavily guarded fortresses would eliminate the root causes of the nation's endemic violence.



**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens are able to change their government through elections, and the November 2001 election, in which 128 congressional seats and nearly 300 mayoralties were also open, was free and fair. However, although the election was largely peaceful, the murder of a PN congressional candidate on the eve of the vote underscored the growing threat to the country's stability posed by crime. For the first time, Hondurans living in the United States, estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, were eligible to vote at special booths set up in New York, Miami, and Los Angeles. Separate congressional and presidential ballots were also used, allowing supporters of smaller parties to split their tickets.

Constitutional guarantees regarding free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to form political parties and civic organizations are generally respected. However, repressive measures coming in the face of peaceful protests and mounting crime have limited political rights and civil liberties.

The judicial system, headed by the supreme court, is weak and corruption prone. In 1998 the new court was packed with lawyers close to both the military and to officials accused of corruption. Death threats and violent attacks face judges who assert themselves in human rights cases. Although 90 percent of the 10,000 people incarcerated are awaiting trial, they share deplorable prison conditions with convicted inmates. Drug-related corruption is rampant, and in August 2000, Guatama Fonseca, Honduras's new security minister, charged that "venal" judges were protecting drug smugglers.

The Honduran police are ill-paid and understaffed, and lack the training and equipment needed to effectively stem the rising tide of crime. There are only 6,500 officers in a country that registered 2,155 homicides in 2000, a number already surpassed by the end of November 2001. In 1997-1998, in an effort to end a more than three-decades-long legacy of rights abuse and endemic corruption, the police were removed from under the command and control of the armed forces. However, throughout 2001 the army was called in to reinforce the police presence in several major cities and in some rural areas. Less than 30 percent of reported crimes are investigated and the rates of apprehension and conviction of criminals are low. Also in 2001, revelations about the participation by police in crime gangs involved in auto theft, kidnapping, drug trafficking, and the robberies of banks, businesses and homes have increased citizen concerns. Politicized appointments within the police force are a problem, as are the lack of important political support, a generalized lack of engagement by civil society groups with the police, and severe limitations on resources and the number of authorities for disciplinary systems within the force. Meanwhile, low wages together with a purge of hundreds of officers accused of corruption and other abuses of power sparked a job action among the police.

The military exerts considerable, if waning, influence over the government. By naming a civilian instead of a general to head the armed forces in January 1999, President Carlos Flores said he hoped to strengthen government control over the military. The oversight offensive also included civilian control of the armed forces budget and the independent auditing of military-business ventures—the sources of much high-level corruption. A constellation of military-owned businesses makes the armed forces one of Honduras's ten largest for-profit enterprises; however, by 2001 the \$40 million annual military budget was under strict civilian oversight. In November 2001, army officials admitted that former top commanders had looted some \$8 million in public funds for their own use. Five once-omnipotent former commanders in chief were under in-

vestigation by federal prosecutors for a corruption spree believed to have lasted from 1986 to 1997.

Labor unions are well organized and can strike, although labor actions often result in clashes with security forces. Labor leaders, religious groups, and indigenous-based peasant unions pressing for land rights remain vulnerable to repression.

Indian communities in Honduras's Atlantic coast region continue to fight against destructive, government-approved activities that threaten their lands and environment. Non-Indians continue to colonize Indian lands with government support for agriculture, ranching, timber and mining interests. In 2001, a Miskito Indian regional organization, *Miskito Asia Takanka* (MASTA), pressed on with its campaign to secure the demarcation of Indian lands in the Moquitia Coast region of Eastern Honduras. Along Honduras's northern Atlantic coast, the descendants of black slaves and Carib Indians known as Garifuna, find their language, culture, land, and access to natural resources under severe pressures, as the government seeks to promote tourist industry development on their traditional lands.

Some 85,000 workers, mostly women, are employed in the low-wage *maquiladora* (assembly plant) export sector. Child labor is a problem in rural areas and in the informal economy. UNICEF has estimated that, in the aftermath of the devastating Hurricane Mitch in 1998, more than 42,000 children joined an estimated 1.3 million between the ages of 10 and 17 who left school to work in the country's streets, factories, and fields.

Honduras is a source country for trafficked children, especially young girls, who are trafficked by criminal groups to other Central American countries for purposes of sexual exploitation. Honduran boys reportedly are sent to Canada in connection with drug trafficking. Trafficking in children also is believed to occur within the country's borders. The government has made significant efforts to combat trafficking. Effective law enforcement, however, is undermined by corruption, lack of resources, and weak police and judicial institutions.

## Hungary

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 10,000,000

PPP: \$11,430

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Hungarian (90 percent),  
Roma (Gypsies) (4 percent), German (3 percent), other (3 percent)

Capital: Budapest

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

The year 2001 in Hungary was marked by efforts to meet accession requirements for membership in the European Union (EU), to prepare for important parliamentary elections in

spring 2002, and to grapple with allegations of high-level corruption. The passage of a law granting substantial rights to ethnic Hungarians residing outside the country generated controversy both at home and abroad.

King Stephen I, who ruled from 1001 to 1038, is credited with founding the Hungarian state. In the centuries that followed, however, Hungarian lands passed through Turkish, Polish, and Austrian hands. In the mid-nineteenth century, Hungary established a liberal, constitutional monarchy under the Austrian Hapsburgs, but two world wars and a Communist dictatorship in the twentieth century forestalled true independence.

By the late 1980s, Hungary's economy was in decline, and the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party came under intense pressure to accept reforms. Ultimately, the party congress dissolved itself, and Hungary held its first free, multiparty parliamentary election in 1990. The new parliament made Jozsef Antall, a member of the conservative Hungarian Democratic Forum, the new head of state. Since then, government control has passed freely and fairly between left- and right-leaning parties, and the country has followed an aggressive reform path. Hungary joined NATO in 1999.

In 2000, Hungary celebrated a millennium of statehood. Prime Minister Viktor Orban declared the end of Hungary's post-Communist transition when output and real wages reached 1989 levels. When President Arpad Goncz completed his second and final term in 2000, parliament elected Ferenc Madl, a professor of international law, to fill the largely ceremonial post.

Efforts continue apace to secure Hungary's place as a first-round entrant into an enlarged EU. In 2001, for example, the country became the first candidate to close negotiations on the free movement of labor and capital, and on justice and home affairs. To date, it has closed more chapters on accession than any other candidate.

Political parties began a showdown in 2001 to parliamentary elections that will take place the following year. The Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) chose Peter Medgyessy, a former finance minister and deputy prime minister, as its candidate. Prime Minister Orban will top the national list of the Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ). FIDESZ and the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) agreed to propose joint lists at the national, regional, and district levels. FIDESZ also concluded a cooperation agreement with Lungo Drom, a Roma group.

The Independent Smallholders' Party (FKGP), a member of the ruling coalition, was the target in 2001 of multiple allegations of bribery and corruption. Jozsef Torgyan, the party's leader, stepped down from his post as agriculture minister amid charges he used ill-gotten funds to build an expensive private home, offered slots on the Smallholders' election list in exchange for donations, and improperly diverted public funds to his son. In related news, the Financial Action Task Force of the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development placed Hungary on its list of states that are "non-cooperative in the fight against money laundering" for its policies on anonymous bank accounts.

At the same time, though, the Hungarian government approved a new anticorruption strategy in 2001. The plan calls for, among other things, strengthening Penalties for corruption, extending asset-declaration requirements to more public servants, and making rules on parliamentary immunity more rigorous. Parliament also approved amended banking legislation that is aimed at curbing money laundering.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Hungary is a multiparty, parliamentary democracy with legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. Citizens age 18 and older enjoy universal suffrage and can change their government democratically. They elect 386 deputies to the unicameral national assembly under a mixed system of proportional and direct representation. Parliament elects both the president and the prime minister.

Post-Communist elections in Hungary have been free and fair. In June 2000, parliament elected Ferenc Madl president in a third round of voting. President Arpad Goncz had completed a maximum two terms in office. After parliamentary elections in 1998, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe praised Hungary's "strong electoral process" and the media's balanced coverage. Twenty-six parties registered for the first round of elections; six received a mandate.

The 1998 election resulted in a change of government when the opposition Hungarian Civic Party (FIDESZ) formed a center-right coalition government with the Independent Smallholders' Party (FKGP) and the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF). These parties took 213 out of 386 seats in the national assembly. The ruling Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) captured only 134 seats. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2002.

The constitution guarantees national and ethnic minorities the right to form self-governing bodies, and all 13 recognized minorities have exercised this right. In 2000, forty-six Roma from the village of Zamoly filed a complaint against Hungary with the European Court of Human Rights. They lodged charges of discrimination for actions committed by local authorities, who tore down Roma homes that had been damaged in a storm and placed the affected Roma in temporary housing. In 2001, when France granted refugee status to nine of the Roma, Prime Minister Orban stated that Hungary had "no reason to feel shame."

In 2000, the government announced an \$8.2 million program to provide vocational training and other programs for Roma youth. In 2001, Hungary implemented a legal rights protection network that will provide legal aid services to Roma. Parliament also passed a controversial law that will grant special status, or rights, to ethnic Hungarians who reside outside the country. Among those rights are the ability to work in Hungary for three months every year and to have access to certain health and education benefits. Domestic opponents, including the MSZP, fear the massive costs associated with an influx of workers. Foreign opponents, especially the leaders of Romania and Slovakia, consider the law, which is scheduled to take effect in 2002, discriminatory. Late in the year, Hungary and Romania signed an agreement that will extend the right to work in Hungary to Romanian nationals.

Independent media thrive in Hungary, but oversight of state television and radio remains a controversial issue. A 1996 media law requires ruling and opposition parties to share appointments to the boards overseeing state television and radio. However, critics charge that the current government has manipulated the law by approving boards composed solely of its supporters and has thereby gained undue influence over hiring and reporting. Others believe the law itself is fundamentally flawed. In 2001, the National Radio and Television Licensing Board granted Radio C, Hungary's first all-Roma radio station, a permanent broadcasting license. At year's end, a panel of judges announced that 44 of the 1,830 members of the electronic media that it had screened had connections to the Communist-era secret service. The panel will investigate print media next.

The constitution guarantees religious freedom and provides for the separation of church and state. There are approximately 100 registered religious groups—primarily Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Jews—to which the state provides financial support for worship, parochial schools, and the reconstruction of property. A 1991 law requires the state to provide restitution for church properties that were seized under communism. In 2000, the constitutional court deemed that a law on compensating Holocaust victims was discriminatory because the amount of recompense was significantly less than that awarded to victims of the 1956 anti-Communist uprising. In 2001, the Calvinist Church prohibited its pastors from belonging to political parties or running for parliamentary office. The move came in response to the controversy surrounding Lorant Hegedus Jr., the Calvinist pastor and deputy chairman of the Hungarian Justice and Life Party who published an anti-Semitic article in a party magazine.

The government respects citizens' rights to form associations, strike, and petition public authorities. Trade unions account for less than 30 percent of the workforce. There are more than 60,000 registered nongovernmental organizations. In 2001, the constitutional court ruled that parliament must pass legislation that guards better against delays in the registration of organizations.

Hungary has a three-tiered independent judiciary and a constitutional court. The constitution guarantees equality before the law, and courts are generally fair. In an effort to improve judicial efficiency, more than 90 new judges were appointed in 2000. Legislation designed to reduce the length of civil court procedures also came into effect. In 1999 the national police agency set up an internal affairs division to deal with corruption in its ranks.

The constitution states that the Hungarian economy is a market economy in which private property, free enterprise, and competition are all respected. The country boasts one of the fastest-growing and freest economies in the region, and approximately 80 percent of state-owned enterprises have been privatized. Small- and medium-sized companies make up approximately 90 percent of all enterprises and employ more than two million people. In 2001, the government raised the minimum monthly wage to 40,000 forints (about \$140).

## Iceland

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 300,000  
 PPP: \$27,835  
 Life Expectancy: 79  
 Ethnic Groups: Icelander  
 Capital: Reykjavik



**Overview:** Prime Minister David Oddsson, head of the conservative Independence Party, is the longest serving prime minister in Europe. In power for ten years, Oddsson plans to seek reelection in 2003. Under his leadership, the country has enjoyed economic growth, with unemployment at just one percent. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) refused Iceland's bid for membership over the country's refusal to sign a commercial whale-hunting ban.

Iceland achieved full independence in 1944. Multiparty governments have been in power since then. On August 1, 1996, the former finance minister and former leader of the leftist People's Alliance, Dr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, was sworn in as Iceland's fifth president.

After a pronounced privatization campaign and the creation of financial markets, Iceland's economy continued to grow in 2001. With unemployment at only one percent and tourism growing, public debt is expected to be dissolved by 2004. Fishing accounts for two-thirds of Iceland's exports and employs one-tenth of its workforce. While Iceland has strong historical, cultural, and economic ties with Europe, Icelanders are hesitant to join the European Union (EU), primarily because of its Common Fisheries Policy. Icelanders believe the policy would threaten their marine industry.

While Prime Minister Oddsson continues to rule out joining the EU, he has expressed his desire to cultivate a knowledge economy in order to wean the country from dependence on the fishing industry. The left-leaning opposition, consisting of two camps, is divided on the issue of EU membership. The Social Democratic faction of the United Left bloc is in favor of submitting an application to the EU, and the Green-Left Alliance opposes EU membership. The country already has access to European markets as a member of the European Economic Area.

In July, Iceland was denied membership in the IWC because of its refusal to sign a commercial hunting ban. Whale hunting is a cultural tradition in Iceland and a lucrative trade. Iceland argues that the numbers of endangered whale species have recovered and that a 1986 moratorium on whaling should be lifted. It also argues that the rising whale population consumes fish stocks vital to its economy.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Icelanders can change their government democratically. Iceland's constitution, adopted by referendum in 1944, vests power in a president (whose functions are mainly ceremonial), a prime minister, a legislature, and a judiciary. The president is directly elected for a

four-year term. The unicameral legislature is also elected for four years (subject to dissolution). The prime minister, who performs most executive functions, is appointed by the president but is responsible to the legislature.

The country's judiciary is independent. The law does not provide for trial by jury, but many trials and appeals use panels consisting of several judges. All judges, at all levels, serve for life.

The constitution provides for freedom of speech, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and freedom of the press. A wide range of publications includes both independent and party-affiliated newspapers. An autonomous board of directors oversees the Icelandic State Broadcasting Service, which operates a number of transmitting and relay stations. There are both private and public television stations. Iceland has the highest Internet penetration rate in the world, with more than 80 percent of the population accessing the Internet from home.

Iceland handed over its citizens' genetic data to a private, U.S.-backed, medical research company in 2000, raising some fears over privacy issues. Iceland, the most genetically homogenous nation on earth, went ahead with the plan on the grounds that the data could provide scientists with vital clues into the origin of diseases, thus increasing the chances for discovering cures. While a law was passed requiring doctors to hand over patient information, the law did contain a provision allowing citizens to opt out of providing genetic data. Only five percent of Icelanders reportedly decided not to participate in the program.

In recent years, Iceland has not received a substantial number of refugees or asylum seekers, although it has accepted several dozen refugees from the Balkans.

Legislation adopted in 1996 permits homosexuals to live together in a formal relationship with the same legal rights as in marriage, minus the right to adopt children or to be artificially inseminated.

Virtually everyone in the country holds at least nominal membership in the state-supported Lutheran Church. Freedom of worship is respected, and discrimination on the basis of race, language, social class, or sex is outlawed.

About 76 percent of all eligible workers belong to free trade unions, and all enjoy the right to strike. Disabled persons enjoy extensive rights in employment and education.

Gender-based equality is guaranteed by law. In July, the United Nations ranked Iceland second in the world in terms of equal rights between the sexes. In 1995, women held 17 out of the 63 seats in parliament. That number rose to 22, or approximately 35 percent, after the 1999 elections. The Women's Alliance, an Icelandic feminist movement founded in 1983, is registered as a political party and has its own parliamentary faction.

## India

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 1,033,000,000  
 PPP: \$2,248  
 Life Expectancy: 61  
 Ethnic Groups: Indo-Aryan (72 percent), Dravidian (25 percent), other (3 percent)  
 Capital: New Delhi

Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

A massive earthquake struck the northwestern state of Gujarat on January 26, 2001, causing widespread devastation and killing an estimated 30,000 people. The ruling National Democratic Alliance coalition was weakened by an arms bribery scandal, which threatened to bring down the government in mid-March, and by defeats in five key state elections in May. Indian and Pakistani leaders met at Agra in July, but the summit failed to resolve their long-standing dispute over the territory of Kashmir. Following an attack on the Indian parliament building on December 13 by suspected members of Kashmiri separatist militant groups, in which eight police officers and a gardener were killed, relations between the two countries worsened. India accused Pakistan of fostering cross-border terrorism and mobilized its army along their common border.

India achieved independence in 1947 with the partition of British India into a predominantly Hindu India, under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, and a Muslim Pakistan. The centrist, secular Congress Party ruled continuously for the first five decades of independence, except during periods of opposition from 1977 through 1980 and from 1989 through 1991. During the campaign for the 1991 elections, a suspected Sri Lankan Tamil separatist assassinated former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, heir to the political dynasty of Congress standard-bearers Nehru and Indira Gandhi. After Congress won the elections, the incoming prime minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao, responded to a balance-of-payments crisis by initiating gradual reforms of the autarkic, control-bound economy.

Even as the crisis receded, Congress lost 11 state elections in the mid-1990s. The party's traditional electoral base of poor, low-caste, and Muslim voters appeared disillusioned with the economic liberalization and the government's failure to prevent communal violence. In December 1992 and January 1993, northern India and Bombay had experienced some of the worst communal violence since independence after Hindu fundamentalists destroyed a sixteenth-century mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya. The rioting killed some 2,000 people, mainly Muslims. Regional parties made gains in southern India, and low-caste parties and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) gained in the northern Hindi-speaking belt.

These trends continued at the national level in the April-May 1996 parliamentary elections. The BJP captured 161 seats versus 140 for Congress. However, in May a BJP-led minority government resigned after 13 days in office after failing to attract secular allies. A minority United Front (UF) government, dominated by leftist and re-



gional parties, took office but collapsed in November 1997 after the Congress Party withdrew its support. The turmoil among centrist and leftist parties provided an opening for the BJP to form a government under Atal Behari Vajpayee after winning the early elections held in February and March 1998. One of the government's first major acts was to carry out a series of underground nuclear tests in May 1998. Archrival Pakistan responded with its own atomic tests.

Holding only a minority of seats, the BJP government faced frequent threats and demands from a small but pivotal number of coalition members. The government fell after a Tamil Nadu-based party defected, but it won reelection in voting held in September and October 1999. Final results gave the BJP-led, 22-party National Democratic Alliance 295 seats (182 for the BJP) against 112 seats for Congress. Among smaller parties, the election confirmed the continued decline of leftist parties and the growing importance of regional and caste-based parties.

Vajpayee spent much of 2000 trying to build support for the government's economic liberalization policies. While Congress endorsed the liberalization process, it was opposed by some leftist coalition members as well as by the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS, or National Volunteer Service), a far-right Hindu organization that exerts considerable influence on the Vajpayee government but which favors economic self-reliance. Both Congress and some coalition members heavily criticized Vajpayee's backing in December 2000 of calls for a Hindu temple to be built in Ayodhya on the site of the mosque that Hindu fundamentalists razed in 1992.

In 2001 progress on economic reform continued to be hindered by political considerations. The government was shaken in March by a sting operation conducted by the investigative news website *tehelka.com*, which caught both defense officials and politicians apparently taking bribes from reporters posing as arms dealers. The ensuing scandal led to the implication of several key party leaders as well as the resignation of Defense Minister George Fernandes. While the coalition government survived the loss of one of its partners, its credibility was further weakened in October by the reinduction of Fernandes into the cabinet prior to the completion of a judicial inquiry into the scandal.

In May 2001, the BJP suffered defeat in five key state elections, losing ground to Congress and its allies in Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala, and the territory of Pondicherry, while the communist Left Front returned to power in West Bengal. Although it has retained a comfortable hold on power at the center, building coalitions and alliances with regional parties is likely to remain crucial to its future electoral success.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Indian citizens can change their government through elections. However, democratic rule continued to be undermined by pervasive criminality in politics, decrepit state institutions, a weak rule of law, and widespread corruption. The Berlin-based Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index ranked India in 71st place, out of 91 countries, with a relatively low score of 2.7 on a 0-10 scale.

The 1950 constitution provides for a lower, 543-seat *Lok Sabha* (House of the People), directly elected for a five-year term (plus 2 appointed seats for Indians of European descent), and an upper *Rajya Sabha* (Council of States), whose 220 representatives are either elected by the states or nominated by the government. Executive power is vested in a prime minister and cabinet. Recent elections have generally been free although not entirely fair. Violence and irregularities have marred balloting in many

districts. The BBC reported in May that violence during state elections in Assam and West Bengal killed 16 people, including two policemen. In the 1999 national elections, guerrilla attacks in Bihar and northeast India and interparty clashes in several states killed some 130 people.

Moreover, criminality has penetrated the electoral process. Last year, the chief vigilance commissioner, N. Vittal, told a seminar on corruption in New Delhi that India's "political process and the system of election depend on black money" that is obtained illegally through tax evasion and other means, according to Agence France-Presse (AFP). In 1998, *The New York Times* cited studies showing that more than one-third of state legislators in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state, had criminal records. In neighboring Bihar, many legislators reportedly lead criminal gangs, and political killings are routine. In a significant judgment, the supreme court ruled in August that a public servant convicted in a corruption case should not hold office until the charges could be cleared by another court. The verdict was put to the test in the case of J. Jayalalitha, who was forced to resign as chief minister of Tamil Nadu in September after a panel of judges ruled that her appointment in May was unconstitutional because she had previously been convicted of corruption.

The judiciary is independent. In recent years judges have exercised unprecedented activism in response to public interest litigation over official corruption, environmental issues, and other matters. However, during the past year, courts have initiated several contempt-of-court cases against activists and journalists, raising questions about their misuse of the law to intimidate those who expose the behavior of corrupt judges or who question their verdicts. Corruption is reportedly rife among lower-level judges; poor people generally cannot afford to take cases to court; and there is a backlog of more than 30 million cases. As a result, cases take an average of 20 years to be settled, according to AFP. Police continued to routinely torture suspects to extract confessions and to abuse ordinary prisoners, particularly low-caste members. Custodial rape of female detainees continues to be a problem.

Police, army, and paramilitary forces continue to be implicated in "disappearances," extrajudicial killings, rapes, tortures, arbitrary detentions, and the destruction of homes, particularly in the context of insurgencies in Kashmir and in Assam and other northeastern states. (A separate report on Kashmir appears in the Related Territories section.) Amnesty International noted in January that while the government had recognized that torture was a serious problem and had taken several positive steps, such as human rights training for police officers and compensation for victims of abuse, more remained to be done. In November, a new police manual was introduced in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, which gave added attention to human rights issues. While the National Human Rights Commission continued to monitor custodial deaths (with 1,037 deaths being reported from April 2000 to March 2001) and other abuses, it had few enforcement powers. This is partly because the criminal procedure code requires the central or state governments to approve prosecution of security force members, which is rarely granted. In August, Indian human rights groups expressed concern over government plans to give amnesties to security force personnel facing human rights charges. Security forces continued to detain suspects under the broadly drawn 1980 National Security Act, which authorizes detention without charge for up to one year (two in Punjab).

In October, the cabinet approved the Prevention of Terrorism Ordinance 2001, which widens the definition of terrorism and bans 24 terrorist organizations. It would

also increase powers of investigation, allow for up to three months of preventative detention without charge, and require all citizens to provide authorities with "information relating to any terrorist activity," a clause that was later dropped after opposition from lawyers as well as journalists. Activists are worried that the bill could be used to harass members of certain organizations as well as minority groups. In the first case of implementation of the bill, an entire family was evicted from their house in Kashmir after they were wrongly suspected of having built it from the "proceeds of terrorism."

In India's seven northeastern states, more than 40 mainly tribal-based insurgent groups sporadically attacked security forces and engaged in intertribal and internecine violence. The rebel groups have also been implicated in numerous killings, abductions, and rapes of civilians. The militants ostensibly seek either greater autonomy or independence for their ethnic or tribal groups. In recent years the army has committed atrocities with impunity during counterinsurgency operations in Assam, Manipur, and other northeastern states. The 1958 Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act grants security forces broad powers to use lethal force and detention in Assam and four nearby states, and provides near immunity from prosecution to security forces acting under it. In June, the federal government imposed "direct rule" in Manipur after the state government collapsed, and thousands of demonstrators clashed with police and set fire to the Manipur state legislature in protest of the federal government's negotiations with neighboring Naga rebels.

Left-wing guerrillas called Naxalites control some rural areas in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Orissa, and kill dozens of police, politicians, landlords, and villagers in these states each year. The Naxalites also run parallel courts in parts of Bihar. Naxalites and the Ranvir Sena, a technically illegal private army backed by middle-caste politicians and upper-caste landlords, continued to engage in tit-for-tat atrocities in Bihar that killed scores of people during the year.

There are some restrictions on freedom of assembly and association. Section 144 of the criminal procedure code empowers state-level authorities to declare a state of emergency, to restrict free assembly, and to impose curfews. In recent years, officials have occasionally used Section 144 to prevent demonstrations. Human rights groups say that in recent years police and hired thugs have occasionally beaten, arbitrarily detained, or otherwise harassed villagers and members of nongovernmental organizations who were protesting forced relocations from the sites of development projects. Following the U.S.-led air strikes in Afghanistan in October, protestors faced increased harassment from the police and several were killed during demonstrations. In addition, some minority groups criticized the government's decision to ban the Students Islamic Movement of India as part of the general crackdown on terrorism while ignoring the activities of right-wing Hindu groups.

India's private press continued to be vigorous although journalists face numerous constraints. In recent years, the government has occasionally censored articles critical of its policies by using its power under the Official Secrets Act to censor security-related articles. In May, income tax officials ransacked the Bombay offices of *Outlook*, an independent newsmagazine. Following an expose of official corruption by the Internet news portal *tehelka.com*, First Global, a successful securities house which had invested in the website, was accused by several government departments of a number of tax and regulatory infractions and was effectively prevented from doing business despite the lack of evidence of any wrongdoing. In June, police detained two foreign journal-

ists in Assam, and detentions of local journalists in the northeastern states are common. Journalists protested when the cabinet approved a communications bill in July that would empower an autonomous commission to "intercept and monitor" press messages, data, or information intended for publication. Radio is both public and private, with India's first private FM radio station being launched on July 4. However, the state-owned All India Radio enjoys a dominant position, and its news coverage favors the government. The government maintains a monopoly on domestic television broadcasting, although foreign satellite broadcasts are available.

Human rights organizations generally operated freely. However, Amnesty International reported last year that authorities occasionally carried out or tolerated abuses against human rights activists, including "threats, harassment, false criminal cases and in some cases torture, ill-treatment, 'disappearances' and even political killings." In March, Amnesty International appealed for an impartial investigation to be initiated in the case of the murder of two human rights defenders in the state of Andhra Pradesh. The work of rights activists could also be hindered by a Home Ministry order issued in July which requires organizations to obtain clearance before holding conferences or workshops if the subject matter is "political, semi-political, communal or religious in nature or is related to human rights."

The constitution bars discrimination based on caste, and laws set aside quotas in education and government jobs for members of lower castes. However, evidence suggested that members of so-called scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, as well as religious and ethnic minorities, continued to routinely face unofficial discrimination and violence. The worst abuse is faced by the 160 million *dalits*, or untouchables, who are often denied access to land, abused by landlords and police, and forced to work in miserable conditions.

Religious freedom continued to be generally respected, but violence against religious minorities remained a problem. In July, six people were killed and several women raped during an attack on the minority Muslim population in Moradabad, a town in Uttar Pradesh. Attacks on Christian clergy and churches have dramatically increased since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in 1998, mainly in the predominantly tribal regions of Orissa, Gujarat, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Local media and some members of the *sangh parivar*, a grouping of Hindu nationalist organizations including the BJP, promote anti-Christian propaganda. Human Rights Watch noted last year that the BJP and its allies have mandated Hindu prayers in certain state-sponsored schools and support the revision of history books to include negative portrayals of Muslims and Christians. However, the government did take some steps to prosecute the perpetrators of violence against religious minorities. In May, a district court sentenced ten men to life in prison for the 1998 gang-rape of four Christian nuns, and the prosecution of Dara Singh, the main accused in the 1999 murder of an Australian missionary and his two sons, continued in 2001.

Each year, several thousand women are burned to death, driven to suicide, or otherwise killed, and countless others are harassed, beaten, or deserted by husbands, in the context of dowry disputes. Despite the fact that dowry is illegal, convictions in dowry deaths continued to be rare. Rape and other violence against women also continued to be serious problems, with lower-caste and tribal women being particularly vulnerable to attacks. Although the authorities have acknowledged the severity of the issue, local officials continue to ignore complaints, take bribes, and cover up abuses, according to

an Amnesty International report issued in May. However, in June the government announced a new Domestic Violence Prevention Bill, which is intended to safeguard women's rights. By many accounts, families often withhold inheritances to Hindu women, and tribal land systems, particularly in Bihar, often deny tribal women the right to own land. Under *Sharia* (Islamic law), Muslim women face discrimination in inheritance rights. In August, an existing law was amended to give Christian women the same divorce rights as Christian men. In an effort to combat the continuing problem of child marriage, the state government of Rajasthan approved legislation in October requiring all couples to register marriages with the authorities.

Major cities all have thousands of street children, many of who work in the informal sector. UNICEF estimates that overall there are up to 60 million child laborers in India. Many work in hazardous conditions, and several million are bonded laborers. According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, only about 16 million of India's 340 million workers are unionized. However, unionized workers wield disproportionate political and economic influence because they are concentrated in key industries, including power, banking, and the railways. Workers regularly exercise their rights to bargain collectively and strike.

## Indonesia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (military-influenced)  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 206,100,000  
 PPP: \$2,857  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Javanese (45 percent), Sundanese (14 percent), Madurese (8 percent), Malay (8 percent), other (25 percent)  
 Capital: Jakarta

Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

After taking office in August 2001, President Megawati Sukarnoputri brought steady leadership to Indonesia compared with the 21-month rule of her erratic predecessor, Abdurrahman Wahid. It was not clear, however, if she had the vision or political will to tackle her country's daunting political and economic problems. They included a slumping economy, endemic corruption, a corporate sector run aground by huge debts, multiple violent ethnic and religious conflicts, and a separatist conflict in oil-rich Aceh Province. Megawati took office after a special assembly ousted Wahid for incompetence and corruption, giving the world's fourth most populous country its third president in a little more than three years.

Indonesia won full independence in 1949 following a four-year intermittent war against its Dutch colonial rulers. After several parliamentary governments collapsed, the republic's first president, Sukarno, concentrated power in the presidency in 1957 in what he called "Guided Democracy." Amid continued political turbulence and eco-

conomic decline, the army, led by General Suharto, crushed a coup attempt in 1965 that it blamed on the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI). In the aftermath, the army reportedly backed the massacre, between 1965 and 1967, of some 500,000 suspected PKI members, many of them ethnic Chinese. With the army's support, Suharto rebuffed Sukarno's efforts to stay in power and in 1968 formally became president.

Suharto's autocratic "New Order" regime jailed scores of dissidents, banned most opposition parties and groups, and allowed only three parties to contest elections: the ruling Golkar party, the nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), and the Islamic-oriented United Development Party (PPP). At the same time, the government introduced programs that helped lift millions of Indonesians out of poverty. Economic development, however, was highly uneven. The president's family members and cronies enjoyed easy access to bank credit and control of major businesses and trading monopolies, while authorities seized land for logging and mining without compensating affected villagers.

By 1997, years of poor investment decisions and profligate borrowing from weakly supervised banks had left Indonesian companies with some \$80 billion in foreign debt, much of it denominated in dollars. As the Asian financial crisis began chipping away at the value of the *rupiah*, making debt service more expensive, Indonesian companies increasingly sold local currency to cover dollar-denominated loans. This triggered a vicious cycle, as the selling further sank the *rupiah* and brought companies even closer to default. To stave off a private sector debt default, the government agreed in October 1997 to a \$43 billion loan package arranged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in return for public-spending cutbacks and the breakup of business monopolies held by Suharto relatives and cronies.

Suharto made few efforts to meet Indonesia's IMF commitments. Doing so would have caused widespread hardship to ordinary Indonesians and, perhaps more important, to the president, damage business interests of his family and key supporters. By January 1998, the *rupiah*'s slide had sent food prices soaring. Suharto resigned on May 21 following months of unprecedented antigovernment demonstrations, the killing of four student protesters by soldiers on May 12, and three days of devastating urban riots in mid-May. Vice President B. J. Habibie, a long-time crony, became president.

Habibie proved to be a weak leader, but he scaled back many repressive measures and oversaw preparations for early elections in June 1999. In Indonesia's first free vote in decades for 500 parliamentary seats, Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle (PDI-P), the successor to the PDI, won 154 seats; Golkar, 120; the PPP, 58; the National Awakening Party, led by Wahid, then leader of Indonesia's largest Muslim social group, 51; the National Mandate Party, led by Amien Rais, the former leader of Indonesia's second largest Islamic social organization, 35; and 16 other parties, 44. In addition, 38 seats were reserved for the military.

Though his party came in fourth in the parliamentary vote, Wahid was elected president in October 1999 by Indonesia's national assembly. The People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) also chose as vice president Megawati, the daughter of the republic's first president. The elections were significant because previously the assembly, which consists of the parliament plus nearly 200 appointed representatives, simply rubber-stamped Suharto's decision to hold another term. Days before the MPR voted, Habibie withdrew his candidacy amid controversy surrounding a bank scandal, his failure to pursue corruption charges against Suharto, and his policies that led to East Timor's independence from Indonesia in September.

Wahid moved quickly to assert civilian control over the military, appointing a civilian defense minister and sacking from the cabinet Suharto's last armed forces commander, General Wiranto. Wahid removed Wiranto in February 2000 after an independent commission implicated the general and 32 other officers in the 1999 killings of hundreds of civilians in East Timor by soldiers and pro-Jakarta militia. However, the president's repeated criticisms of parliament and aloof and erratic leadership style drew the ire of opposition legislators. By summer 2000, they were threatening to impeach Wahid over scandals involving his private masseur and the rice distribution agency, his economic policies, and his failure to contain the insurgency in Aceh and deadly ethnic and sectarian violence in the Moluccas, Borneo, and Sulawesi.

The MPR's ousting of Wahid on July 23, 2001, ended more than a year of political and economic uncertainty and paved the way for Megawati, as vice president, to succeed him. She soon put together an economics team made up of respected professionals. They included Dorodjatun Kuntjorojakti, the ambassador to Washington, as coordinating minister for economics. The IMF responded to the political changes in September by releasing a \$395 million tranche of a \$5 billion aid package, suspended since December 2000. However, the new administration, stocked with Suharto-era elites, moved slowly on promised legal reforms, including the privatization of state firms and sale of distressed assets. Indonesia's multilateral and bilateral donors in November pledged \$3.14 billion for 2002, which was \$1.7 billion less than last year, and conditioned \$1.3 billion on Jakarta's efforts to speed up privatization, strengthen the legal system, and clean up the banking sector.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Indonesians can choose their legislators in free and reasonably fair elections but do not elect their president, who holds most executive power. Instead, the president is chosen by the People's Consultative Assembly, which consists of the entire 500-member parliament plus 130 regional representatives chosen by provincial legislatures and 65 members representing various business, labor, and social constituencies. The parliament, a docile body under Suharto, today vigorously debates government policy and sees itself as a check on the president's power. Domestic watchdog groups accused Golkar supporters of illegally using state welfare funds for campaigning and bribes prior to the 1999 parliamentary vote. The next presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2004.

Indonesia's human rights record is far better today than it was during the Suharto era. However, the rule of law is weak throughout the archipelago and serious abuses take place in West Papua and to an even greater extent in Aceh, a resource-rich province of 4.6 million people in northern Sumatra. In Aceh, low-level fighting has continued unabated despite a ceasefire signed in May 2000 between the government and Islamic rebels demanding Aceh's independence. "Violence has escalated over the past year and civilians continue to suffer grave human rights abuses at the hands of both the Indonesian security forces and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM)," Amnesty International said in June. The conflict killed an estimated 1,600 people in 2001.

The army continued to be implicated in extrajudicial killings, disappearances, tortures, rapes, arbitrary detentions, and other abuses against suspected GAM members or sympathizers, according to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Divided into eight factions, the guerrillas reportedly committed extrajudicial killings of

soldiers and of civilians who allegedly assisted the army, while intimidating Aceh's population and raising money through extortion, the two rights groups said. In 1999, GAM leaders rejected Wahid's offer of a referendum on autonomy for the province.

A special tribunal set up to try soldiers and militia fighters accused of killing hundreds of civilians and of other grave crimes in East Timor following the territory's 1999 independence referendum made little progress by year's end. Facing international pressure to bring to justice suspects in the 1999 violence, parliament and President Wahid approved setting up the tribunal in the spring, along with a second tribunal to try suspects in the army's 1984 killing of 33 protesters in the Jakarta port of Tanjung Priok. Ordinary Indonesian courts have rarely prosecuted soldiers and police for human rights abuses, and the few convictions have generally resulted in relatively light sentences. The special tribunals were set up under a 2000 law authorizing the creation of new courts to try cases of major human rights abuses and of ad hoc courts to try serious abuses committed before the law took effect, including crimes against humanity.

Police at times kill unarmed suspects or alleged criminals, and guards often mistreat and extort money from suspects in police or military custody, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Indonesia's human rights record in 2000. The military and police continue to use torture against independence supporters in Aceh, criminal suspects, and ordinary Indonesians involved in land or labor disputes, Amnesty International said in November.

Despite a series of recent reforms, the judiciary is still wracked by "widespread corruption, and judges are subject to considerable pressure from governmental authorities," the U.S. State Department report said. The report also said that police and judges frequently ignore due process rights and that prison conditions are harsh. In an effort to create a more independent and effective court system, Wahid replaced many Suharto-era judges. In addition, the government is transferring administrative and financial control over the judiciary from the justice department to the supreme court.

Indonesia's private press, freed from its Suharto-era shackles, reports aggressively on government policies, corruption, and other formerly taboo issues. Police, however, occasionally assault journalists covering local issues. Journalists reporting on the conflict in Aceh routinely face pressure from the GAM, police, and soldiers, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists said in August. Private radio stations must broadcast each day government-prepared news packages but can also air their own news programs. Most private commercial television networks are owned by or have management ties to former President Suharto's family.

Students, workers, and other Indonesians frequently hold peaceful demonstrations, although security forces forcibly break up some protests. Legal aid, human rights, environmental, and social welfare nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operate fairly freely. However, several activists and humanitarian workers have in recent years been killed in strife-torn Aceh. Indonesia's official National Human Rights Commission investigates and publicizes reports of human rights abuses and recommends legal and regulatory changes, but lacks enforcement powers.

Violence along ethnic, racial, and religious lines has in recent years killed several thousand people in Borneo, Sulawesi, and the Moluccan Islands. In Borneo, clashes between indigenous Dayaks and Madurese migrants killed at least 500 people in Central Kalimantan province in February and drove thousands of Madurese from their homes in West Kalimantan in June, Reuters reported. The Dayak and Madurese communities



in Borneo are embroiled in disputes over land, jobs, and other economic matters. Sectarian violence in Central Sulawesi province killed more than 300 people between May 2000 and December 2001, according to Agence France-Press. In the eastern Moluccan Islands, violence between Muslims and Christians appeared to abate somewhat in 2001, possibly because fighting in the past several years has effectively partitioned the two groups into separate communities. The Laskar Jihad, an Islamic fundamentalist group founded in 2000, has sent thousands of volunteers to the Moluccas and Central Sulawesi, from Java and elsewhere, to fight local Christians.

The Madurese migrants in Borneo are among the tens of thousands of Indonesians whom authorities relocated over the past several decades to remote parts of the archipelago from overcrowded areas. Conditions for newcomers at some relocation sites are extremely poor, while human rights activists say the influx of migrants limits job opportunities for indigenous people and marginalizes their culture. Jakarta announced in 2000 that it would no longer resettle people between islands, only within the same province. Local communities throughout Indonesia tend to have limited say on decisions concerning development projects, use of natural resources, and other economic activities that affect them.

Ethnic Chinese continued to face some harassment and violence, but far less than in the late 1990s, when violent attacks killed hundreds and destroyed many Chinese-owned shops and churches. State universities still have informal quotas that limit the enrollment of ethnic Chinese students, according to the U.S. State Department report. In a positive development, ethnic Chinese can once again publicly celebrate the Lunar New Year and other Chinese festivals. President Wahid in 2000 repealed a 1967 ban on the public practice of Chinese customs. Ethnic Chinese make up less than three percent of the nation's population, but are resented by some Indonesians for controlling a disproportionate share of commerce and private wealth.

Indonesians of all faiths generally can worship freely, although authorities monitor and have outlawed some radical Islamic groups. Violence between Muslims and Christians in the Moluccas and elsewhere in recent years has damaged or destroyed dozens of churches and mosques.

Women face unofficial discrimination in education and employment opportunities and are underrepresented in government and politics, according to the U.S. State Department report. Violence against women is a continuing concern, although there are no accurate figures on the extent of the problem. Police often do not take rape allegations seriously and avoid bringing assault charges against husbands in domestic violence cases, the State Department report said. Anecdotal evidence suggests that among Muslims female genital mutilation continued to be practiced in some areas.

Indonesia's economic woes have contributed to higher infant mortality and school dropout rates and greater numbers of undernourished children and child laborers, according to reports by UNICEF, the International Labor Organization (ILO), the government, and local NGOs. In the Moluccas, Borneo, and other conflict-wracked areas, hundreds of thousands of children have had their schooling interrupted temporarily in recent years after fleeing their homes to escape violence.

Workers can join independent unions, bargain collectively, and stage strikes, but employers frequently ignore minimum wage laws, dismiss labor activists, and hire thugs to intimidate workers or break strikes. Authorities no longer use the military to intervene in labor disputes, but they weakly enforce laws on anti-union discrimination, minimum wages,

safety, and child labor. Indonesia has 43 registered union federations and hundreds of small splinter groups, although only 10 to 15 percent of the country's 80 million industrial workers are unionized. The economic crisis, moreover, threw millions of Indonesians out of work, meaning that unions generally lack the clout to bargain collectively.

## Iran

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (clergy-dominated)  
 Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 6  
 Status: Not Free  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 66,100,000  
 PPP: \$5,531  
 Life Expectancy: 70  
 Ethnic Groups: Persian (51 percent), Azeri (24 percent), Gilaki and Mazandarani (8 percent), Kurd (7 percent), Arab (3 percent), other (7 percent)  
 Capital: Tehran



### Overview:

President Mohammad Khatami was reelected on June 8 with 78 percent of the vote and a 66 percent voter turnout. The result of the vote underscored the overwhelming popular support for Khatami's agenda of "Islamic democracy," including respect for the rule of law and greater social freedoms. However, while Khatami and his fellow reformists now effectively control all popularly elected institutions in Iran, from the *majlis* (parliament) to local government, they are hampered by these institutions' lack of actual political power. Armed only with the legitimacy of popular support, they continue to struggle against the hardline conservatives who control the judiciary, broadcast media, military, and police. Unwilling to loosen their grip on power, conservatives have undermined Khatami by blocking legislation, closing reformist newspapers, and arresting reformist activists, students, journalists, and members of parliament.

In January 1979, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the hereditary monarch whose decades-long authoritarian regime was marked by widespread corruption, fled Iran amid mounting religious and political unrest. A month later, the exiled Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to lead the formation of the world's first Islamic republic. The 1979 constitution provides for a directly elected president and a 12-member Council of Guardians. The council approves all presidential and parliamentary candidates and certifies that all bills passed by the *majlis* are in accord with *Sharia* (Islamic law). Khomeini was named supreme religious leader for life and invested with control over the security and intelligence services, armed forces, and judiciary.

Following Khomeini's death in June 1989, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei assumed the role of supreme religious leader and chief of state. Khamenei lacked the religious credentials and the initial popularity of his predecessor, and the constitution was changed to consolidate his power and give him final authority on all matters of foreign and domestic policy.

By 1997, soaring inflation and unemployment, declining oil revenues, a demographic trend toward a younger population, and restrictions on personal freedom had created

widespread dissatisfaction. Khatami, a former culture minister who was forced to resign in 1992 for being too liberal, ran for president on a platform of economic reform, rule of law, civil society, and improved foreign relations. He won the support of women, intellectuals, youth, and business groups seeking greater social freedom and an end to state interference in the economy. With 70 percent of the vote and a 90 percent turnout, Khatami swept the 1997 presidential election, humiliating the favored candidate of the conservative establishment.

Reformers were initially successful in securing improved press freedom, freedom of association, and social freedom. Dozens of reformist newspapers cropped up and became immensely popular because of their diversity of views. Authorities slightly relaxed the enforcement of strict Islamic dress codes for women, prohibitions on satellite dishes, and restrictions on social interaction between men and women. Reformists won 80 percent of the seats in Iran's first nationwide municipal elections in 1999, and an overwhelming majority of majlis seats in 2000.

However, reformists were unable to institutionalize such improvements, and conservatives blocked efforts at liberalization wherever possible. A conservative backlash followed the 2000 majlis elections, and since then most reformist newspapers have been shut down. In 2001, members of parliament who criticized the arrests of journalists found themselves summoned before courts to answer to charges of insulting the judiciary. Dozens of reformist and nationalist politicians and activists were arrested for inciting public opinion or endangering state security. A reformist member of parliament and key Khatami ally was sentenced to a year in prison in March for alleged electoral fraud in the 2000 majlis vote, and two reformist ministers have been forced out by conservatives. A cabinet member was sentenced to six months in jail in December for "spreading lies" about the Guardians Council. Prominent journalist Akbar Ganji and nine others were convicted in January for attending a 2000 conference in Germany on Iranian reform. Ganji was sentenced to ten years' imprisonment and five years' internal exile.

Ganji, a dogged investigative journalist, had written extensively about high-level complicity in killings and intimidation of political opponents, including the 1998 murders of several reformist intellectuals and writers. Those killings were attributed to "rogue elements" in the intelligence services, and 18 low-level intelligence agents were tried, including one, the alleged ringleader, who died mysteriously in police custody in 1999. Three were sentenced in January to death, two to life in prison, and seven others to various jail terms. The victims' families denounced the trial as a sham. Human Rights Watch denounced the trial, which was closed to observers, saying "it is impossible to say that the judgments were based on the facts." Ganji has alleged that high-ranking clerics were involved in some 100 murders of dissidents from 1989 to 1997. Other attempts to silence reformers include an assassination attempt on Saeed Hajjarian, a close aide to Khatami, who was shot in 2000 by suspected members of the security forces. Regime-backed vigilantes attacked students during anti-regime demonstrations in Tehran in 1999, and during celebrations following the 2001 presidential elections.

Reformists were outspoken in denouncing the arrests of activists and politicians. In January, 150 majlis members signed a letter calling for judges to respect basic rights, and denouncing the "negligence or politicization" of the judiciary. More than 70 members of parliament called for an investigation into the judiciary following the closures of newspapers and arrests of activists. Khatami himself issued a strong statement in

February, accusing hardliners of harming Iran's image abroad and warning that if Iranians "feel the authorities are not meeting their real demands and that dirty hands have succeeded in disappointing them," then "no military, security, or judicial power will be able to save the country." The president has displayed deep frustration at his lack of authority to enforce the rule of law and deliver on other campaign promises; while announcing his candidacy for reelection in May, he repeatedly broke down in tears and said he would have preferred to serve the people in some other capacity.

The struggle between reformists and hardliners has spilled over into Iran's economic and foreign policy. Iran's economy suffers from unemployment reaching to 25 percent, heavy reliance on volatile oil prices, state interference, rampant corruption and inflation, and a U.S. trade embargo. More than half the population live below the poverty line. Poor living conditions have led to social unrest and an outflow of immigrants. Reforms introduced by parliament in hopes of attracting foreign investment have been blocked by the Council of Guardians. However, reformists have had some success in improving relations with the West and neighboring Arab countries. In 2000, the United States eased sanctions on Iranian consumer goods, and in 2001, Iran reached agreements on economic, political, or military cooperation with Russia, Italy, Kuwait, and the United Kingdom, among others.

Iran's internal split was evident in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. Initial messages of support and condemnation of the attacks from Iran were followed by a statement from Khamenei accusing the United States of exploiting the crisis to spread its influence in Central Asia. Iran denounced the U.S.-led bombing of Afghanistan in October, saying that it would kill innocents and create more refugees. Iran already hosts some two million Afghan refugees, whom many Iranians blame for their country's social and economic woes. However, Iranian and U.S. officials subsequently reported that Iran had pledged limited cooperation with the United States, agreeing to rescue any U.S. military personnel in distress within Iranian territory. In November, President Khatami, in an interview with the *New York Times*, called the September 11 attacks the work of "fanatics" who do not represent the majority of Muslims. Iranians provided the U.S.-led antiterror coalition with intelligence on the Afghani Northern Alliance. Despite conservatives' threats against public officials who advocate a U.S.-Iran dialogue, the war in Afghanistan reportedly prompted unprecedented public debate on the issue. Many in Iran see improved relations with the United States as economically—if not politically—beneficial.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Iranians cannot change their government democratically. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has the final say on all matters of policy, and the Council of Guardians vets all electoral candidates and pieces of legislation for strict allegiance to the ruling theocracy and adherence to Islamic principles. In late November 2001, the majlis passed an electoral law prohibiting the Council from excluding reformist election candidates, but the Council rejected it. Reformists then announced that they were considering calling a referendum on the issue before the next legislative elections in 2003. The issue arose when the Council of Guardians disqualified reformist candidates for by-elections in Golestan province. Political parties are technically illegal, but some political groupings have won legal recognition since 1997. There are reportedly some 120 political parties, associations of political activists, and other social groups, but few are active owing to financial

or procedural constraints. The Council of Guardians approved only ten presidential candidates for the 2001 presidential vote, out of 814 who originally declared their intention to run. Several women who sought to run were disqualified. All Iranians age 16 and older may vote, including women.

The state continues to maintain control through terror: arbitrary detention, torture, disappearance, summary trial, and execution are commonplace. Security forces enter homes and offices, open mail, and monitor telephone conversations without court authorization. Prisons are substandard, seriously overcrowded, and rife with disease. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) reported in January about the existence of "unofficial" prisons run by various law enforcement, military, and judicial agencies. Hardline vigilante groups commit extrajudicial killings with the tacit consent of the government, and there have been reports of "parallel" security organizations run by both hardliners and reformists. Although the government has investigated murder and other misconduct by hardline officials and others, information about the cases is not made available and officials are rarely punished. In the trial of intelligence officials accused of the 1998 dissident killings, a former intelligence minister was implicated by one of the defendants but never investigated. Parliament approved a bill in February banning police from universities and seminaries, in response to an incident in 1999, when police and hardline vigilantes stormed a Tehran University dormitory, killing one student and injuring 20 others.

The judiciary is not independent. Judges must meet strict political and religious qualifications. The supreme leader directly appoints the head of the judiciary, who appoints the supreme court. Bribery is common. Civil courts provide some procedural safeguards, though judges may serve simultaneously as prosecutors during trials. Revolutionary courts try political and religious cases, and are often assigned cases that normally fall under civil court jurisdiction. Charges are often vague, detainees are denied access to legal counsel, and due process is ignored. These courts are used frequently to prosecute critics of the Islamic system. A prominent student leader and a veteran nationalist, both Khatami supporters, publicly admitted in May to having plotted to overthrow the government. Both had been held in solitary confinement with no access to counsel for six months. The Penal code is based on Sharia and provides for flogging, stoning, amputation, and death for a range of social and political misconduct charges. Amnesty International expressed concern over a dramatic increase in executions during the summer of 2001, and others noted a similar increase in floggings and stonings. Rioting reportedly broke out as bystanders tried to stop a public hanging in August and a flogging in July.

The reformist press played an active role in society during President Khatami's first administration with political commentary, advocacy of a free and independent civil society, and investigative journalism. But beginning in March 2000, Khamenei began publicly criticizing reformists, particularly in the press, accusing them of slander and of creating anxiety, pessimism, and mistrust. Since then, nearly 50 publications have been closed. In February, Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) reported that Iran had become the country with the greatest number of imprisoned journalists in the world (by October the number was 20). RFE/RL attributed the press's woes to "serial plaintiffs," including the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, and the state broadcasting company, who file the criminal complaints leading to press closures and arrests. RSF also reported that detained journalists are

often held incommunicado and their families not told of their whereabouts. Notable cases in 2001 included Akbar Ganji, whose sentence was reduced to six months on appeal, then increased in September by a higher court to six years. Also in September, an appeals court upheld a 19-month prison sentence and fine for prominent journalist Massoud Behnoud, who was convicted of "spreading lies" and "insulting the Islamic system." In January, parliament called the detention and trials of several journalists illegal and called upon the judiciary to review the cases. Any review is considered unlikely.

Broadcasting is totally state run. Authorities began enforcing a ban on satellite dishes, widely ignored in recent years, in October 2001 after incidents of serious unrest broke out in Tehran and other cities following World Cup soccer qualification matches. Each incident was preceded by statements broadcast via television, radio, and Internet from exiled Iranian opposition groups calling for mass anti-regime demonstrations. Hundreds of demonstrators were arrested. The government also began jamming Persian-service RFE/RL broadcasts. In August 2001, Tahmineh Milani, a prominent filmmaker, was arrested for insulting Islamic values and portraying a positive image of "anti-revolutionaries" in one of her movies. RSF reported also that some 400 cybercafes were closed in Tehran between May 8 and 13. Still, the cafes are hugely popular with young Iranians, who use them for education, entertainment, and even to fill out online personal ads.

The constitution permits public assembly that does not "violate the principles of Islam." The rare anti-regime demonstrations that occurred ended with officials or vigilantes clubbing or using tear gas on protesters. A demonstration by some 10,000 unpaid textile factory workers in Isfahan turned violent in October when police used tear gas and batons to prevent the workers from storming a municipal building. The protests were in response to a new bill that would reduce the number of textile factory employers. In March and April, security agents arrested about 60 people, including some belonging to the Freedom Movement, which is technically illegal but usually tolerated, and charged them with plotting to overthrow the regime; the defendants went on trial in November behind closed doors. Iranian parliamentary deputies and international rights groups condemned what they called the unjust conditions of the suspects' detention and trial. The detainees were held in undisclosed locations, and some were allegedly tortured. Seven intellectuals who attended a conference in Berlin in 2000 on reform in the Islamic republic received prison sentences of four to ten years. They included Akbar Ganji, translators Saeed Sadr and Khalil Rostamkhani, student Ali Afshari, activist Izzatollah Sahabi, lawyer Mehrangis Kar, and publisher Shahla Lahiji. Six defendants were acquitted, and others received suspended sentences or fines.

Women face discrimination in legal, social, and professional matters. They may be fined, imprisoned, or lashed for violating officials' standards of modesty, and they do not have legal guardianship of their own children. A woman must have permission from a male relative to obtain a passport. Unlike women in Saudi Arabia and the emirates, women may vote, stand for public office, and drive. In January, the majlis lifted a ban prohibiting unmarried women from obtaining scholarships for study abroad, but the Council of Guardians reversed the decision. One of Iran's vice presidents, several of its majlis deputies, and a senior cultural advisor to President Khatami are women, and women are vocal in their demands for key government positions and other jobs.

Religious freedom is limited. The constitution recognizes Zoroastrians, Jews, and

Christians as religious minorities, and generally allows them to worship without interference. Iran is 99 percent Muslim, with 89 percent Shiite and 10 percent Sunni. Religious minorities are barred from election to representative bodies (except for the seats in the majlis reserved for them) and from holding senior government or military positions. They also face restrictions in employment, education, and property ownership. Some 300,000 Bahais, Iran's largest non-Muslim minority, are not recognized. They face official discrimination, a complete denial of property rights, arbitrary arrest, a ban on university admission, employment restrictions, and prohibitions on practicing and teaching their faith communally. Their marriages are not recognized by the government, leaving women open to charges of prostitution and their children regarded as illegitimate and thus without inheritance rights. Hundreds of Bahais have been executed since 1979.

Minorities may conduct religious education and establish community centers and certain cultural, social, sports, or charitable associations. All six majlis deputies from Iran's Kurdish minority resigned in September in protest over not being consulted about the interior ministry's appointment of the Kurdish regional governor. Iranian Kurds have been strong supporters of President Khatami, who has devolved power over the region's budget and police to its governor. The government rejected the resignations.

There are no independent trade unions. The government-controlled Workers' House is the only legal federation. Collective bargaining is nonexistent, and workers may not strike. Workers in Tehran protested in front of the majlis in July over unpaid wages. Eight were injured as police dispersed the demonstration with batons.

## Iraq

Polity: One party      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Statist      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 23,600,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: NA  
 Life Expectancy: 59  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab (75-80 percent), Kurd (15-20 percent),  
 other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Baghdad



### Overview:

Despite persistent rumors of illness, Saddam Hussein appears stronger than at any time since the 1991 Persian Gulf war.

The U.S.-led coalition that drove Iraq out of Kuwait has disintegrated; support for the 11-year-old sanctions has eroded; internal and external opposition to the Iraqi government is weak and divided; the regime is flush with money from illicit oil trade; and Saddam has waged a successful propaganda campaign, using the Palestinian uprising and Iraqi suffering to rally anti-Western sentiment throughout the region. All the while, he continues to defy UN resolutions and to bar weapons inspectors.

Iraq gained formal independence in 1932, though the British maintained influence

over the Hashemite monarchy. The monarchy was overthrown in a military coup in 1958. A 1968 coup established a government under the Arab *Baath* (Renaissance) Socialist Party, which has remained in power since. The frequently amended 1968 provisional constitution designated the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) as the country's highest power, and granted it virtually unlimited and unchecked authority. In 1979, Saddam Hussein, long considered the strongman of the regime, formally assumed the titles of state president and RCC chairman.

Iraq attacked Iran in 1980, touching off an eight-year war of attrition during which at least 150,000 Iraqis died and Iraq's economy was devastated. In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. At least 100,000 Iraqi troops were killed in the Persian Gulf War before a 22-nation coalition liberated Kuwait in February 1991. In April, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 687, which called on Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, to accept long-term monitoring of its weapons facilities, and to recognize Kuwaiti sovereignty. The UN also imposed an oil embargo on Iraq, which may be lifted when the government complies with the terms of Resolution 687. In 1996, the UN initiated an oil-for-food program that allows Iraq to sell a limited amount of oil to pay for food and medicine.

UN weapons inspectors were withdrawn, and the United States and Britain began bombing military and potential weapons production sites in December 1998, after traces of a nerve agent were found in an Iraqi weapons dump. A UN weapons inspector had reported that Iraq was largely in compliance with Resolution 687 with regard to chemical and nuclear weapons, but was less forthcoming about biological weapons. In December 1999, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1284, which would suspend sanctions for renewable 120-day periods, provided Baghdad cooperates with a new arms control body, the UN Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). The resolution also lifted the ceiling on oil-for-food exports. Saddam rejected the resolution, refusing access to weapons inspectors without an unconditional lifting of sanctions.

According to UNICEF, more than 500,000 Iraqi children under age five died between 1991 and 1998. Only about 41 percent of the population has regular access to clean water. Contaminated water, deteriorating sewage treatment facilities, and sharp declines in health care services have increased the spread and mortality rate of curable diseases. The UN Human Development Index, which ranks countries based on quality of life as measured by indicators such as education, life expectancy, and adjusted real income, rated Iraq 55th in 1990. In 2000, Iraq was ranked 126th of 174 countries.

Saddam has skillfully exploited the humanitarian disaster in Iraq to create divisions among UN Security Council members and to rally support for a lifting of sanctions. While the United States and Britain take a hardline approach, China, France, and Russia have pushed for an end to sanctions for humanitarian reasons and to restore economic relations with Iraq. Iraq reopened its international airport in August 2000, and a year later some 20 countries had defied the air embargo and resumed flights to Iraq. Jordan, Egypt, and Syria resumed scheduled flights, while Russia, France, and a number of African states sent humanitarian assistance or delegations interested in reviving trade. Turkey appointed an ambassador to Iraq in January 2001, and opened a rail link between the two countries in May. An international trade fair in November drew participants from 47 countries, and Iraq signed free-trade agreements with six Arab countries in 2001.



Iraqi officials reportedly pocket between \$1.5 billion to \$3 billion per year from oil smuggling through Syria, Turkey, and the Persian Gulf. In March, UN officials reported that Iraqi officials demand millions of dollars in kickbacks and illegal commissions on contracts under the oil-for-food agreement. The illegal profits have been used by Saddam to build vast palaces, amusement parks, mosques, and other monuments, and to pad his personal fortune, which is estimated at some \$6 billion in unfrozen foreign assets. U.S. intelligence and other sources say that Saddam is also using the revenues to rebuild weapons factories that may have begun producing chemical and biological agents. Meanwhile, Kurdish officials in the autonomous north of Iraq have spent their portion of the oil-for-food money on building schools, infrastructure, and hospitals. Recent public health statistics put infant mortality in Kurdistan at lower than its pre-sanctions rate. Several observers have reported that the Iraqi government exports food and medicine meant for Iraqis.

By blaming the United States and Britain for the poor state of his people, Saddam further inflames anti-Western sentiment among Arabs in neighboring countries, who already perceive the United States as supporting Israel against Arabs in the current Palestinian uprising. Saddam criticizes Arab leaders for not standing up to Western "meddling" in the region and recently announced the formation of a volunteer Jerusalem Liberation Army "to liberate Palestine from the Mediterranean to the Jordan." His skillful use of propaganda has won him support among Arabs and put increasing pressure on Arab governments allied with the West. Egypt and Jordan both reacted negatively to U.S. airstrikes on radar installations 20 miles south of Baghdad in February.

Saddam won another public relations victory against the West in 2001, when a U.S.-British proposal to overhaul sanctions was postponed under threat of a Russian veto. The proposal would remove restrictions on importing civilian goods while placing tighter controls on illegal oil trade and suspect items, including almost all computer and telecommunications equipment, and other civilian items which may have potential military uses. The United States failed to obtain support for the policy from Iraq's neighbors, who also benefit from illegal oil trade. Still, as the U.S. administration debated the direction of the war on terrorism following the September 11 attacks in the United States, with some officials favoring military action to oust Saddam, President George Bush warned that Iraq would face "consequences" if the Iraqi leader continues to refuse access to UN weapons inspectors.

Recent media reports alleging that Saddam has cancer or has suffered a stroke have highlighted the issue of succession. While authorities have vehemently disputed these reports, Saddam appears to be grooming his younger son, Qusay, for the presidency. In May, the Baath Party elected Qusay to its leadership structure. Three days later, Saddam named him one of two deputy commanders of the party's military branch. Qusay, 34, is head of the country's security apparatus and keeps a much lower profile than his older brother, Uday, who has a reputation for brutality and excess. Throughout the year a number of senior figures, including foreign ministry officials and the sons of several senior government aides, were arrested or fired for alleged corruption. The purges have been seen by some as a way of eliminating potential rivals to Qusay.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Iraqis cannot change their government democratically. Saddam holds supreme power, and relatives and friends from his hometown of Tikrit hold most key positions. Opposition

parties are illegal, and the 250-seat National Council (parliament) has no power. Members of the Council serve four-year terms. Elections were held in 2000 for 220 of the seats; 30 seats reserved for Kurds are appointed by presidential decree. Saddam's older son, Uday Hussein, won a seat for Baghdad. All candidates are vetted to ensure their support for the regime, and all are either Baathists or nominal independents loyal to the Baath Party. High turnout is typical of Iraqi elections, as failure to vote may be seen as opposition to the government and thus may result in harassment, arrest, torture, and/or execution.

State control is maintained through the extensive use of intimidation through arrest, torture, and summary execution. In August 2001, Amnesty International published a report entitled "Iraq: Systematic Torture of Political Prisoners," which details abuses against suspected dissidents, including electric shock, extraction of fingernails or toenails, severe beating, rape or the threat of rape, and mock execution. An Amnesty International press release in April 2001 said that hundreds of political prisoners and detainees are executed in Iraq every year. Dozens of women accused of prostitution were beheaded in front of their homes in October 2000 by a militia created by Uday Hussein, according to the statement. London-based opposition groups report that Qusay Hussein regularly carries out mass executions of prisoners in a campaign to "cleanse" prisons. Military and government officials suspected of disloyalty to the regime are from time to time also reportedly killed.

Some safeguards exist in civil cases, but political and "economic" cases are tried in separate security courts with no due process considerations. Theft, corruption, desertion from the army, and currency speculation are all punishable by amputation, branding, or execution. Doctors have been killed for refusing to carry out punishments or for attempting reconstructive surgery.

Criticisms of local officials and investigations into official corruption are occasionally tolerated, as long as they do not extend to Saddam or to major policy issues. The government makes little effort to block the signal of Radio Free Iraq, which began broadcasting in 1998. An opposition-run, U.S.-backed satellite channel called Liberty TV was set to begin broadcasting into Iraq from London in early September 2001. The government carefully controls most information available to Iraqis. Restricted access to satellite broadcasting was allowed beginning in 1999. Uday Hussein is Iraq's leading media magnate. He is head of the Iraqi Journalists' Union, the owner of 11 of about 35 newspapers published in Iraq, including the *Babel* daily, and the director of television and radio stations. In July 2001, Uday reportedly threatened to kill a Kurdish journalist living in Britain for criticizing the Iraqi regime on the Internet.

Freedom of assembly and association is restricted to pro-Baath gatherings. All active opposition groups are in exile, and regime opponents outside Iraq are subject to retaliation by the Iraqi regime. There have been credible reports of Iraqi defectors receiving videotapes of their female relatives being raped, in attempts to coerce them to abandon the opposition. In 2000, the Revolutionary Command Council passed Societies Law 13, which specifies that "the goals, programs, and activities of societies should not conflict with the principles and objectives of the great 17-13 July revolution, the independence of the country, its national unity, and its republican system." Workers for the UN oil-for-food program were accused of spying and expelled in September 2001.

Islam is the state religion. Shiite Muslims, who constitute more than 60 percent of the population, face severe persecution. Shiites may not engage in communal Friday

prayer, the loaning of books by mosque libraries, broadcasting, book publishing, or funeral processions and observances. The army has arrested thousands of Shiites and executed an undetermined number of these detainees. Security forces have desecrated Shiite mosques and holy sites. The army has indiscriminately targeted civilian Shiite villages, razed homes, and drained southern Amara and Hammar marshes in order to flush out Shiite guerrillas.

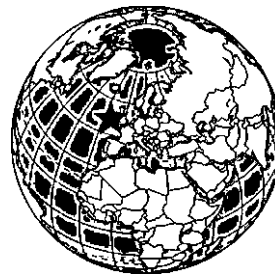
Forced displacement of ethnic Kurds, Turkomans, and other non-Arab minorities continued in 2001. According to Kurdish sources, a government "Arabization" policy involves authorities' forcibly expelling thousands of Kurdish families from Kurdish areas under Baghdad's control and replacing them with Arabs, who are offered land and money as incentives. A Kurdish newspaper reported in March that Kurds in the Kirkuk governorate had been ordered to report for military training or be imprisoned. In August, the government reportedly issued a ban on Iraqis traveling to Kurdistan. Many believe that the purpose of the ban is to prevent Iraqi awareness of the relative peace and prosperity in the north. Ethnic Turkomans have also been subjected to Arabization and assimilation policies, as well as displacement to reduce their concentration in the oil-rich north.

Although laws exist to protect women from discrimination in employment and education, to include women in security and police forces, to require education for girls, and to grant women rights in family matters such as divorce and property ownership, it is difficult to determine whether these rights are respected in practice. Men are granted immunity for killing female relatives suspected of "immoral deeds." In May 2001, the Baath Party elected a woman to its leadership for the first time.

Independent trade unions are nonexistent; the state-backed General Federation of Trade Unions is the only legal labor federation. The law does not recognize the right to collective bargaining and places restrictions on the right to strike.

## Ireland

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 1
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 1
Population: 3,800,000	Status: Free
PPP: \$25,918	
Life Expectancy: 77	
Ethnic Groups: Celtic, English minority	
Capital: Dublin	



### Overview:

Ireland's standing in Europe was damaged when voters rejected a key European Union (EU) treaty on enlargement in a June referendum. Poor electoral turnout was considered a major factor in the Nice Treaty's defeat, although Ireland is expected to ratify it in a further vote to be held before the end of 2002.

Ireland's struggle to maintain identity and independence dates from the beginning of its conquest by England in the early Middle Ages. Ruled as a separate kingdom under

the British Crown and, after 1800, as an integral part of the United Kingdom, Ireland received a measure of independence in 1921 when Great Britain granted dominion status to the 26 counties of southern Ireland. Six Protestant-majority counties chose to remain within the United Kingdom. The partition has long been regarded as provisional by the Irish republic, which until recently remained formally committed to incorporation of the northern counties into a unified Irish nation. Since 1949, governmental responsibility has tended to alternate between the *Fianna Fail* and *Fine Gael* parties.

Ongoing investigations into alleged financial improprieties by former Prime Minister Charles Haughey and other members of the ruling Fianna Fail party continued in 2001. Haughey allegedly siphoned funds intended for the party for personal use. Current Prime Minister Bertie Ahem signed several blank checks for Haughey while acting as Fianna Fail chief whip in the late 1970s. Over the past several years, Ireland has instituted numerous tribunals and inquiries to deal with corruption claims. In January 2001, a member of the Irish parliament was fined and jailed temporarily for failing to cooperate with an inquiry into alleged corruption. However, in spite of these unresolved allegations, Bertie Ahem's sometimes frail coalition continued to stay in power, at least partly as a result of the country's unprecedented economic prosperity: Ireland is Europe's fastest-growing economy, and at seven percent per year, the Irish economy has grown twice as fast as the U.S. economy over the last five years.

Ireland achieved "full employment" in 2000, and with labor in short supply, the country continued to experience an immigration reversal, with more people, including many expatriates, moving to Ireland than leaving. Because of its skilled workforce, flexible business environment, and favorable corporate tax policies, Ireland has also become an investment haven, especially for U.S. high-technology and Internet companies. The economy has become heavily dependent on the foreign-owned manufacturing sector, which accounts for half of all manufacturing jobs and 80 percent of manufactured exports. However, the slowdown in the global technology sector started to adversely affect Irish industry in 2001.

In July, the government took steps to address issues pertaining to the rejection of the Nice Treaty by voters in a poorly attended referendum held in June. It indicated a willingness to give the national parliament greater powers to scrutinize proposals under consideration by EU ministers, as well as expressing its intention to establish a national consultative forum to consider Ireland's future position in the EU. The government has also indicated, however, that it does not wish to seek to opt out from Europe's "rapid reaction" military force. While Ireland maintains a policy of neutrality, it is a member of the NATO-led Partnership for Peace program.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Irish citizens can change their government democratically. The Irish constitution, adopted in 1937, provides for direct election of the president for a seven-year term and for a bicameral legislature consisting of a directly elected 166-seat lower house (*Dail*) and an indirectly chosen 60-seat upper house (*Seanad*) with power to delay, but not veto, legislation. The cabinet, which is responsible to the Dail, is headed by a prime minister, who is the leader of the majority party or coalition and is appointed by the president for a five-year term on the recommendation of the Dail. Suffrage is universal; citizens over the age of 18 can vote.

Ireland has an independent judicial system that includes a district court with 23

districts, a circuit court with eight circuits, the high court, the court of criminal appeals, and the supreme court. The president appoints judges on the advice of the government. In June, following a referendum, the death Penalty was removed from the Irish constitution (it had been effectively abolished in 1990).

The national police service, or *Garda Siochana*, is under effective civilian control and has primary responsibility for internal security. Complaints regarding the mistreatment of detainees and prisoners while in police custody are investigated by an internal disciplinary body. Observers raised concerns in 2001 regarding the treatment of prisoners who suffer from mental illness. A report by the Irish Penal Reform Trust, published in April, focused on the imposition of solitary confinement for prolonged periods, and in sometimes squalid conditions, on mentally ill detainees.

Although free expression is constitutionally guaranteed, the five-member Censorship of Publications Board under the jurisdiction of the ministry of justice is empowered to halt publication of books. The board was established under the Censorship of Publications Act of 1946 and is frequently criticized as an anachronism by civil libertarians.

The constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the government does not hamper the teaching or practice of any faith. Even though Ireland is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, there is no state religion and no discrimination against nontraditional religious groups. However, most primary and secondary schools are denominational, and their boards of management are partially controlled by the Catholic Church. Although religious instruction is an integral part of the curriculum, parents may exempt their children from such instruction.

The rights of ethnic and racial minorities are generally respected, although increased levels of racial discrimination and violence have accompanied the growing immigration of foreign workers. In August, police investigated a number of racist websites, most based outside the country, which promoted messages such as "Say No to Black Ireland." There are some 25,000 nomadic persons who regard themselves as a distinct ethnic group called Travellers, roughly analogous to the Roma (Gypsies) of continental Europe. Travellers are regularly denied access to premises, goods, facilities, and services; many employers do not hire them. The Employment Equality Act of 1998 that came into force in October 1999 extends protection against discrimination in the workplace to include family status, religious belief, age, race, sexual orientation, disability, and membership in the Travellers community.

While Ireland moved to loosen its immigration laws in 2000 because of its economic boom and need for foreign labor, it drew criticism for passing tougher restrictions against asylum seekers. Ireland has become an attractive destination for asylum seekers from Africa and Eastern Europe. The new laws allow for longer detention periods for asylum seekers and reduces the amount of time applicants can prepare for judicial review from three months to 14 days. Critics of the new laws complained that those with legitimate claims would not have enough time to prepare their cases. A corollary policy of dispersing asylum seekers throughout the country was criticized for putting many refugee claimants at an unfair disadvantage since they could ostensibly be denied fair access to quality legal representation. The police were also given new powers to detain and deport asylum seekers whose applications were unsuccessful.

Discrimination against women in the workplace is unlawful, but inequalities persist regarding pay and promotions in both the public and private sectors. According to

the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Ireland ranks in 55th place in terms of female political representation; 12 percent of the members of the lower house and 18 percent of the upper house of parliament are women. Women's reproductive rights are limited: abortion is legal only when a woman's life is in danger, and an estimated 6,500 women travel to Britain annually to obtain abortions. An upcoming referendum planned by the government would restrict this right further by disallowing the risk of suicide by an expectant mother as grounds for terminating a pregnancy.

Labor unions are free to organize and bargain collectively. About 55 percent of workers in the public and private sectors are union members. Police and military personnel are prohibited from striking, but they may form associations to represent them in matters of pay and working conditions. Occasional strikes took place throughout 2001.

## Israel

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy      Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Economy: Mixed  
capitalist      Status: Free

Population: 6,400,000 [Note: includes about 176,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank, about 20,000 in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, about 6,900 in the Gaza Strip, and about 173,000 in East Jerusalem]

PPP: \$18,440

Life Expectancy: 78

Ethnic Groups: Jewish (80 percent), non-Jewish [mostly Arab] (20 percent)

Capital: Jerusalem



### Overview:

Israelis spent 2001 gripped by the continuing violence of the Palestinian *intifada* (uprising). Suicide bombings, drive-by shootings, and ambushes eroded the public's sense of security, further restricting their freedom of movement and assembly. In February, with the violence extending into its fifth month and showing no signs of abatement, Israelis overwhelmingly elected a new prime minister, the right-wing Likud Party leader and hawkish former general, Ariel Sharon. Feeling the Palestinians were ultimately unwilling to compromise for peace, the Israeli populace, including those on the left, shifted dramatically to the right, with security issues and the specter of war looming large in the Israeli psyche. Israel faced intense international criticism throughout the year for its handling of the Palestinian uprising. Prime Minister Sharon adopted strong tactics including armored incursions into Palestinian territory, targeted killings of suspected terrorists, and air strikes. Sharon stepped up use of these tactics after Palestinian gunmen assassinated an Israeli cabinet minister in Jerusalem on October 18. Israel launched a public commission of inquiry into the October 2000 shooting deaths of 13 Israeli Arab citizens at the hands of Israeli troops.

Israel was formed in 1948 from less than one-fifth of the original British Palestine

Mandate. Its neighbors, rejecting a UN partition plan that would have also created a Palestinian state, attacked immediately following independence in the first of several Arab-Israeli conflicts. Israel has functioned as a parliamentary democracy since independence. Since 1977, the conservative Likud and the center-left Labor Party have shared or alternated power.

Following June 1992 *Knesset* (parliament) elections, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's Labor-led coalition government secured a breakthrough agreement with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1993. The Declaration of Principles, negotiated secretly between Israeli and Palestinian delegations in Oslo, Norway, provided for a phased Israeli withdrawal from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and for limited Palestinian autonomy in those areas. Negotiations on the status of Jerusalem, Jewish settlements, refugees, and Israel's borders began in November 1999. On November 4, 1995, a right-wing Jewish extremist, opposed to the peace process, assassinated Rabin in Tel Aviv.

After winning a landslide election in 1999 on an ambitious peace-making platform, Prime Minister Ehud Barak succeeded Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu. At Camp David in July 2000, Barak engaged the Palestinian leadership in the most far-reaching negotiations ever. For the first time, Israel offered compromise solutions on Jerusalem, agreeing to some form of Palestinian control and quasi-sovereignty over East Jerusalem, which contains Islamic holy sites. Israel also offered 95 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians. The Palestinians rejected the Israeli offers, and no agreement was reached. Barak's determination to address all the final-status issues with the Palestinians at once, rather than in incremental steps, as proscribed by the Oslo process, was seen as dangerous by some members of his own cabinet. Much of the public also became disillusioned with the prime minister, feeling that he was insufficiently informing them about the compromise solutions he was proposing.

In a snap election in February 2001, held against the backdrop of the continuing Palestinian uprising, Barak lost by a landslide to Likud leader Ariel Sharon. Israelis identified with Sharon's promises to enhance Israel's security as Barak's political stock plummeted in the wake of the failed Camp David talks.

While Israelis voted overwhelmingly for Sharon, voter turnout was low at 62 percent. Approximately 18 percent of eligible Arab Israelis voted in the elections, down from 75 percent in 1999. Most Arab citizens boycotted the vote, registering their disaffection with the political establishment and their solidarity with the Palestinians. Sharon assembled a cabinet composed primarily of Likud and Labor along with several religious, centrist, and ultra- and extreme-right-wing parties. For the first time in Israel's history, an Arab citizen, Salah Tarif, was awarded a cabinet post.

In June, a Belgian court began deliberations over whether to indict Prime Minister Sharon on charges of crimes against humanity. A group of Belgians, Palestinians, Lebanese, and Moroccans submitted a complaint assigning to Sharon responsibility for the deaths of 800 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982, while he was defense minister. An Israeli state inquiry ruled in the late 1980s that Sharon—the architect of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon—was indirectly responsible for the deaths.

In September, Israel's Labor Party held an inconclusive leadership primary. Decimated by the results of the February elections and attendant infighting, the party split its votes between Abraham Burg, an Orthodox Jewish dove, and Binyamin Ben-Eliezer,

the country's hawkish, yet peace-oriented defense minister. Ben-Eliezer accused the Burg camp of stuffing ballot boxes. Ben-Eliezer captured the party's leadership in a subsequent round of voting in late December.

In October, the state comptroller accused Prime Minister Sharon of campaign finance irregularities, alleging that he had accepted a \$1.4 million donation from a foreign company.

As the Palestinian uprising wore on, a growing number of Israeli troops and reservists refused to report for duty. Approximately 600 reservists have refused to report to their bases since the start of the intifada in September 2000.

Israelis experienced a pronounced decline in personal security in 2001. Over 100 Israelis were killed in Palestinian terrorist attacks. Islamic radicals and other Palestinian militants staged suicide bombings, ambushes, and car bombings, eroding the public's freedom of movement. In one case in February, a Palestinian bus driver deliberately rammed his vehicle into a group of Israelis standing at a Tel Aviv bus stop, killing eight. Suicide bombers struck crowded gathering points in several Israeli cities during the year, including a Jerusalem pizzeria and a Tel Aviv disco, killing scores. Some Palestinian attackers disguised themselves as Orthodox Jews or Israeli soldiers, discreetly placing themselves in large crowds before detonating explosives or opening fire. Suicide bombings in Jerusalem and Haifa, and other attacks in late November and the first half of December, killed dozens of people, forcing Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to declare and enforce a ceasefire which significantly damped down the violence for the rest of the year.

In October, seven months into his term, Sharon faced his first real internal political challenge when right-wing members of the government withdrew from the coalition. Citing fears that Sharon was giving in to U.S. pressure to ease restrictions on Palestinians, two cabinet ministers resigned, taking between them seven parliamentary seats. While Sharon's coalition held a commanding 76-seat majority, other members threatened to resign, raising the prospect of early elections. Two days after issuing his resignation, Rehevam Ze'evi, the right-wing former tourism minister, was assassinated in a Jerusalem hotel by Palestinian gunmen.

Throughout the year, Israel faced attacks from southern Lebanon by Hezbollah, a radical Shiite Muslim group backed by Iran. In June 2000, Israel withdrew from its self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon, after occupying the area for 18 years to protect its northern region from attacks. While the UN authorized Israel's withdrawal as complete, Hezbollah nonetheless continues to attack Israeli troops, especially those patrolling near the Shebba farms area in northern Israel. Hezbollah considers the area Lebanese, a claim backed by Syria.

In April, and again in July, Israel attacked Syrian army positions in Lebanon after Hezbollah attacked Israeli troops in northern Israel. Syria maintains 35,000 troops in Lebanon and controls most of the country's political system. Israel thus holds Syria ultimately responsible for Hezbollah attacks against Israeli troops and civilians.

Peace talks with Syria did not take place during the year. Intensive negotiations between the countries broke down in January 2000 over disagreements on final borders around the Golan Heights. Prior to losing the Golan in 1967, Syria had used the territory to shell northern Israeli towns.



**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Israeli citizens can change their government democratically. Although Israel has no formal constitution, a series of basic laws has the force of constitutional principles.

In March, Israel reinstated a proportional voting system for national elections, replacing a dual voting system in which voters cast separate ballots for political parties and prime ministerial candidates. The dual voting system resulted in the proliferation of several small political parties, which made it very difficult for a prime minister to compose a cohesive and stable governing majority. In the proportional system, voters cast ballots for a party list. The total percentage of votes determines the number of parliamentary seats earned. Party leaders, elected by party members, naturally stand for the prime ministership.

The judiciary is independent, and procedural safeguards are generally respected. Security trials, however, may be closed to the public on limited grounds. The Emergency Powers (Detention) Law of 1979 provides for indefinite administrative detention without trial. The policy stems from emergency laws in place since the creation of Israel. Most administrative detainees are Palestinian, but there are currently two Lebanese detainees being held on national security grounds. Members of Lebanese Shiite Muslim groups, they are believed to have the most direct knowledge of Israeli airman Ron Arad, believed to be held in Lebanon since his plane was shot down in 1986. In August the Supreme Court ruled that the two detainees must receive visits from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); Israel had previously blocked its visits.

Some one million Arab citizens (roughly 19 percent of the population) receive inferior education, housing, and social services relative to the Jewish population. Israeli Arabs are not subject to the military draft, though they may serve voluntarily. Those who do not join the army do not enjoy the financial benefits available to Israelis who have served, including scholarships and housing loans.

In February, a public inquiry headed by Supreme Court Justice Theodor Or convened to examine the circumstances surrounding the shooting deaths of 13 Arab Israeli citizens in October 2000. Israeli police opened fire on the Arab demonstrators protesting in support of the Palestinian uprisings in the West Bank and Gaza. Testimony provided during the commission's initial hearings revealed police blunders and the unauthorized use of firearms during the protests.

In September Israeli police discovered an Arab-Israeli terror gang in the country's north. Police suspected that the *Tanzim*—the armed wing of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction—recruited the group's members. The group was accused of staging a bomb attack at a road junction. Israelis were noticeably alarmed by the discovery, fearing that Israel's Arab citizens may represent a fifth column.

Newspaper and magazine articles on security matters are subject to a military censor, though the scope of permissible reporting is expanding. Editors may appeal a censorship decision to a three-member tribunal that includes two civilians. Arabic-language publications are censored more frequently than are Hebrew-language ones. Newspapers are privately owned and freely criticize government policy.

Publishing the praise of violence is prohibited under the Counter-terrorism Ordinance. Israeli authorities prohibit expressions of support for Hamas and other groups that call for the destruction of Israel. In November 2000, the Israeli Supreme Court lowered the standard by which public speech or publications can be deemed inciteful

and harmful to the "values of public order," including "social cohesion." Previously, only public statements found to be threatening to the foundations of democratic rule were considered tantamount to sedition and subject to punishment.

In June 2001, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) issued a report on the shootings of journalists covering the intifada. It claimed that 15 had been shot and wounded by Israeli forces since the beginning of the uprising in September 2000. In some cases, CPJ claimed journalists were deliberately targeted, a charge the Israeli government denied. In July, Israeli military authorities ordered field commanders to protect journalists covering street clashes in the West Bank and Gaza.

Freedoms of assembly and association are respected. Freedom of religion is respected. Each community has jurisdiction over its own members in matters of marriage, burial, and divorce. In the Jewish community, the Orthodox establishment handles these matters. A heated debate has erupted in recent years over the Orthodox monopoly on conversions, which denies certain rights, such as citizenship and marriage, to Reform and Conservative converts. However, a 1999 lower court ruling rejected the Orthodox hold on conversions, clearing the way for the participation of the Reform and Conservative branches of Judaism.

In April 2001 Rabbi Ovadiah Yossef, the highly influential spiritual leader of the Orthodox Sephardic Shas Party, publicly called for the annihilation of Arabs. He was widely condemned by the Israeli political establishment.

Women are underrepresented in public affairs; only 9 women were elected to the 120-seat Knesset in 1996. In the May 1999 election, an Arab woman, Husaina Jabara, was elected to the Knesset for the first time. However, women continue to face discrimination in many areas, including in military service, where they are barred from combat units, and in religious institutions.

Most Bedouin housing settlements are not recognized by the government and are not provided with basic infrastructure and essential services. In September 2000, residents of four recognized Bedouin villages in the Negev desert elected their own representatives to local governments for the first time. The interior ministry usually appoints representatives.

Workers may join unions of their choice and enjoy the right to strike and to bargain collectively. Three-quarters of the workforce either belong to unions affiliated with *Histadrut* (General Federation of Labor) or are covered under its social programs and collective bargaining agreements.

# Italy

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Population: 57,800,000

PPP: \$22,172

Life Expectancy: 79

Ethnic Groups: Italian, small minorities of German, French,  
Slovenian, and Albanian

Capital: Rome

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



## Overview:

Silvio Berlusconi's center-right coalition, which includes his own Forza Italia, the post-Fascist National Alliance, and the northern-nationalist Northern League, swept to power in national elections held in May. Weeks after his government took office, rioters disrupted the Group of Eight (G8) summit in Genoa, prompting a heavy-handed response from the police that left one protester dead and more than 230 injured. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the United States, the opposition center-left alliance was thrown into disarray by disagreements over support for the war in Afghanistan.

Modern Italian history dates from the nineteenth-century movement for national unification. Most of Italy had merged into one kingdom by 1870. Italy sided with Germany and Austria-Hungary at the outset of World War I, but switched to side with the Allied powers during the war. From 1922 to 1943, the country was a Fascist dictatorship under Benito Mussolini, who sided with the Axis powers during World War II. A referendum in 1946 replaced the monarchy with a republican constitution, which provides for a president whose role is largely ceremonial. He is elected to a seven-year term by an assembly of members of parliament and delegates from the regional councils. The president chooses the prime minister, who is often, but not always, a member of the largest party in the chamber of deputies, the lower house of parliament. Members of the upper house, the senate, are elected on a regional basis.

Italy's fractious and unstable governments have failed during the past several years to implement the reforms necessary to tackle the country's myriad political problems. Such reforms would include overhauling current electoral laws, which engender political instability by allowing dozens of small parties to wield disproportionate influence in parliament; creating a framework for devolution in order to neutralize secessionist sentiment among northern Italians; and developing measures to prevent conflicts of interest. Observers believe that the chances of any serious electoral reform are slim, and thus it is likely that the present government will suffer the same instability as previous ones.

Following the collapse in 1994 of a center-right coalition led by Berlusconi, a media mogul, the center-left held power from 1996 to 2001. Despite the infighting that led to four government changes in five years, the coalition presided over economic austerity measures that brought Italy into line with Maastricht Treaty criteria for the European Monetary Union. However, the sweeping defeat of center-left parties in Italy's first

direct regional assembly elections in April 2000 led to the resignation of Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema and the end of the 57th Italian government since World War II. With a view to an upcoming referendum on electoral reform, President Carlo Ciampi avoided dissolving parliament by appointing Giuliano Amato prime minister in April 2000. By the end of the year, disunity, a lack of new policy ideas, and low poll ratings paved the way for the success of Berlusconi's center-right coalition in the May 2001 elections. The coalition won a comfortable majority of 368 out of 630 seats in the chamber of deputies and 177 out of 326 in the senate, and a strong showing for the Forza Italia gave Berlusconi firm control of his coalition.

Berlusconi's victory raised questions regarding his personal probity—he is facing charges of criminal wrongdoing which have yet to be resolved—as well as the worry that he would be unwilling to resolve his long-standing conflict-of-interest problems with regard to control of the media. A bill approved by parliament in September to decriminalize false accounting will allow him to evade some of the charges against him, and his suggestion that a government-appointed "authority" monitor senior political figures to prevent conflicts of interest, has been derided by the opposition.

On the economic front, Italy continues to see the slowest growth of the major European countries. Instability in financial markets, coupled with disagreements among coalition partners and a fear of assets falling into foreign hands, kept the long-standing program of privatizing state industries incomplete during 2001. In addition, Italy's leading trade association reported in late 2000 that some 20 percent of all Italian businesses are controlled by organized crime. During the summer, two changes of ownership at major industrial companies raised questions about the influence of family-owned business empires on the Italian economy. On the positive side, the Italian Antitrust Authority had stepped up its efforts and become increasingly effective in the past two years against anticompetitive practices in the private sector.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Italians can change their government democratically. Citizens are free to form political organizations, with the exception of the constitutionally forbidden prewar Fascist Party. The post-war constitution, designed to prevent another Mussolini-style dictatorship, sharply restricts the powers of the executive in favor of the legislative and judicial branches of government. The result has been unstable governing coalitions, political deadlock, and heavy reliance on the referendum as a political tool. In a referendum on constitutional change, voters in October 2000 approved proposals on devolution designed to give regional authorities more control over taxes and educational and environmental policies. A series of bomb blasts throughout the year targeted a variety of companies, political organizations, and government offices.

The judiciary is independent but notoriously slow and inefficient. A 1995 law allows for preventive detention as a last resort or in cases where there is convincing evidence of a serious offense, such as illegal activity involving organized crime or related to drugs, arms, or subversion. A maximum of two years is permitted for preliminary investigation. About half of some 52,000 inmates are waiting to be tried. The average waiting period for a trial is about 18 months, but can exceed two years. A decree issued in November 2000 extends the time limit on pretrial incarceration of suspects charged with pedophilia or the prostitution of minors. It would also give judges greater discretion in extending pretrial detention up to a six-year limit. Other provisions include abol-

ishing the plea bargain for suspects facing life imprisonment and increasing surveillance of suspects under house arrest.

In July 2000, the government announced plans to reform Italy's prison system. The plans include building new prisons, renovating existing facilities, recruiting new prison officers, and deporting prisoners from outside the European Union sentenced to less than three years. Prison conditions and overcrowding have drawn criticism from domestic and international observers; Italy's prisons are holding about 9,000 more prisoners than they were designed to accommodate.

Concern over human rights violations by law enforcement officials surfaced several times in 2001. In April, Amnesty International called for an inquiry into allegations of ill-treatment of protestors both on the streets and in police stations during a Global Forum meeting held in Naples in March. In July, demonstrations at the G8 summit in Genoa were marred by violence and allegations of police brutality, and led to the death of one protestor and the arrest of hundreds more. A fact-finding parliamentary inquiry established in August ended in disagreements between members and a refusal by some to endorse the committee's final report. In a biannual report issued in September, Amnesty detailed a number of reports of "gratuitous and deliberate violence" inflicted on both demonstrators and detainees by law enforcement officers during the first half of the year.

The Italian press is free and competitive. Most of approximately 80 daily newspapers are independently owned. The main state-owned television network and the three main channels of Radio Audizioni Italiane (RAI) provide Italians with most of their news. Their boards of directors are parliament-appointed. A February 2000 law on political advertising requires broadcasters to give political adversaries equal time, bans paid political ads on national television, and requires public broadcasters to give all parties free television time at certain hours. Private broadcasters must also provide equal time to opposing parties if they choose to run political ads. Fears that the independence of the press could be compromised were raised after Berlusconi's appointment as prime minister; as one of Italy's wealthiest men with extensive holdings in the media, he could potentially control 90 percent of all TV broadcasting; he also has a significant stake in the publishing business.

Freedom of assembly and association is guaranteed by the constitution, with the exception of organizations that promote racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination. Religious freedom is protected, and the government subsidizes several religions through tax revenues. In March 2000, the government formally recognized Buddhists and Jehovah's Witnesses as official religions for the first time. Official recognition allows religions to establish their own schools and to benefit from a system in which taxpayers can donate a percentage of their income tax payment to the faith of their choice. Observers have raised concern over what appears to be an increase of xenophobia and anti-Semitism, particularly in the north. Umberto Bossi's public statements against Muslims, homosexuals, and foreigners appeared to resonate with Italians who feared that an influx of foreigners would threaten the national identity. In February, police arrested 12 members of the banned international-neo-Nazi group Blood and Honor in the regional capital of Bolzano.

There are no restrictions on women's participation in government and politics. Though few women hold elective office, they currently constitute 9.8 percent of the chamber of deputies and 7.7 percent of the senate. Women enjoy legal equality in

marriage, property, and inheritance rights. Foreign women are particular victims of human trafficking. Tens of thousands have been smuggled in to work as prostitutes, primarily by Albanian organized crime rings. Often, their passports are destroyed, and they are abused in an effort to frighten them into submission. Immigration laws offer special protection to trafficked women, such as automatic six-month legal residency with the possibility of renewal. In addition, an estimated 1,200 women in 48 programs throughout the country have been given assistance finding alternative employment.

Workers may strike and bargain collectively. Some 40 percent of the workforce is unionized. The law prohibits discrimination by employers against union members and organizers.

## Jamaica

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3\*

Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free

Population: 2,600,000

PPP: \$3,561

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Black (91 percent), other, including white, Chinese, East Indian (9 percent)

Capital: Kingston

Ratings Change: Jamaica's civil liberties rating declined from 2 to 3 due to Colombian narcotics traffickers' control of the local drug trade, increasing use of the army for internal security, and the killings of more than 900 people in often politically related street crimes.



### Overview:

Crime dominated the news in Jamaica throughout 2001, casting a pall on the run-up to national elections to be held following year, frightening potential foreign tourists, disrupting the local economy, and accelerating an already hemorrhaging brain drain of the country's professional class. By early 2001, Colombian drug lords had completed their efforts to cut Jamaican middlemen out of the illegal drug trade, effectively taking direct control of both the island's domestic trade and the transshipment of cocaine to countries to the north. Meanwhile, the U.S. government's annual drug-war report named Jamaica as the Caribbean's leading transshipment point for U.S.-bound Colombian cocaine.

Following deadly street warfare in Kingston in July, Prime Minister Percival J. Patterson ordered the full deployment of the army to restore order, and the government budgeted \$5 million for advertising in the United States, Britain, and Canada designed to shore up the vital but sagging tourism industry. (Tourism, however, plummeted again following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.) The rising tensions are part of a long-running feud between partisan-affiliated neighborhood gangs that also control much of the country's drug trade. Despite government efforts to improve public safety through a series of anticrime initia-

tives, street crime is also on the rise, with Jamaica's murder rate up more than 30 percent compared with that of the previous year. In October, Patterson reshuffled his cabinet in response to growing criticism of his government's handling of crime control and citizen safety.

Jamaica, a member of the Commonwealth, achieved independence from Great Britain in 1962. It is a parliamentary democracy, with the British monarchy represented by a governor-general. The bicameral parliament consists of a 60-member house of representatives elected for five years and a 21-member senate, with 13 senators appointed by the prime minister and 8 by the leader of the parliamentary opposition. Executive authority is vested in the prime minister, who leads the political party commanding a majority in the house.

Since independence, power has alternated between the social-democratic People's National Party (PNP) and the conservative Jamaica Labor Party (JLP). The PNP's Michael Manley, who died in 1997, was prime minister from 1972 to 1980, and again from 1989 until his resignation for health reasons in 1992. JLP leader Edward Seaga held the post from 1980 until 1989. During the 1970s the two parties helped organize and arm slum dwellers, creating rival armed gangs in order to intimidate voters.

In 1992 the PNP elected Patterson to replace Manley as party leader and prime minister. In the 1993 elections, the PNP won 52 parliamentary seats, and the JLP 8. The parties differed little on continuing the structural adjustment begun in the 1980s, but the JLP was hurt by long-standing internal rifts. Irregularities and violence marred the vote. The PNP agreed to address subsequent JLP demands for electoral reform. Meanwhile, the Patterson government continued to confront labor unrest and an unrelenting crime wave.

In October 1995 Bruce Golding, a well-respected economist and businessman and the former chairman of the JLP, left the party to launch the National Democratic Movement (NDM), one of the most significant political developments since independence. Golding brought with him a number of key JLP figures, including one other member of parliament, cutting the JLP's seats to 6.

Politically motivated fighting between supporters of the JLP and the NDM claimed at least ten lives during 1996. In December 1997, the PNP won a third successive victory in parliamentary elections, taking 50 seats in the lower house to the JLP's 10. Confidence in Patterson's unprecedented second full term was reaffirmed in local elections held in September 1998, as the ruling PNP gained 75 percent of the vote and took possession of the capital and all 13 rural parishes. The 1997 and 1998 votes were characterized by unusually low levels of political violence and were judged generally free and fair, despite a creaky electoral administration.

In April 1999, sweeping tax changes proposed by Patterson sparked a riot that left nine people dead, most killed by the police. The Private Sector Organization of Jamaica, made up of manufacturers, distributors, and exporters, has said that the island's recent economic decline, marked by a 20 percent unemployment rate, is the result of three decades of crime. The increase in violent crime is largely the work of former politically organized gangs that now operate a lucrative drug trade that is only loosely tied to local party bosses.

In 2000 Patterson promised to stanch Jamaica's "rampant criminality" by introducing new efforts to control guns, creating a new police anti-organized-crime strike force, and reintroducing the death Penalty. The get-tough promises came after criti-

cisms from key leaders of the vital tourism industry joined a crescendo of complaints from Jamaicans of all walks of life demanding an end to a more than two-decades-long spiral of mostly drug-related street crime. The fierce crime wave crippled local businesses and created an exodus of middle-class Jamaicans overseas. The subsequent decision to resume the death Penalty was immediately condemned by international human rights organizations, and Jamaican lawmakers lashed out at what they called U.S. reluctance to provide real help in stemming the flow of illegal guns to the island and its Caribbean neighbors. In September 2000, Seaga accused the government of running extortion rackets and the PNP of arming "activists"—gangsters—with licensed guns, charges denied by the government. In October Patterson dismissed the head of the police Civilian Intelligence Unit, after the elite group was accused of engaging in illegal wiretapping of leading politicians, including the prime minister and senior police officials.

In 2001, Princess Cruises, the world's largest cruise line, announced that it would no longer make stops in Jamaica, citing incessant reports of the harassment of passengers, a wake-up call for the country's vital \$1.3 billion tourism industry. Gang fighting in West Kingston erupted in May 2001, leaving a toll of 71 dead, and 28 others—including at least three police officers and one soldier—were killed in several days of gunfights as police and soldiers moved into opposition-held communities. Gang violence surged again in November, when at least seven people were killed in PNP neighborhoods.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens are able to change their government through elections. However, voter apathy in the 1998 local elections resulted in one of the lowest turnout rates—31 percent—in Jamaican history. Although violence associated with the 1997 preelectoral period was significantly down from previous years, it was nonetheless marked by thuggery on both sides, police intimidation, and large-scale confusion. Progress on electoral reform has been slow, and the municipal elections had been postponed for five years in order for electoral rolls to be updated and the voting system reformed. International concern has been expressed about candidate access to so-called garrison communities—armed political fiefdoms in 9 of the 60 parliamentary districts. Seaga's JLP controls only one, Tivoli Gardens, while the PNP controls seven and the NDM one.

Constitutional guarantees regarding the right to free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties, civic organizations, and labor unions are generally respected.

The judicial system is headed by a supreme court and includes several magistrate's courts and a court of appeals, with final recourse to the Privy Council in London, which is drawn from members of Britain's House of Lords. The justice system is slow and inefficient, particularly in addressing police abuses and the violent conditions in prisons. Despite government efforts to improve Penal conditions, a mounting backlog of cases and a shortage of court staff at all levels continue to undermine the judicial system. In February 1997 Jamaica signed on to the hemispheric antidrug strategy formulated by the Organization of American States (OAS).

Violence is now the major cause of death in Jamaica, and the murder rate is one of the highest in the world. Much of the violence is the result of warfare between drug gangs known as posses. Criminal deportees from the United States and a growing ille-



gal weapons trade are major causes of the violence. Mobs have been responsible for numerous vigilante killings of suspected criminals. Inmates frequently die as a result of prison riots. Jamaican officials complained that the United States was flagrantly applying a double standard by demanding a full effort by them to help stop the flow of drugs into the United States, but at the same time failing to stem the flow of guns to Jamaica.

Human rights groups say that there are continuing concerns over criminal justice practices in Jamaica. In 1999, Jamaican police killed 151 suspects, and in 2000 they killed 140. Other disputed practices include the imposition of death sentences following trials of questionable fairness; deaths in custody; corporal punishment; alleged ill-treatment by police and prison wardens; appalling detention centers and prisons; and laws punishing consensual sexual acts in private between adult men. A mounting crime rate led the government to take the controversial steps of restoring capital punishment and restoring flogging. Rights groups protested both measures. Critics charge that flogging is unconstitutional because it can be characterized as "inhuman or degrading punishment," which the constitution prohibits.

In 1998, a six-month limit on death-row appeals to international bodies was adopted. Jamaica also announced its intention to withdraw from an agreement with the Inter-American Human Rights Commission of the OAS that gives prisoners the right to appeal to the commission in order to remove barriers to executions. There are 600 prisoners on death row. A 2000 ruling by the Privy Council in London, which commuted the death Penalty for six Jamaican inmates, said that inmates should be allowed lawyers when appealing before Jamaica's privy council, which advises on mercy pleas. It objected to a Jamaican law that gives death-row inmates only six months to have their cases heard by international human rights commissions. It also reaffirmed an earlier ruling that mandated, because of concerns about cruel and inhumane punishment, a lapse of no more than five years between sentencing and execution. The ruling prompted Patterson, a proponent of executions, to declare that it was "another compelling reason" to create a much-touted Caribbean court to replace the Privy Council. The Privy Council ruling that six men on Jamaica's death row should have their sentences commuted to life imprisonment brought to a halt government plans to resume hangings, suspended since 1988.

There are an estimated 1.9 million radios in Jamaica—the highest ratio in the Caribbean—but only 330,000 television sets, and there is generally low newspaper readership. Newspapers are independent and free of government control. Journalists are occasionally intimidated during election campaigns. Broadcast media are largely public but are open to pluralistic points of view. Public opinion polls play a key role in the political process, and election campaigns feature debates on state-run television.

In 1998, a woman was for the first time elected as speaker of parliament. Labor unions are politically influential and have the right to strike. The Industrial Disputes Tribunal mediates labor conflicts.

## Japan

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 127,100,000  
PPP: \$24,898  
Life Expectancy: 81  
Ethnic Groups: Japanese (99 percent), other (1 percent)  
Capital: Tokyo

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 2  
Status: Free



### Overview:

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi took office in April 2001 pledging to introduce ambitious reforms to shake the Japanese economy out of its decade-long malaise. By year's end, he had made little headway in his plans to slash government spending, deregulate the economy, privatize or eliminate dozens of state companies, and force banks to dispose of bad loans. Koizumi faced staunch opposition to the changes from conservatives within his own party, while tumbling industrial production, plunging exports, and weak consumer demand pushed the Japanese economy into its fourth recession in a decade during the third quarter of the year.

If carried out, Koizumi's plans could throw hundreds of thousands of Japanese out of work in the coming years. For now, however, most voters seem to be behind the prime minister. Koizumi, 59, led his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to its best election results since 1992 in the July upper house elections, gaining a popular mandate for his agenda.

Following its defeat in World War n, Japan adopted a U.S.-drafted constitution in 1947 that provided for a parliamentary government, renounced war, and ended the emperor's divine status. Created through a 1955 merger of two conservative parties, the LDP dominated Japanese politics during the Cold War and presided over the economy's spectacular postwar growth. Successive governments spent massively on public works projects to benefit the LDP's rural stronghold as well as its corporate backers, who funneled both legal and illegal contributions back to the party. Bureaucrats, meanwhile, imposed costly regulations to protect small businesses, which overwhelmingly supported the LDP.

The LDP's only spell in opposition in the post-War era came after it lost the 1993 lower house elections. The party's drubbing followed a string of corruption scandals in the late 1980s that brought down Prime Minister Noburu Takeshita and other top LDP politicians. After a fractious reformist government collapsed, the LDP returned to power in 1994 as the head of a three-party coalition. Taking advantage of the opposition's failure to form a coherent and credible agenda, the scandal-ridden LDP won 239 out of 500 seats in the 1996 parliamentary elections and formed a minority government under Ryutaro Hashimoto.

Hashimoto and his immediate successors, Keizo Obuchi and Yoshiro Mori, did little to arrest mounting economic problems stemming from the collapse of Japanese stock and real estate prices in the early 1990s. The crash left Japanese banks saddled with tens of billions of dollars worth of problem loans and diminished the value of property

and other collateral backing the loans. The Asian financial crisis that began in 1997 further weakened the banking system and cut into exports. Companies responded by sacking tens of thousands of workers, which in turn helped weaken consumer spending, which makes up around 60 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Consumers also cut spending in response to a sales tax introduced in 1997 and over fears that they would have to rely on their own savings for retirement should the government's swelling public debt and Japan's greying population overwhelm the state pension system.

Though the banks' problem loans were dragging down the economy by choking off lending and eroding consumer confidence, the government did not push the banks too hard to foreclose on bad debts because it feared this would lead to widespread corporate bankruptcies. Instead, it introduced at least a dozen stimulus packages in the 1990s worth a total of around \$1 trillion that failed to jumpstart the economy while jacking up Japan's huge public debt.

Despite the economy's continuing woes and Prime Minister Mori's deep unpopularity just two months after succeeding Obuchi in April 2000, the LDP won 233 seats in the June 25, 2000, elections for the 480-seat lower house. The party formed a governing coalition with the New Komeito and New Conservative parties, which together won 38 seats. During the campaign, the government pledged to continue spending heavily on public works until the economy rebounded. The main opposition Democratic Party, which promised deregulation and fiscal tightening, won 127 seats. Turnout was 62.4 percent.

Dogged for months by government and party scandals and accusations of incompetence, Mori resigned in early April 2001. Enjoying the strong support of the LDP's rank and file, Koizumi, who formerly held the health and telecommunications portfolios, won an April 24 party primary and days later was named prime minister.

The LDP's conservative mainstream faction opposed Koizumi's reforms because they would scale back the public spending and red tape that benefit the party's core constituency of farmers, small businesses, and the construction industry. Construction accounts for ten percent of all jobs in Japan. Moreover, while tending to support Koizumi's calls for change, most ordinary Japanese did not have a feeling of urgency about the economy and therefore were hardly clamoring for radical measures. The unemployment rate reached 5.4 percent in the fall, a postwar record but still low compared to other wealthy countries.

Economists, meanwhile, warned that Koizumi's reforms would likely make matters worse before they improved. They said that cutting government spending and forcing banks to get rid of bad loans, at a time when Japan already suffers from deflation and weak consumer spending, could lead to more corporate layoffs and make Japanese even more hesitant to spend. This in turn could cause prices to drop further, making it even harder for indebted Japanese companies to repay bank loans.

Koizumi, however, argued that only painful structural reforms could revive the economy. His supporters noted that the government's monetary tools were limited given that interest rates were close to zero and the central bank was reluctant to print more money. Similarly, the government had little room to increase spending given its high level of debt. Fueled by rising health care and social security costs for the country's aging population, Japan's public debt is around 130 percent of GDP, the highest among wealthy countries.

Koizumi's hardest and most important reform task appeared to be to restore the

banks to health so that they would be more willing to lend money. Japan's banks officially have 150 trillion *yen* (\$1.2 trillion) in bad loans on their books, although Goldman Sachs suggests that the true number could be as high as 237 trillion *yen*. Almost as troubling, the banks' capital bases include 45 trillion *yen* in equities, meaning that Japan's falling stock market has cut into bank balance sheets. The benchmark Nikkei index closed for the year at 10,543, down 23.0 percent for 2001, far below its peak of 38,915 in December 1989.

Koizumi won solid public backing for his efforts to revamp Japan's economy and politics with the LDP's victory in the July 29 upper house elections. The party won 65 of the 121 seats contested, more than double the 26 taken by the Democratic Party. He largely failed, however, to capitalize on his victory by setting out details of his plans.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Japanese can change their government through elections and enjoy most basic rights. The lower house of parliament has 300 single-member, simple-plurality districts and 180 party-list, proportional-representation seats. The upper house has 152 single-seat districts and 100 seats chosen by proportional representation. Despite recent reforms aimed at curbing the power of the bureaucracy, policy generally is still shaped by senior civil servants rather than by elected politicians. The bureaucracy has in recent years been hit by numerous scandals and operates with little transparency. The Berlin-based Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Japan 21st out of 91 countries, with a score of 7.1 out of 10. The top-ranked and least corrupt country, Finland, received a 9.9.

Japan's judiciary is independent, although some procedural rules might make it harder for defendants to receive fair trials, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Japan's human rights record in 2000. The criminal procedure code allows police and prosecutors to restrict suspects' access to counsel during investigation and bars attorneys from being present during interrogations, even after indictment. Human rights groups say that in practice suspects have little access to counsel. Bar associations, human rights groups, and some prisoners also say that police occasionally use force to obtain confessions from suspects. Appeals courts have in recent years thrown out some convictions that were based on forced confessions.

Foreign and domestic human rights groups have criticized Japan's Penal system for subjecting prisoners to severe regimentation and dehumanizing punishments. Amnesty International in June criticized Japan's treatment of death row inmates, including the practices of notifying condemned inmates less than two hours before they are to be executed and not informing family members until after executions take place. The government restricts access by human rights groups to prisons and detention centers.

The Japanese press is independent though not always outspoken. Exclusive private press clubs provide major media outlets with access to top politicians and bureaucrats. In return, journalists generally do not aggressively report on the condition of troubled companies and banks and other sensitive financial issues.

Japanese companies frequently track women into clerical careers and otherwise discriminate against female employees, according to the U.S. State Department report. In addition, reports in recent years by government agencies and the Japanese Trade Union Confederation suggest that sexual harassment in the workplace is widespread.

The law bans both discrimination and sexual harassment on the job, but authorizes only light sanctions for corporate violators. A 1998 survey by the prime minister's office found that one in three Japanese women experienced some form of physical abuse at home. Women also frequently complain of being groped or otherwise molested on crowded trains. There is also growing concern in society over teenage prostitution and the practice of girls dating older men for money.

Japanese of all faiths worship freely. Buddhism and Shintoism have the most followers. In the wake of the 1995 terrorist attacks in the Tokyo subway by the Aum Shinrikyo cult, parliament amended the Religious Corporation Law to give the government greater oversight over the operations and financial affairs of most religious groups. The law applies only to religious groups that register voluntarily as "religious corporations," but most do register in order to receive tax benefits and other advantages.

The three million Burakumin, who are descendants of feudal-era outcasts, and the tiny, indigenous, Ainu minority face unofficial discrimination in housing and employment and social ostracism, the U.S. State Department report said. The government funds programs aimed at improving the social and economic status of both groups. The 636,000 ethnic Koreans, most of whom were born in Japan, face unofficial discrimination in housing, education, and employment, the report added. Koreans and other ethnic minorities born in Japan are considered to be legal foreign residents and are not automatically Japanese citizens at birth. Instead, those seeking citizenship must apply for naturalization and submit to extensive background checks.

Japanese trade unions are independent and active. The International Labor Organization has criticized a ban on joining unions or striking by members of the armed forces, police, and firefighters. Civil servants cannot strike, and they face restrictions on bargaining collectively. Around 22 percent of all Japanese workers belong to trade unions. Nongovernmental groups accuse employers of exploiting or discriminating against foreign workers, who often cannot speak Japanese and are unaware of their rights.

China, South Korea, and other regional countries frequently protest passages in Japanese history textbooks that try to justify the country's occupation of other Asian countries before and during World War II, and that downplay the imperial army's wartime atrocities in occupied countries. These abuses included forcibly using tens of thousands of women as sex slaves. The education ministry must approve all textbooks and has censored textbook passages that it considers too critical of Japan's wartime record.

## Jordan

Polity: Traditional monarchy and limited parliament  
Economy: Mixed capitalist  
Population: 5,200,000  
PPP: \$3,955  
Life Expectancy: 70  
Ethnic Groups: Arab (98 percent), other, including Armenian (2 percent)  
Capital: Amman

Political Rights: 5\*  
Civil Liberties: 5\*  
Status: Partly Free



**Ratings Change:** Jordan's political rights and civil liberties ratings declined from 4 to 5 because of the dissolution of parliament, the delay of general elections, and the enactment of temporary laws that restrict civic freedom.

### Overview:

Escalating violence between Israelis and Palestinians during 2001 stirred up frustrations among Jordan's largely Palestinian population and presented King Abdullah with the most serious challenge of his short reign. Facing increasing domestic opposition to Jordan's peace treaty with Israel, as well as discontent over poverty, unemployment, and official corruption, the government increased restrictions on civil society and free speech, dissolved parliament, delayed general elections, and cracked down on antinormalization activists. These moves, along with Abdullah's unwavering support of the United States in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, sent the king's popularity plummeting as he was seen to be out of touch with popular sentiment.

Great Britain installed the Hashemite monarchy in 1921 and granted the country full independence in 1946. King Hussein ascended the throne in 1952. His turbulent reign saw the loss of all territory west of the Jordan River in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, assassinations and coup attempts by Arab nationalists, and sporadic efforts to make peace with Israel. Under the 1952 constitution, executive power rests with the king, who appoints the prime minister and may dissolve the national assembly. The assembly currently consists of a 40-member upper house appointed by the king and an 80-member directly elected lower house.

In 1989, Hussein responded to riots over fuel price increases by easing restrictions on freedom of expression and ending a 32-year-old ban on political party activity. The Muslim Brotherhood's political wing, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), took 22 seats in general elections that year. The electoral law was amended to prevent such a strong showing in 1993 elections, in which Islamists won 16 seats. Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994, formally ending a 46-year state of war. In 1997, nine opposition parties, led by the IAF, boycotted parliamentary elections to protest normalization with Israel, restrictions on public freedom, ineffective economic policy, and the electoral law, which left Islamists at a disadvantage with regard to tribal leaders who support the king.

In January 1999, an ailing King Hussein dismissed his long-standing heir, his brother Hassan, and named his son Abdullah crown prince in a surprise decision. Abdullah assumed power upon the death of his father in February. Although the late king's mo-

tives for naming Abdullah were unclear, the new king's credentials as former commander of the elite internal security force and his marriage to a Palestinian woman help ensure the critical support of the military and of Palestinians, who constitute about 60 percent of Jordan's population.

Abdullah inherited a kingdom beset by 20 to 30 percent unemployment, rampant poverty, and an inefficient bureaucracy perceived by most to be widely corrupt. The economic "peace dividend"—improved trade with the West Bank and increased investment from Western Europe, expected as a result of normalization with Israel—has failed to materialize, while sanctions against Iraq block Jordanian exports. In an attempt to address these issues, Abdullah has made economic development his major priority. His government has initiated intellectual property and tax laws, decreased import duties, and privatized state-run freight railway and telecoms systems. In 2000, Abdullah brought Jordan into the World Trade Organization and obtained a free trade agreement with the United States. In May 2001, he launched the Aqaba Special Economic Zone, a duty-free area for residential communities, tourism, and light and heavy industries, schools, hospitals, and business parks. The same day as the launch, the government unveiled a \$500 million joint Egyptian-Jordanian tourism project. Future plans include building an advanced information technology industry, overhauling education to provide for computer and English-language training, and privatizing the energy and phosphates sectors.

Despite these efforts, both political and economic liberalization have suffered in the face of rapidly intensifying public opposition to the normalization of relations with Israel and perceived worsening government corruption. The deterioration of the Middle East peace process into ongoing violence in the neighboring West Bank has inflamed the frustrations of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, as well as the leftists and Islamists who dominate much of Jordanian civil society. Antinormalization activists have issued blacklists of journalists, politicians, academics, artists, and businessmen who advocate cross-cultural and economic ties with Israel. Though antinormalization activists have been generally nonviolent, an apparently new group called the Nobles of Jordan claimed responsibility for the shooting death of an Israeli businessman in Amman in August. In May, 20 members of the Professional Association's Anti-Normalization Committee went on trial for seditious libel and other charges related to the blacklists. Two other suspects were sent to State Security Court for possession of bomb detonators.

As the antinormalization movement picked up momentum among professional associations, the media, and members of parliament, the government increasingly suppressed all forms of dissent. Demonstrations were banned in late 2000, and officials responded with batons and tear gas when some 1,000 Jordanians defied the ban in May 2001 to protest the anniversary of the founding of Israel. About 50 protesters were injured. Also in 2001, the president of Al Bayet University and a member of the upper house of parliament were both forced to resign after authoring articles criticizing the government. In April, a majority of lower house parliamentary deputies petitioned the government to end the prosecution of antinormalization activists "as long as Israel maintains aggression against Palestinians." In June, Abdullah dissolved parliament, ostensibly because it had failed to adopt a new election law, and in July he postponed general elections scheduled for November. Observers speculated that the polls might have brought to power nationalists and Islamists whose first priority would be canceling the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty.

In the absence of parliament, the government endorsed more than a dozen temporary laws, including an Elections Law, which maintains the current controversial system but increases the membership of the lower house to 104 and reduces the voting age to 18; a Law on Public Gatherings, which stipulates that public demonstrations may be held only with written permission three days in advance; amendments to the Penal code that restrict a long list of vaguely defined violations in writing and speech; and amendments to the State Security Court Law, which abrogate due process and increase the scope of security offenses. In addition, the government merged the 328 municipalities into 100, replacing municipal councils with state-appointed local committees. The committees' mandate runs until the next scheduled municipal elections in 2003.

Prime Minister Ali Abul Ragheb defended the enactment of temporary laws, saying, "It is better to go a step backwards, and then proceed, rather than to go back 20 years in time." Still, the "massacre of public liberties," as one observer called it, has added to the ranks of the opposition and harmed the king's popularity. Abdullah's close relationship with the United States has also cost him popular support. Perceived U.S. support for Israel against Palestinians and the continuing U.S.-led embargo on Iraq have infuriated Jordanians, as has Abdullah's unflinching support for U.S. air strikes on Afghanistan in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks by Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network. Bin Laden's anti-American message and proclaimed support for the Palestinian cause resonate among many Jordanians, whose membership in Islamist organizations has reportedly increased by 20 percent in the past two years.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Jordanians cannot change their government democratically. The king holds broad executive powers and may dissolve parliament or dismiss the prime minister or cabinet at his discretion. Parliament may approve, reject, or amend legislation proposed by the cabinet, but is restricted in its ability to initiate legislation. In October, 60 public figures, including opposition activists, professional associations, and human rights defenders issued a public statement denouncing the dissolution of parliament and the enactment of temporary laws, which they assailed as undemocratic. Political parties and journalists have moved to contest the laws, calling them unconstitutional because there was no national emergency to justify enacting them.

The electoral law has been a point of contention since its implementation in 1993. Its first-past-the-post system is seen to favor Hashemite strongholds, and the opposition favors a proportional-representation system of lists. The new electoral law leaves the system intact, but increases the number of constituencies from 21 to 45, lowers the voting age from 19 to 18, increases the number of lower house parliamentary seats from 80 to 104, and calls for special committees that include members of the judiciary to supervise elections. King Abdullah dissolved parliament in June, and elections were rescheduled for September 2002. The Islamic Action Front (IAF) and other opposition parties have not announced whether or not they will contest the polls.

Security forces arbitrarily arrest and detain citizens, particularly Islamists, and abuse detainees in order to extract confessions. Such arrests escalated after September 11. Suspects in cases involving state security enjoy few procedural safeguards. Amnesty



International protested the sentencing of nine men to life imprisonment by the State Security Court (SSC) in July 2001 for alleged involvement in a series of politically motivated bombings in 1998. This was the second trial for the defendants, who were ordered retried after the SSC earlier sentenced them to terms of up to life imprisonment. Amnesty International asserted that the suspects' confessions were made under duress, the court procedures fell short of international standards of fairness, and the suspects may have been tortured. Temporary amendments to the State Security Court Law in 2001 allow security forces to detain a suspect for seven days before referring him to a prosecutor, and give the prime minister the authority to refer any case to the SSC.

The judiciary is subject to executive influence through the justice ministry and a committee whose members are appointed by the king. A January *Jordan Times* report quoted an attorney as saying that most judges "feel threatened and insecure because they might be retired or demoted if they do not comply with certain demands." A plan announced in November to overhaul the judiciary drew skepticism from legal experts, who stressed the need to end favoritism in judicial appointments.

A number of laws, including the State Security Law, the Contempt of Court Law, and the Law for Protecting State Secrets and Documents, contain provisions that may be used to restrict freedom of expression and the press. In 2001 the Penal code was amended to allow for the trial of publishers and journalists in the SSC for vaguely defined offenses related to terrorism. The amendments also provide for the imprisonment of those who harm national unity, instigate criminal action, incite hatred or malice, instigate acts of religious fanaticism, insult the dignity of individuals, promote "deviation from what is right," or incite strikes or sit-ins, among other offenses, in speech or in writing. Publications may be closed for publishing false or libelous information, or for undermining national unity. King Abdullah announced in October that the information ministry would be dissolved and replaced with the government-appointed Higher Media Council. In November, journalists reacted to the new Higher Media Council draft law with uncertainty over its purposes and powers. Members were appointed by royal decree in December, and the council is expected to become operational in January 2002. Six Israeli journalists were barred from an Arab summit in Amman in March because officials claimed to be unable to ensure their safety. Two journalists from Qatar's Al-Jazeera television were detained and questioned in December while covering demonstrations in support of Osama bin Laden.

The new temporary Law on Public Gatherings bans public assembly without written consent from the government and allows officials to disperse demonstrations with force if they stray from their stated goals. Authorities used the law to ban a march in November protesting Israeli and American "aggression" against Iraqis, Palestinians, and Afghans. On September 30, about a dozen Islamist and leftist activists were arrested for holding a pro-bin Laden rally.

Political parties and other associations are licensed by the government. Dozens of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) address numerous political and social issues. While the government may restrict NGO activities, Islamists call upon authorities to crack down on foreign financing of associations, which is seen as an attempt by Israel and the West to control the country. In June, 21 University of Jordan students were referred to a disciplinary committee for staging a parallel student council election in protest against the university's decision to appoint half the student council. Some

unions revoke the membership, and thus the right to work, of members who associate with Israel.

By December, at least 19 women had been murdered by male relatives for allegedly violating family honor. The Penal code reduces the prison sentences for such murders from execution or life imprisonment to a minimum of six months. In December the government adopted amendments to the Penal Code and the Civil Status law proposed by the Royal Commission on Human Rights. Penal Code amendments exempt from Penalty or reduce punishment for men who kill their female relatives found committing adultery, and reduce Penalties for those who commit a crime in a "fit of fury" (which is always a defense in honor-crime cases) from execution or life imprisonment to a minimum of one year for the former or six months for the latter. Changes to the Civil Status Law allow women to divorce their husbands by paying them monetary compensation, raise the legal age of marriage for girls from 15 to 18, and require a husband to inform his wife of his decision to take another wife. Women may drive, vote, stand in elections, and pursue careers in many professions. Still, they constitute only 14 percent of the workforce and hold no legislative seats. The government announced in October that it had appointed a woman to each of Jordan's 100 recently merged municipalities. The Judicial Council appointed 5 new women judges in 2001, raising the total number of women in the judiciary to 12.

Islam is the state religion; more than 90 percent of the population is Sunni Muslim. Christianity and Judaism are recognized faiths, and the government does not interfere with worship. Although not recognized as a religious minority, Bahais may practice their faith. However, they face legal and social discrimination, and their personal status matters are heard in *Sharia* (Islamic law) courts. Palestinians face systematic discrimination in government and military employment and university admission. In June, the government announced increased restrictions on entry into Jordan from the West Bank, citing concerns about a new influx of Palestinian refugees.

More than 30 percent of workers belong to trade unions. All unions belong to the sole trade federation, the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions, though membership is not mandatory. Workers have the right to bargain collectively and may strike with government permission. Jordanian labor laws do not protect domestic servants, most of whom are South Asian nationals. Abuse of these workers, including beatings, rape, long work hours, and inadequate food, is reportedly pervasive, but many domestic workers fail to report mistreatment for fear of deportation.

# Kazakhstan

Polity: Presidential  
 (dominant party) Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist-  
 statist Status: Not Free  
 Population: 14,800,000  
 PPP: \$4,951  
 Life Expectancy: 66  
 Ethnic Groups: Kazakh (53 percent), Russian (30 percent), Ukrainian (4 percent),  
 German (2 percent), other (11 percent)  
 Capital: Astana



## Overview:

Kazakhstan joined most of its Central Asian neighbors in 2001 in offering its support for the U.S.-declared war on terrorism following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. However, in contrast to some of the other so-called frontline states, Kazakhstan was less directly affected by the military operation against the Taliban because of factors including its relative distance from Afghanistan and the absence of a significant militant Islamist presence in its territory. On the economic front, the Tengiz-Novorossisk oil pipeline, which extends from one of the world's largest oil fields in Kazakhstan to a Black Sea port in Russia, was finally operational by the middle of the year.

This sparsely populated, multiethnic land stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Chinese border was gradually conquered by Russia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. After a brief attempt at independence in 1917 in the wake of the Russian Revolution, Kazakhstan became an autonomous Soviet republic in 1920 and a union republic in 1936.

The former first secretary of the Communist Party, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was elected president on December 1, 1991, just two weeks before Kazakhstan declared independence from the U.S.S.R. The country's first national legislative elections, in March 1994, were invalidated by the constitutional court a year later because of numerous irregularities. Nazarbayev subsequently dissolved parliament and called for a referendum on April 29, 1995, in which a reported 95 percent of voters supported the extension of his term until December 2000. An additional referendum in August of that year, which was boycotted by the main opposition parties, approved a new constitution strengthening the powers of the presidency. In December 1995 elections for a new bicameral parliament, Nazarbayev's People's Union of Kazakhstan Unity and its supporters captured most of the seats in the legislature.

In October 1998, parliament approved Nazarbayev's call for presidential elections to be held in January 1999, almost two years before their scheduled date, as well as an amendment to the constitution extending the presidential term of office from five to seven years. The key challenger, former Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin, was banned from competing on a legal technicality, while two other candidates were known supporters of the incumbent. Nazarbayev was reelected with a reported 80 percent of the vote. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which

monitored the elections, refused to recognize the results, which it said fell "far short" of being democratic.

In the September and October 1999 parliamentary vote, which was the first multiparty election in Kazakhstan's history, 33 candidates competed for the 16 seats becoming vacant in the 39-seat upper house (senate), while more than 500 candidates from ten parties vied for the 77 seats of the parliament's lower house (*Majlis*). As expected, Otan, the newly formed party loyal to Nazarbayev, won the single largest number of seats in the Majlis. Despite some improvement since the controversial presidential ballot in January, the parliamentary poll remained deeply flawed. The OSCE noted obstruction and intimidation of opposition candidates, as well as the lack of independent election commissions.

Kazakhstan's parliament overwhelmingly approved a law in June 2000 giving Nazarbayev lifetime privileges after the end of his second term in office in 2006. Proposed by the pro-Nazarbayev Civilian Party, which includes some of the country's most influential industrialists, the law provides Nazarbayev with formal access to key government officials to advise them on domestic and foreign policy matters, as well as a permanent place on the Security Council. While some analysts have concluded that the law may lead to Nazarbayev's formally becoming president-for-life, others speculate that he would be content to continue running state affairs behind the scenes after he officially steps down from office.

Shortly after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Astana offered the use of its airspace for the U.S.-led military campaign against the Taliban. Kazakhstan's geographical distance from Afghanistan left it somewhat removed from the conflict and less worried than countries such as Uzbekistan or Tajikistan about possible spillover effects, including refugee concerns. In addition, unlike several of its Central Asian neighbors, Kazakhstan has not faced serious threats from regional militant Islamist groups during the last several years. Nevertheless, in the wake of the September terrorist attacks, Kazakhstan took precautionary measures by tightening border controls with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, placing its armed forces in the south on high alert, and enacting certain restrictions on the movements of citizens of other Central Asian countries.

On September 6, the supreme court sentenced former Prime Minister Akezhan Kazhegeldin to ten years in prison on charges of tax evasion, abuse of power, and illegal arms possession. His property in Kazakhstan was confiscated and he was ordered to pay fines to the state in excess of \$6 million. Kazhegeldin, who lives abroad and heads an opposition party to Nazarbayev, was convicted in absentia. Many observers maintain that the purpose of the trial was to prevent him from making a political comeback in Kazakhstan, as the conviction would bar him from running for public office.

In a public sign of a power struggle at the highest political level, Prime Minister Qasymzhomart Tokaev called for the dismissal of a number of senior government officials on November 20 after they announced the formation of a new movement called Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan. The following day, several of these officials, including a deputy prime minister and deputy defense minister, resigned or were removed from their posts. Democratic Choice included prominent critics of President Nazarbayev's son-in-law, Rakhat Aliev, who resigned on November 15 as deputy chairman of the country's National Security Committee, and was subsequently rehired as deputy chief of Nazarbayev's presidential guard. Aliev had also been embroiled in a

struggle with the governor of Pavlodar, who accused Aliev of pursuing a libelous campaign against him through his vast media holdings.

As part of the government's stated intention to reverse years of capital flight from Kazakhstan, a tax amnesty law went into effect on June 14. Under the legislation, individuals were given 20 days to bring money back into the country without the threat of taxes or investigation by the authorities; the deadline was later extended by another ten days. The government announced that by July 13, some \$480 million had been deposited into special accounts at banks chosen by the National Bank. Critics of the law charged that it would allow corrupt officials and others to launder money with the government's blessing, and that the amount returned to Kazakhstan would be too small to have any real effect on the economy of such a large country.

In a significant step forward in the development of reliable export routes for Kazakhstani crude oil, construction of the Tengiz-Novorossisk pipeline, which extends from Kazakhstan to Russia, was completed in 2001. The pipeline was officially commissioned in March 2001, with the first oil reaching Russia in mid-year. According to industry observers, the line is not expected to reach its full capacity until the year 2015.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Kazakhstan cannot change their government democratically. The constitution grants the president considerable control over the bicameral legislature, the judiciary, and local governments. President Nursultan Nazarbayev continues to enjoy sweeping executive powers and rules virtually unchallenged. Opposition parties have complained of harassment, surveillance, denial of access to the state-run media, and arbitrary banning from registering candidates.

While the constitution provides for freedom of the press, the government has repeatedly harassed or shut down many independent media outlets. The press is not permitted to criticize the president and his family, and self-censorship on other issues is widespread. Most newspapers, publishing facilities, and television and radio stations are controlled or otherwise influenced by the government and its supporters, including Nazarbayev's daughter Dariga and her husband, Rakhmat Aliev. In April, Yermurat Bapi, the editor of the independent newspaper *Soldat*, was sentenced to a year in prison for printing an article linking Nazarbayev to corrupt business deals; Bapi subsequently was pardoned under a presidential amnesty. All Internet service providers must route their lines through a state registration system, allowing the government to establish control over the country's access to the Internet.

The constitution guarantees freedom of worship, although the government sometimes harasses certain nontraditional Islamic and Christian groups. Religious organizations must register with the ministry of justice to receive legal status, without which they cannot engage in legal transactions, including the buying or renting of property or the hiring of employees. Religious organizations that have encountered difficulties during registration include Jehovah's Witnesses and some Protestant sects, as well as certain Muslim and Orthodox Christian groups.

The government continued to discriminate in favor of ethnic Kazakhs in government employment, where Kazakhs predominate, as well as in education and housing. The 1999 Kazakhstani census revealed that, for the first time in decades, recent emigration by Russians had resulted in ethnic Kazakhs constituting more than half of the country's population.

Freedom of association is hindered by complicated requirements that restrict the right to hold political gatherings. The government has cited minor infractions of the law to arrest and detain government opponents arbitrarily. Although the law gives workers the right to form and join trade unions, it does not provide independent union members with legal recourse from harassment by enterprise management or state-run unions. Members of independent unions have been dismissed, transferred to lower-paying jobs, or threatened.

The constitution significantly constrains the independence of the judiciary, which is subservient to the executive branch. Judges are subject to bribery and political bias, and corruption is evident throughout the judicial system. Police frequently abuse detainees during arrest and interrogation. Prisons suffer from severe overcrowding and inadequate food and medical care for inmates.

While the rights of entrepreneurship and private property are legally protected, bureaucratic hurdles and the control of large segments of the economy by clan elites and government officials loyal to Nazarbayev limit equality of opportunity and fair competition. Traditional cultural practices and the country's economic problems limit professional opportunities for women, who are underrepresented in government bodies and in the leadership of state enterprises.

## Kenya

Polity: Dominant party    Political Rights: 6

Economy: Capitalist    Civil Liberties: 5

Population: 29,800,000    Status: Not Free

PPP: \$1,022

Life Expectancy: 48

Ethnic Groups: Kikuyu (22 percent), Luhya (14 percent),

Luo (13 percent), Kalenjin (12 percent), Kamba (11 percent),

Kisii (6 percent), Meru (6 percent), other African (15 percent), Asian,

European, and Arab (1 percent)

Capital: Nairobi



### Overview:

Kenya made little headway in promoting political rights and civil liberties in 2001. The highly charged political environment was dominated by maneuvering for 2002 presidential election. Long time President Daniel arap Moi has not said whether he plans to run again, although many observers believe that he will step down. An inconclusive and controversial constitutional reform process continued but made slight progress. Richard Leakey, whom President Moi had installed to tackle governmental corruption and mismanagement, resigned. Ethnic tensions resulted in a number of violent incidents. In a potentially important pre-electoral move, the ruling Kenyan African National Union (KANU) party fused with the National Development Party (NDP), led by Raila Odinga, a son of a former Kenyan vice president.

Britain conquered Kenya in the late eighteenth century in order to open a route to control the Nile River headwaters in Uganda. In 1963 Kenya achieved its independence.

The nationalist leader Jomo Kenyatta was president until his death in 1978, when he was succeeded by Moi. Moi's ascent to the presidency kept KANU in power, but gradually diminished the power of the previously dominant Kikuyu ethnic group.

In 1992, after a lengthy period as effectively a one-party state, multiparty elections were held as a result of domestic unrest and pressure from international aid donors. Moi was reelected president in controversial polling. In December 1997 presidential and parliamentary elections were held, and Moi again secured victory over a divided opposition, gaining 40.1 percent of the vote; KANU won 107 of the 220 seats in the newly expanded national assembly. An additional 12 seats were appointed by the government, which in effect gave KANU a majority. Moi's reelection was ensured by massive use of state patronage and the official media to promote his candidacy and by harassment of the divided opposition. To date, there is no clear successor to the longtime president.

Kenya's politics are divided along ethnic lines. KANU has traditionally maintained power through the support of the president's own minority ethnic grouping, the Kalenjin, while combining an alliance of other minority groups and playing the two largest ethnic groups, the Kikuyu and the Luo, off against each other. The country is divided into seven provinces run by commissioners appointed by the president.

The 1999 appointment of Richard Leakey, a respected public figure, and the adoption of an economic reform policy, resulted in temporarily improved relations with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. In March, however, Leakey resigned in frustration at the opposition to reform within the government. The opposition was due to the political implications of the need to reduce the size of the government bureaucracy, enact anticorruption legislation, and reduce or eliminate extra-budgetary expenditures. Leakey's resignation effectively signalled an end to Moi's heralded anti-corruption campaign. In August a government-introduced anti-corruption bill, which many observers felt was not sufficiently strong, was defeated in parliament, and international aid has been limited. Kenya was rated 84th out of 90 countries in Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index.

Kenya's economy and infrastructure continued to deteriorate significantly. Most of Kenya's 29 million people are poor and survive through subsistence agriculture. Nepotism and fraud inhibit economic opportunity and discourage greater foreign investment.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Kenyans have been unable to exercise their right to choose their leaders in genuinely open and competitive elections. President Daniel arap Moi's election victories have been achieved through political repression, media control, and dubious electoral procedures. His shrewd ability to play upon divisions within the opposition and to use the form, but not the spirit, of democratic institutions to advance his own interests and those of KANU are legendary. Physical violence, a usually docile judiciary, police powers, and executive decrees have been used against political opponents and in efforts to undermine the wider civil society. Power is heavily concentrated in the executive branch of government.

The right of citizens to effectively participate in the political life of the country is limited. Legislation that had established the constitutional review process with the participation of a wide range of civic and associational groups was revised in 1999, and the process was channeled through the KANU-controlled parliament. Dr. Yash Gai, a

respected academic, was appointed head of the Constitutional Review Commission. The commission continued its work throughout 2001, but the review process has proceeded slowly. Little specific progress is expected in the short term owing to the upcoming national elections.

In 2001, parliament provided evidence of rampant graft and cronyism pervading state-run institutions. A report from the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee presented numerous credible and detailed examples of government corruption and gross mismanagement. The report was particularly critical of "slow investigation by the police and lack of sanction against the force for disobedience." The parliament had previously published a "list of shame," identifying by name a number of high-ranking government officials who were implicated in corruption. These included Vice President George Saitoti, Trade and Tourism minister Nicholas Biwott, one of Moi's sons, and nearly a dozen cabinet members. Under government pressure the report was subsequently revised and the names deleted.

The security forces regularly violate constitutional guarantees regarding detention, privacy, and search and seizure. Groups such as the Kenyan Human Rights Commission and the National Council of Churches of Kenya have publicized abuses and demanded respect for civil and political liberties. The government's attitude towards civil society, however, is generally hostile and suspicious. In 1999, to cite one example, a senior government minister warned nongovernmental organizations who "meddle in politics" that they risked deregistration, although such an action would be of questionable legality. Courts are still heavily influenced by the executive and cannot be relied on to protect constitutional rights or to offer fair trials. Local chiefs still exercise sometimes arbitrary and violent power. Prison conditions are harsh and often life threatening.

Despite Kenya's history of authoritarian rule, many basic elements necessary for the development of a democratic political system exist. Opposition parties are active and vocal. Parliament is the setting for much of the nation's political discourse. A varied and energetic civil society plays an important role in public policy debates. These elements, however, do not often succeed in achieving actual policy change.

Although the press at times adopts independent and probing stances, freedom of expression is severely limited by lack of access to the dominant state broadcast media and the continued repression of the private press. The country's few private radio and television stations are either pro-KANU or carefully apolitical. Journalists have been charged with criminal libel, and independent publications are subject to harassment in their business operations. Moi has decreed that it is a crime to "insult" him, and sedition laws have been employed in efforts to silence criticism.

Trade unions generally follow government policy on key issues. For example, the general secretary of the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) has instructed members not to support calls by opposition parties and civil society groups for demonstrations over constitutional reform. Unions have occasionally defied a 1993 ministry of labor decree that forbids all strikes, despite constitutional guarantees to the contrary. Civil servants and university academic staff may join only government-designated unions. Approximately one-fifth of the country's 1.5 million industrial workforce is unionized.

The economic situation has contributed to increasing crime and lawlessness. For example, in April fighting occurred in an impoverished section of Nairobi, resulting in the death of seven people and destruction of about 100 houses. In December thou-



sands of inhabitants fled fighting in the Nairobi slum of Kibera after two days of ethnically related clashes over rent left at least a dozen people dead. In addition, ethnic tension continued in other parts of Kenya; competing land claims often provided the spark. Approximately 60 people were killed in eastern Kenya in 2001, in one example of ethnic violence based on limited land and livestock resources. In November, tribal clashes sparked by a land dispute in southern Kenya left more than 30 people dead or seriously injured. Pro-KANU elements have at times been accused of instigating ethnic cleansing for political purposes, especially in the Rift Valley area.

In general there is freedom of religion, although uneasy relations between Muslims and other faiths at times result in violence. In 2000, rioting between Catholics and Muslims occurred in central Kenya.

Women in Kenya continue to face serious obstacles in the exercise of their freedoms. A draft gender equity bill created considerable public controversy, with some Muslims protesting that it was too sweeping in scope. Some evidence suggests that violence against women is increasing. A survey carried out by a women's rights group stated that more than 49 women were murdered by their spouses in 1998 alone, a 79 percent increase in cases since 1995. Many of the cases have gone unpunished, despite repeated complaints by women's groups that Kenyan laws remain too lenient in sentencing offenders in cases of violence against women. Women are also seriously underrepresented in Kenya's politics and government. With only seven women legislators in a 222-member parliament, Kenya ranks last among the 15 eastern and southern African countries in the number of women legislators.

## Kiribati

Polity: Presidential  
parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist-  
statist  
Population: 100,000  
PPP: na  
Life Expectancy: 62  
Ethnic Groups: Micronesian, some Polynesian  
Capital: Tarawa

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Status: Free



### Overview:

Like many other Pacific Island countries at low elevation, Kiribati is increasingly concerned about the impact of global climate change on surrounding sea levels. In February, unusually high tides forced some residents to leave their homes. In October, Kiribati agreed to accept up to 500 refugees while their applications to enter Australia were being processed, but later decided not to proceed with the arrangement.

The Republic of Kiribati consists of 33 inhabited islands of the Gilbert, Line, and Phoenix groups scattered over 1.4 million square miles of the central Pacific Ocean, as well as Banaba Island in the west. The country, with a Micronesian majority and a Polynesian minority, achieved independence from Great Britain in 1979.

The first postindependence legislative elections were held in March 1982. In July 1991, President Ieremia Tabai, the republic's first president, served out his third and final term. Tetao Teannaki, who received Tabai's backing, defeated Roniti Teiwaki in the presidential race. In May 1994, however, Teannaki was forced to resign after his government lost a vote of no-confidence introduced by the parliamentary opposition, which accused his administration of financial irregularities. In accordance with the constitution, a three-member caretaker Council of State, consisting of the speaker of parliament, the chief justice, and the chairman of the Public Service Commission (PSC), took over government authority until new elections were held. A brief constitutional crisis ensued after acting head of state Tekira Tameura was removed forcibly, on the grounds that his tenure as chairman of the PSC had expired three days earlier. In September 1994, the parliament elected Teburoro Tito as president with 51 percent of the votes. Tito was elected to a second term in free and fair elections held in November 1998. In 1999, Kiribati became a full member of the United Nations.

A new, independent newspaper, *The New Star*, was launched in May 2000 by former President Ieremia Tabai and former government publications manager Ngauea Uatiao. In September 2000, the government barred a New Zealand-based reporter from entering Kiribati to cover the Pacific Islands Forum, the annual summit meeting for leaders in the region. The reporter attributes this ban to his writings condemning pollution in the country and a Chinese satellite-monitoring base in South Tarawa. The Kiribati government said the ban is for the journalist's personal safety, as locals have been offended by his writing.

For many years, Kiribati has marketed its location along the equator for monitoring satellite launches and operations to foreign countries. In May 2000, an agreement was signed with Japan's National Space Development Agency to begin a multimillion-dollar spaceport project on Christmas Island. This agreement gives Japan seven-year lease-free access, allowing unmanned space shuttles, launched from Japan, to land on the island.

At the annual meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum held in August, Kiribati was a signatory to the PICTA and PACER agreements, two trade pacts that aim to encourage free trade and boost economic growth throughout the region.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Kiribati can change their government democratically. The 1979 constitution established a unicameral legislature, the *Maneba ni Maungatabu*, with 40 members directly elected for a four-year term, one appointed member, and one ex-officio member. The president, serving as both head of state and head of the government, is chosen in a nationwide ballot from among three or four candidates selected by parliament and is limited to three terms. Local island councils serve all inhabited islands. Several parties exist, but most lack true platforms and are organized around specific issues or in support of particular individuals. Subsequent to the 1994 constitutional crisis, a five-member committee was established to review the 1979 constitution.

The judiciary is independent and free from government interference. The judicial system is modeled on English common law and provides adequate due process rights. Litigants have the right of appeal to the Privy Council in London. Traditional customs permit corporal punishment, and island councils on some outer islands occasionally order such punishment for petty theft and other minor offenses. The police force of about 250 is under effective civilian control.

Freedom of speech and of the media is generally respected. The government-run radio station and newspaper offer diverse views, and Protestant and Catholic churches publish newsletters and other periodicals. *The New Star*, the independent newspaper launched by Ieremia Tabai and Ngauea Uatiao in May 2000, now competes against the government's *Te Uekera*. Tabai and Uatiao have also tried unsuccessfully to establish an independent FM radio station in Kiribati. In 1999, they were fined for importing broadcasting equipment for the proposed radio station without a proper license. The September 2000 ban on Michael Field, a New Zealand-based reporter, remains in place.

While Christianity is the predominant religion, there is no state religion and freedom of worship is respected. The constitution provides for freedom of assembly and association, and these rights are respected in practice. More than 90 percent of the workforce is involved in fishing or subsistence farming. The Kiribati Trade Union Congress represents the small wage sector and has approximately 2,500 members. The law provides for the right to strike. The last strike occurred in 1980.

Citizens are free to travel domestically and abroad. The law prohibits interference in personal or family matters, and the government respects these provisions in practice. Women enjoy full rights to own and inherit property. Although gender discrimination persists in many areas, employment opportunities for women in this traditionally male-dominated society are slowly improving. However, women are underrepresented in politics and government; according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women currently constitute just 4.8 percent of the legislature. In May 2000, trade unions launched a nationwide campaign to urge government and private employers to support comprehensive standards of maternity protection for working women.

## Korea, North

Polity: One party	Political Rights: 7
Economy: Statist	Civil Liberties: 7
Population: 22,000,000	Status: Not Free
PPP: na	
Life Expectancy: 70	
Ethnic Groups: Korean	
Capital: Pyongyang	



**Overview:** Despite the severe food shortages plaguing his impoverished nation, North Korean strongman Kim Jong-Il made few efforts in 2001 to free up the country's command economy or to gain increased aid by improving relations with South Korea and the United States. Thanks to international food-aid programs, the country no longer seems to be in danger of a repeat of the 1990s famine that killed hundreds of thousands of people. The outlook seemed bleak, however, for any real improvements in the lives of ordinary North Koreans.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in the northern part of the Korean Peninsula in September 1948, three years after the United States occupied the south of the peninsula—and Soviet forces, the north—following Japan's de-

feat in World War II. At independence, North Korea's uncontested ruler was Kim II Sung, a former Soviet army officer who claimed to be a guerrilla hero in the struggle against the Japanese colonial rule that began in 1910. North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950 in an attempt to reunify the peninsula under Communist rule. Drawing in the United States and China, the ensuing three-year conflict killed up to two million people on both sides and ended with a ceasefire rather than a peace treaty. Since then, the two Koreas have been on a continuous war footing.

Kim solidified his power base during the Cold War, purging rivals, throwing thousands of political prisoners into gulags, and promoting a Stalinist-style personality cult emphasizing absolute fealty to himself as North Korea's "Dear Leader." The end of the Cold War brought North Korea's command economy to the brink of collapse, as Pyongyang lost crucial Soviet and East Bloc subsidies and preferential trade deals. North Korea's economy shrank an estimated 30 percent between 1991 and 1996, according to the United Nations.

With the regime's survival already in doubt, Kim's death in 1994 ushered in even more uncertainty. Many observers questioned whether his son and appointed successor, Kim Jong-E, would have the stature to command the loyalty of other senior officials and the 1.1 million-strong armed forces. The reclusive Kim Jong-Il, 59, has done little to dispel these doubts. Meanwhile, his tolerance of small farmer's markets and his sporadic efforts to improve relations with the United States, Japan, and South Korea are widely viewed as desperate acts meant to save the country from economic implosion.

Still reeling from the loss of Soviet support and crippled by its own economic mismanagement, North Korea has also suffered since the mid-1990s from droughts and floods that have contributed to chronic food shortages. Famine has killed "approximately a million" people since 1995, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on North Korea's human rights record in 2000.

North Koreans have more to eat now than during the worst shortages, in 1997, largely because of international aid. The UN and private groups help feed 8 million of North Korea's 20 million people. Critics, however, say the regime misappropriates humanitarian aid. The Paris-based *Médecins Sans Frontières* relief group quit working in North Korea in 1998, accusing Pyongyang of diverting food aid to government officials. Similarly, the UN Human Rights Committee accused Pyongyang in July 2001 of failing to take adequate measures to tackle the country's food problems.

On top of the food shortages, North Korea is facing an acute health care crisis. Foreign press reports suggest that the state-run health system has all but collapsed, hospitals lack adequate medicine and equipment, and clean water is in short supply because of electricity and chlorine shortages. Some 63 percent of North Korean children have been stunted because of chronic undernourishment, according to a 1998 Unicef survey.

The government has tried to stave off economic collapse by bringing to the cities small farmer's markets, which have existed in the countryside for several years. It has also allowed foreign investors to set up factories in a free trade and special economic zone in the Rajin-Sonbong area.

Moreover, South Korean intelligence reported that technocrats in their 40s and 50s took up key posts in September in government agencies dealing with the economy, the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in December. It is not yet clear, however, whether the reshuffle will lead to tangible economic reforms. In

any case, the regime appears to be wary of carrying out broad reforms that could undermine its tight control of the country.

North Korea has also used its long-range missile and suspected nuclear weapons programs as bargaining chips to win aid and other concessions from the United States and Japan. Pyongyang pledged in 1999 to suspend ballistic missile tests and open to American inspection a suspected nuclear weapons facility north of the capital. In return, the U.S. agreed to ease sanctions and provide 100,000 tons of food aid. The negotiating progress came a year after North Korea launched a long-range missile that flew over northern Japan. Earlier concerns over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons program led to a 1994 agreement under which a U.S.-led, multinational consortium is currently supplying North Korea with light-water nuclear reactors, which cannot be used to make atomic weapons. Pyongyang in return is scrapping existing nuclear reactors capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium.

North Korea largely rebuffed efforts by Seoul in 2001 to improve bilateral relations in the wake of a landmark June 2000 summit in Pyongyang between Kim Jong-Il and his South Korean counterpart, Kim Dae Jung. The lack of progress largely ended the few social exchanges and business deals that followed the summit.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** North Korea is one of the most tightly controlled countries in the world. The regime denies North Koreans even the most basic rights, holds tens of thousands of political prisoners, and controls nearly all political, social, and economic groups and activities.

Kim Jong-Il, the North Korean leader, and a small group of elites from the Korean Worker's Party (KWP) rule by decree, although little is known about the regime's inner workings. Kim is formally the general secretary of the KWP, supreme military commander, and chairman of the National Defense Commission. The latter post is the "highest office of state," following the 1998 abolition of the presidency. Vice Marshall Jo Myong Rok, first vice chairman of the National Defense Commission, is believed to be Kim's second-in-command.

The Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), or parliament, has little independent power. It meets only a few days each year to rubber-stamp the ruling elite's decisions. In an effort to provide a veneer of democracy, the government occasionally holds show elections for the SPA and provincial, city, and county bodies. All of the candidates belong to the KWP or one of several small, pro-government "minority parties." The last SPA elections were in 1998.

Defectors and refugees have in recent years reported that the regime regularly executes political prisoners, repatriated defectors, military officers accused of espionage or other antigovernment acts, and other suspected dissidents, according to the U.S. State Department report. The regime has also executed prisoners for "ideological divergence," "opposing socialism," and other "counterrevolutionary crimes," the report added. The UN Human Rights Committee commended North Korea in July for cutting the number of offenses carrying the death Penalty to 5 from 33. The committee noted, however, that four of the remaining offenses are largely political.

The UN human rights body also severely criticized the regime's harsh treatment of prisoners. It called on Pyongyang to allow international human rights groups into the country to verify the "many allegations of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and conditions and of inadequate medical care in reform institutions, prisons, and prison

camps." Defectors say the regime holds some 150,000 political prisoners, while the South Korean government puts the figure at 200,000, the U.S. State Department report said. The number of ordinary prisoners is not known.

Foreign humanitarian groups estimate that up to 300,000 North Koreans have fled to China since 1995 to escape food shortages. Chinese authorities have returned many refugees to North Korea, where some have been executed, according to the U.S. State Department report. The government has also forcibly relocated "many tens of thousands" of North Koreans to the countryside from Pyongyang, particularly people considered politically unreliable, the U.S. State Department report said. In addition, authorities continue to restrict travel into Pyongyang, normally granting permission only for government business. At the same time, the government has in recent years eased internal controls that had required North Koreans to obtain passes to travel outside of their home villages.

Authorities rely on an extensive network of informers to expose dissidents and routinely carry out surprise security checks on homes and even entire communities, according to the U.S. State Department report. Pyongyang assigns to each North Korean a security rating that partly determines access to education, employment, and health services as well as place of residence. By some foreign estimates nearly half the population is considered either "wavering" or "hostile," the U.S. State Department report said, with the rest rated "core."

The government severely punishes North Koreans for worshipping at underground churches and requires all prayer and religious study to be supervised by state-controlled bodies, according to the U.S. State Department report. Foreign religious and human rights groups say that authorities have killed, beaten, arrested, or detained in prison camps members of underground churches.

North Korean authorities control all trade unions, which they use to monitor workers, mobilize them to meet production targets, and provide them with health care, schooling, and welfare services. The regime does not permit strikes, collective bargaining, or other basic organized labor activities. Many work sites are dangerous, and the rate of industrial accidents reportedly is high, the U.S. State Department report said.

Authorities subject North Koreans to intensive political and ideological indoctrination through the mass media, schools, and work and neighborhood associations. They face a steady onslaught of propaganda from radios and televisions that are pretuned to receive only government stations. Foreign visitors and academics say that children receive mandatory military training and indoctrination at their schools. The regime also routinely orchestrates mass marches, rallies, and performances involving thousands of people that glorify the two Kims and the state.

The government uses a vague guiding philosophy of *juche*, or "I myself," to justify its dictatorship and rabid efforts to root out dissent. Credited to former President Kim Il Sung, *juche* emphasizes national self-reliance and stresses that the collective will of the people is embodied in a supreme leader. Opposing the leader means opposing the national interest. Taking this to the extreme, authorities have punished people for offenses as trivial as accidentally defacing photographs of Kim Il Sung or Kim Jong-Il, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Few women have reached the higher ranks of the ruling KWP or government. Little is known about how problems such as domestic violence or workplace discrimination may affect North Korean women.

The government prohibits private property and directs and controls nearly all economic activity. Authorities have in recent years, however, allowed families to keep small private gardens and farmers to sell produce at small daily markets. Prior to the economic collapse that began in the early 1990s, the government provided all North Koreans with free food, housing, clothing, and medical care. Today, it barely provides these essentials.

## Korea, South

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 48,800,000  
 PPP:\$15,712  
 Life Expectancy: 74  
 Ethnic Groups: Korean  
 Capital: Seoul



### Overview:

Beset by a sputtering economy, corruption scandals involving top officials, and a lack of progress in relations with bellicose North Korea, President Kim Dae Jung saw his popularity slide in 2001, while the conservative opposition geared up for the December 2002 presidential election. With Kim barred by the constitution from seeking reelection, his Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) party faces a bruising internal fight for the presidential nomination.

The Republic of Korea was established in 1948, three years after the United States and the Soviet Union divided the Korean Peninsula in the waning days of World War II. During the next four decades, South Korea's mainly military rulers crushed left-wing dissent, kept the country on a virtual war footing in response to the threat from Communist North Korea, and oversaw an industrialization drive that transformed a poor, agrarian land into the world's eleventh-largest economy.

South Korea's democratic transition began in 1987, when military strongman Chun Doo Hwan gave in to widespread student protests and allowed his successor to be chosen in a direct presidential election. In voting that December, Chun's protege, Roh Tae-Woo, defeated the country's best-known dissidents, Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung, who together split the reformist vote.

After joining the ruling party in 1990, Kim Young Sam defeated Kim Dae Jung in the 1992 presidential election to become South Korea's first civilian president since 1961. President Kim curbed the powers of the domestic security services, sacked hardline military officers, launched an anticorruption campaign, and successfully prosecuted former Presidents Chun and Roh for corruption and treason.

South Korea went through its worst financial crisis in several decades in late 1997, when slowing exports, a tumbling currency, and years of reckless corporate borrowing brought the country close to default on \$150 billion in private sector debt. Seoul agreed

to a \$57 billion International Monetary Fund-led bailout in early December in return for pledging to restructure companies and end lifetime job guarantees. Amid public anger over the government's failure to better supervise the country's banks and business conglomerates, Kim Dae Jung became South Korea's first opposition candidate to win a presidential election on December 18, 1997. Backed by trade unions and his core support base in the southwestern Cholla region, Kim defeated two conservative candidates, Lee Hoi Chang of the ruling Grand National Party (GNP) and Rhee In Je, a ruling party defector.

With the government pumping billions of dollars into the banking system and investor confidence recovering, the economy grew by 10.7 percent in 1999 after shrinking 6.7 percent in 1998. Yet the Kim administration largely failed to take advantage of the rebound to persuade banks to shut down or restructure debt-ridden conglomerates. Instead, it organized rescues of Hyundai Construction and several other highly indebted companies. At the same time, Daewoo Motors and other companies seeking foreign suitors or pressed by foreign creditors laid off thousands of workers. Trade unions charged that workers were being forced to bear the brunt of the restructuring costs.

Despite losing some union support, Kim's MDP picked up seats in the April 13, 2000, elections for the 273-seat parliament, though the GNP retained its plurality. Under a record-low 57 percent turnout, the GNP won 133 seats, up from 122 in 1996, compared to 115 for the MDP, up from 99 in 1996. Smaller parties and independents took the remaining 25 seats. During the campaign, the GNP criticized the administration's economic restructuring plans as well as the speed of Kim's rapprochement with hard-line North Korea. Kim's so-called sunshine policy toward the North led in June to the first-ever summit meeting between leaders of the two countries. The government ran on its record of returning economic growth to double-digit levels. However, the unemployment rate, at five percent, remained above pre-crisis levels, and wages for most workers remained lower than before the crisis.

Kim, 76, saw his popularity slide in 2001 as companies sacked thousands of workers amid tumbling exports and slowing economic growth. Weakened by the global economic slowdown and the steep drop in technology spending in the United States, South Korea's economy grew by less than two percent in the year to the third quarter, compared to 8.8 percent in 2000. Exports of computer chips and other goods made up 38 percent of gross domestic product in 2000.

Adding to the country's economic problems, many Korean banks are still saddled with bad debt even though the Kim administration has spent more than \$90 billion to shore up the financial system. State-owned banks, moreover, continue to prop up large, bankrupt companies.

Blue-collar anger deepened during the year, as workers and police clashed violently several times during protests over layoffs at big industrial companies and the proposed sale of bankrupt Daewoo Motors to U.S.-based General Motors. Kim also faced fallout from a series of bribery scandals involving top officials and a failed attempt at health care reform in 2000. Polls showed Kim's approval rating at an all-time low of 20 percent in August.

Lee Hoi Chang, the GNP president who lost to Kim in the 1997 election, is widely expected to again be his party's standard-bearer in the 2002 vote. At least eight men have signaled their interest in seeking the MDP's nomination in a primary expected as early as March 2002.



Sharpening their attacks on Kim and his party ahead of the election, Lee and other opposition leaders slammed the president during the year for supposedly having little to show for his June 2000 summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. In September, Kim sacked his minister in charge of North Korea policy, Lim Dong Won, after a small coalition partner voted with the opposition in a no-confidence motion against Lim. The move left the MDP with a minority government and complicated Kim's efforts to score a breakthrough with Pyongyang before he leaves office.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** South Koreans can change their government through elections and enjoy most basic rights. Human rights problems include the government's use of a harsh security law to detain dozens of dissidents, the jailing of some journalists under criminal libel laws, and discrimination against women.

The 1988 constitution vests executive powers in a directly elected president who is limited to a single five-year term. The national assembly is directly elected for a four-year term. It currently has 227 single-member, simple-plurality seats and 46 seats elected by proportional representation. The prime minister, currently Lee Han Dong, is responsible to the president.

South Korea's judiciary is independent, although "several scandals in 1999 involving alleged illegal influence peddling and cronyism have damaged the image of prosecutors and judges," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on South Korea's human rights record in 2000. In a positive development, human rights groups say that incidents of police abuse of suspects in custody have decreased in recent years.

A former dissident, Kim has released dozens of political prisoners held under South Korea's broadly drawn National Security Law (NSL). At the same time, his administration has used the law to arrest hundreds of students, labor leaders, political activists, and others for peaceful activities that allegedly aid or support North Korea. These include traveling to North Korea without official permission; praising the North, its leaders, or its state creed of "self-reliance"; or producing, selling, or distributing pro-Pyongyang literature. Authorities also use the NSL to arrest South Koreans accused of spying for the North. Courts have handed down suspended sentences or short prison terms to most NSL detainees, but long prison sentences to others. Overall, South Korea appears to hold "under 200" political prisoners and detainees, the U.S. State Department report said. The government says it needs to continue using the law against suspected dissidents because of the continued threat from North Korea.

South Korean newspapers are privately owned and report fairly aggressively on government policies and alleged official wrongdoing. In a setback for press freedom, courts have in recent years jailed several journalists under criminal libel laws. Media rights groups say that politicians and businessmen use the libel laws to punish journalists for articles that are factually accurate, but that express criticism. Raising questions about the quality of South Korean journalism, a survey showed that about a fifth of 703 journalists interviewed admitted being paid by their sources, the London-based newsmagazine, *The Economist* reported in June.

In a controversial move, the National Tax Service in 2001 fined 23 media companies a record \$390 million for tax evasion. Tax authorities also filed related criminal charges against five media executives and arrested three of them, including the owners

of South Korea's two largest newspapers, *Chosun Ilbo* and *Dong-a Ilbo*. The opposition GNP accused the government of trying to gag the press, which has been critical of Kim's economic reform policies and overtures to North Korea. Many civic groups and the Brussels-based International Federation of Journalists, however, viewed the cases as ordinary tax evasion matters.

Women face employment discrimination in the private sector and are frequently the first to be laid off when companies restructure, according to the U.S. State Department report. Parliament in 1999 stiffened the Penalties for companies that discriminate against women in hiring and promotions, although the effects of the changes, if any, are not clear. Violence and sexual harassment against women continue to be serious problems. Women's groups say that rape and sexual harassment are generally not prosecuted and that convicted offenders often receive very light sentences. There were officially 6,359 rapes in 1999, while a 1997 survey found that 31.4 percent of South Korean households had experienced domestic violence during that year, the U.S. State Department report said.

Trade unions are independent and practice collective bargaining extensively. However, the law places some legal restrictions on labor rights; enforcement of labor laws is often lax; and the government has in recent years arrested some strike leaders. The law prohibits defense and white-collar government workers from forming unions, although the latter can form more limited workplace councils. It also bars strikes in government agencies, state-run enterprises, and defense industries. The 1998 Trade Union-Labor Relations Adjustment Act will permit multiple unions at the company level beginning in 2002. As of 1999 only about 12.6 percent of workers were unionized.

Authorities rarely prosecute employers for labor violations. These offenses include illegally firing workers or subjecting foreign workers, who number about 235,000, to beating, forced detention, withheld wages, and the seizure of passports. At the same time, the Kim administration has prosecuted some workers for organizing illegal strikes or instigating violent strikes. President Kim apologized after riot police in April beat and injured dozens of protesting Daewoo workers who were trying to force their way into their plant in Pupyong, west of Seoul.

Despite recent anticorruption initiatives, anecdotal reports suggest that bribery, extortion by officials, and influence peddling continued to be pervasive in politics, business, and daily life. The Berlin-based Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index rated South Korea in a tie with Greece as the 42nd most corrupt country out of 91 surveyed.

Because citizenship is based on parentage rather than place of birth, many of South Korea's 20,000 ethnic-Chinese residents face difficulty in obtaining citizenship. This makes it hard for them to get government jobs. Ethnic Chinese also face discrimination in mainstream society, according to the State Department report.

As president, Kim has done relatively little to bridge South Korea's long-standing political divide between the southwestern Cholla region, his support base, and the southeastern Kyongsang region, stronghold of the conservative opposition and past military rulers. Most of Kim's appointees to top public offices and his advisors are from Cholla.

## Kuwait

Polity: Traditional  
 monarchy and limited  
 parliament  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 2,300,000  
 PPP: \$17,289  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Kuwaiti (45 percent), other Arab (35 percent),  
 South Asian (9 percent), Iranian (4 percent), other (7 percent)  
 Capital: Kuwait City



### Overview:

Ten years after Kuwait's liberation from Iraq in the Persian Gulf War, the emirate continues to suffer political stagnation as a result of infighting within the royal family, disputes between the government and parliament, and the opposing forces of traditional Islamists and liberals within the legislature. Badly needed economic reforms saw modest progress in 2001, though rebounding oil prices weakened officials' resolve to implement painful austerity measures.

The al-Sabah family has ruled Kuwait since 1756. Under a special treaty, Kuwait ceded control of its foreign affairs and defense to Britain in 1899. The emirate gained full independence in 1961, and the 1962 constitution assigns broad executive powers to the emir, currently Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, who rules through an appointed prime minister and cabinet. The government shares power with the parliament, or national assembly, which is subject to dissolution or suspension by decree.

Infighting and stagnation are recurrent obstacles to political progress. In January 2001, the cabinet resigned, with Prime Minister and Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Abdallah al-Sabah citing "obstacles hindering the government functioning." While some commentators explained his resignation as an attempt to protect the justice minister from a parliamentary inquiry into alleged inefficiency and corruption in his ministry, others said it was due to a rift between Sheikh Saad and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who took on the duties of the 72-year-old prime minister when the latter was recently ill. Reportedly, a dispute over succession arose when Sheikh Sabah returned to work, precipitating the government's collapse. Many observers and officials also complain about the advanced age and deteriorating health of major members of the ruling family. In late September, Sheikh Jaber suffered a brain hemorrhage and was flown to London for treatment. His illness underscored the need for strong leadership at a critical time for the Middle East.

The economy has become a casualty of battles between the government, which wants to reform the economic and financial sectors to offset dependence on oil revenues, and largely Islamist members of parliament (MPs), who oppose any "Westernization," including measures that would endanger social spending. Some 95 percent of working Kuwaitis draw monthly tax-free salaries from the state, and an estimated 55 percent of those are underemployed, or placed in nominal jobs with no responsibilities for the sake of employment statistics. Kuwaitis enjoy free health care and education;

cheap gasoline, power, and water; subsidies on bread and other items; and generous housing loans for newlyweds. Economists routinely say that this cradle-to-grave welfare state is unsustainable, but MPs have consistently blocked government initiatives to cut the fiscal deficit, privatize state-run industries, and promote foreign investment for fear of allowing "foreign domination" inside Kuwait. In March 2001, however, lawmakers did pass a bill that allows for majority foreign ownership in local companies, a ten-year tax break and customs duties exemptions for investors.

Analysts have recently noted a conservative Islamist backlash in Kuwait characterized by attempts to impose stricter religious codes and limit foreign social influences. Two MPs introduced a draft law in July calling for amending the Penal code to conform to *Sharia* (Islamic law). More women are covering themselves with the *hijab*, or traditional veil, while hardliners try to ban social events such as public concerts. In October 2000, the information minister resigned under pressure from Islamists, who criticized the government media as too liberal. Islamists have also blocked several recent attempts to grant women political rights. A 1999 emiri decree granting women the right to vote was narrowly defeated by parliament, and several lawsuits against the interior ministry by women demanding full political rights were thrown out in 2000. In January 2001, the constitutional court rejected a case brought by a man against the elections department for failing to register the names of several women, including his wife, on electoral lists.

In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Islamist MPs denounced U.S.-led air strikes on Afghanistan. However, the Kuwaiti leadership pledged support for the U.S. operation. The government also stripped the spokesman of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist network, a Kuwaiti, of his citizenship. In December, officials announced that international auditors would be brought in to oversee the finances of Islamic charities, some of which may be channeling funds to al-Qaeda or to other terrorist groups.

Still, the Islamist movement in Kuwait has neither become as virulently anti-Western nor gained as much momentum as in neighboring countries, despite a lingering American troop presence since the Persian Gulf War. The reason evidently involves a continuing threat from across the border; Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein openly maintains that Kuwait is an Iraqi province.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Kuwaitis cannot change their government democratically. Political parties are illegal, although de facto groupings of Bedouins, merchants, Sunni and Shiite Muslims, secularist leftists, and nationalists are tolerated. Under the 1962 constitution, the national assembly has limited power to approve the emir's choice of crown prince. The emir holds executive authority and rules through both an appointed prime minister, who is also the crown prince, as well as an appointed council of ministers. The cabinet is immune from prosecution, but subject to investigation and questioning by parliament. Legislative authority is shared by the emir and the 50-member national assembly, which is elected every four years. Women, citizens naturalized for fewer than 20 years, members of the armed forces, the police, and other interior ministry personnel may not vote or seek election to the national assembly. In 1999, several national assembly candidates were prosecuted for defamation of government officials during an election campaign marked by widespread verbal attacks against the government for alleged corruption. About 30 tribal leaders were also prosecuted for holding illegal primary elections.

The emir appoints all judges, and renewal of many judicial appointments is subject to government approval. One court system tries both civil and criminal cases. Sharia courts for Sunnis and Shiites handle family law cases. Defendants have the right to appeal verdicts and to be represented by legal counsel, which the courts provide in criminal cases. Suspects may be detained for four days before being brought before an investigating official. People convicted of collaboration with Iraq during the 1990-1991 occupation remain incarcerated. Most of those tried in the Martial Law Court in 1991, and the Special State Security Court, which was abolished in 1995, did not receive fair trials. In March 2001, the court of cassation commuted to life imprisonment a death sentence against Alaa Hussein, a Kuwaiti convicted of treason in May 2000 for heading the pro-Iraqi puppet government during the Iraqi occupation. In July 2000, the UN Human Rights Committee expressed concern over the large number of offenses for which Kuwaiti courts can impose the death penalty, including vaguely defined offenses related to national security and drug related crimes. In April 2001, Kuwait agreed to allow Iraqis to visit relatives held in its prisons for the first time since the 1990 invasion.

The Printing and Publications Law and the Penal code may both be used to restrict freedom of expression, and although prepublication censorship was abolished in 1992, journalists practice self-censorship. Direct criticism of the emir or of relations with other states; material deemed offensive to religion; incitement to violence, hatred, or dissent; or news that "affects the value of the national currency" are punishable by imprisonment and/or fines. Enforcement of restrictions is arbitrary. Newspapers are privately owned and frequently criticize government policies and officials. They were openly critical of the lengthy deliberations over forming a new government in February 2001, which took more than two weeks. Veteran journalist and women's rights campaigner Hedayet Sultan al-Salem, editor of *al-Majales* magazine, was shot to death in her car in March. In April, a Kuwaiti court ordered Qatar's al-Jazeera television network to pay \$16,000 in damages after a talk-show host accused Kuwaitis of using acid to kill and maim Iraqis, Palestinians, and fellow Kuwaitis at the end of the Gulf War. In May, *al-Tadamon al-Arabi wal-Douali*, a fortnightly based in Cyprus, was banned in Kuwait and its correspondent barred from the country after the paper ran a front-page picture of Saddam Hussein and his son Qusay.

Public gatherings require government approval. Informal, family-based, almost exclusively male social gatherings called *diwanis* provide a forum for political discussion. The law gives the government the full authority to regulate, ban, or license any society and prohibits clubs and associations from engaging in political activities. The government denies formal recognition to human rights groups and restricts their ability to organize publicly. However, some informal gatherings by human rights activists are tolerated. The parliamentary human rights committee has complained of governmental interference with their visits to prisons.

Women face discrimination in legal and social matters. Sharia courts give a woman's testimony lesser weight than that of a man, women must have permission of a male relative in order to obtain a passport, and only men are able to confer citizenship on children. Women are also legally disadvantaged in matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The Penal code provides relative impunity for men who commit violent crimes against women. Women are prohibited from certain professions, but the field of possibility is widening. The government decided in late 2000 to allow women to join the police force, but has since said that women will only be given jobs "suitable to their

nature." The nature of these jobs is not yet clear, but most doubt that women will be allowed to carry weapons or patrol streets. Islamists in parliament have blocked measures aimed at granting women full political rights. On March 18, a parliamentary committee rejected a draft law giving women the right to vote and run for office. Ironically, in student union elections, in which women may vote, they have overwhelmingly voted for Islamists.

Islam is the state religion, and both Sunnis and Shiites worship freely. The government recognizes the Christian community of more than 150,000, including Roman and Greek Catholics, National Evangelicals (Protestants), Greek and Armenian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, and Maronites. Leaders of these churches describe the government as tolerant. Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'is, and Buddhists may not build places of worship, but may worship privately without interference; they number more than 60,000. A ban on organized, non-Muslim religious education is not widely enforced.

Some 120,000 *bidoon*, or stateless people, are considered illegal residents and denied citizenship and civil rights, including the right to travel, to register births, deaths, and marriages, and to confer Kuwaiti citizenship on their children. An estimated 240,000 live outside Kuwait because the state does not allow them to return. In October 1999, the interior ministry initiated a nine-month program during which *bidoon* who renounced Kuwaiti nationality could apply for five-year residency permits and other benefits. Deportation procedures began in June 2000 against people deemed in violation of nationality and alien residence laws.

The government maintains financial control over unions through subsidies that account for 90 percent of some union budgets. Only one union is permitted per industry or profession, and only one labor federation, the pro-government Kuwaiti Trade Union Federation, exists. Workers may strike, but no law protects them from resulting legal or administrative action. Roughly 100,000 foreigners who work as domestic servants are not protected under labor law and are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse by employers.

## Kyrgyz Republic

Polity: Presidential	Political Rights: 6
Economy: Capitalist-statist (transitional)	Civil Liberties: 5
Population: 5,000,000	Status: Not Free
PPP: \$2,573	
Life Expectancy: 69	
Ethnic Groups: Kyrgyz (52 percent), Russian (18 percent), Uzbek (13 percent), Ukrainian (3 percent), other (14 percent)	
Capital: Bishkek	



### Overview:

Throughout 2001, the Kyrgyz government continued its persecution of opposition leader Felix Kulov, whom many regarded as the main political challenger to President Askar Akayev. Kulov was sentenced to prison in January for abuse of power while national security minister in the late 1990s, and was charged with additional crimes later in the

year. In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the tiny Central Asian country of the Kyrgyz Republic offered its support for the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, including the use of its airspace and air bases.

Populated by nomadic herders and ruled by tribal leaders for centuries, the Kyrgyz Republic was conquered by Russia in the mid-1800s and incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1924. The country declared independence from the U.S.S.R. in August 1991. Two months later, Askar Akayev, a respected physicist, was elected president in the country's first direct presidential vote. While Akayev introduced multiparty elections and pursued economic reforms in conjunction with International Monetary Fund requirements, he faced strong resistance from a Communist-dominated parliament elected in 1990.

In the 1995 parliamentary elections, no single party won a clear majority, with a mix of governing officials, intellectuals, and clan leaders capturing most of the seats in the legislature. Later that year, Akayev was reelected president in early elections with more than 70 percent of the vote. In a February 1996 referendum, 94 percent of voters endorsed constitutional amendments that substantially increased the powers of the presidency.

In the highly flawed February 2000 parliamentary poll, opposition parties, including the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan (PDMK), *El Bei-Bechora* (The People's Party), and *Ar-Namys* (Dignity), were barred from the vote over minor legal technicalities widely regarded as politically motivated charges. *Ar-Namys* chairman Felix Kulov, who ran as an independent candidate, lost in the runoff by a suspiciously large margin despite having enjoyed a secure lead in the first round. According to official election results, the Communist Party received the largest percentage of votes, followed by the pro-government Union of Democratic Forces. International election observers, including representatives from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, noted serious irregularities such as attempts to bribe voters, violations in tabulating the votes, the forging of ballots, and a state media bias in favor of pro-government parties.

Shortly after a second-round runoff on March 12, Kulov was arrested on charges of embezzlement and abuse of power allegedly committed while national security minister in the mid-1990s. Critics charged that Kulov's arrest was an attempt to prevent him from running against Akayev in the October presidential election. Following more than four months in detention and a closed military trial, Kulov was acquitted in August and immediately declared his candidacy for president.

The October 29 presidential poll was contested by six candidates, including the heavily favored incumbent, Akayev, who received nearly 75 percent of the vote. Omurbek Tekebayev, deputy speaker of parliament and leader of the *Ata-Meken* (Fatherland) party, came in a distant second. Kulov, who was widely regarded as Akayev's main challenger, was denied registration as a candidate for refusing to take a mandatory Kyrgyz language exam, which he charged violated election laws and the constitution. As with the parliamentary elections, international monitors and opposition figures cited widespread irregularities, including the exclusion of candidates for political purposes, the stuffing of ballot boxes, and biased state media coverage.

For the second successive year, Islamic militants engaged in armed incursions in August 2000 in the southern region of the Kyrgyz Republic. The rebels were members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), a group seeking the violent overthrow of the secular government of Uzbekistan and its replacement with one based on Islamic

law. After several months of intense battles between the rebels and Uzbekistani and Kyrgyzstani troops, the fighting ceased with the onset of winter, with many of the rebels fleeing back to bases in neighboring Tajikistan.

After a closed military trial, Felix Kulov was convicted in January 2001 of abuse of power while serving as national security minister in 1997 and 1998, and was sentenced to seven years in prison; a military court rejected his appeal in March. In late December, he was put on trial again on additional charges of embezzlement. Most observers maintain that the case against Kulov is politically motivated and intended to exclude him from further activities in politics.

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the Kyrgyz Republic offered Washington the use of its airspace in connection with the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan. In December, parliament voted to allow the U.S. to use its air bases for one year for humanitarian operations, and the first U.S. transport planes began arriving at Manas airport by mid-month. For the cash-strapped Kyrgyz economy, U.S. troop deployments promise to be a valuable source of income, with Bishkek reported to have received some \$7,000 for each takeoff and landing. Other countries, including France, Italy, and Australia, reportedly requested the use of Manas airport for aid shipments to Kabul. At the same time, human rights groups expressed concern that the government was using its increased cooperation with the United States since September 11 to crack down further on sources of domestic dissent, including independent media and opposition political groups.

Relations between the Kyrgyz Republic and its more powerful neighbor, Uzbekistan, continued to be strained throughout the year. A number of Kyrgyzstani civilians were killed in 2001 by land mines placed by Uzbekistan along the Uzbek-Kyrgyz border. Tashkent insisted that the mines, which were laid without Bishkek's approval, were necessary to prevent Islamic extremists from crossing into Uzbek territory. During the winter, Tashkent reportedly pressured Bishkek to accept certain territorial demands by suspending deliveries of natural gas. Publication of the land-swap deal caused an uproar in the Kyrgyz Republic's parliament, where many members maintained they had been unaware of the agreement.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic cannot change their government democratically. International election observers described the 2000 parliamentary and presidential elections as neither free nor fair. The 1996 constitution codifies strong presidential rule and a weak parliament, and the post of prime minister is largely ceremonial. The bicameral legislature is composed of a 45-member upper chamber, which meets only occasionally to approve the budget and confirm presidential appointees, and a 60-seat lower chamber. Although the constitution limits the president to only two terms in office, President Askar Akayev was allowed to run in 2000 after the constitutional court ruled that his first term began in 1995, rather than in 1991, when he ran effectively unopposed.

While there is some degree of press freedom in the Kyrgyz Republic, both state and private media are vulnerable to government pressure, which causes many journalists to practice self-censorship. All media are required to register with the ministry of justice, and an article in the criminal code regarding libel is used to prosecute journalists who criticize government officials. The independent newspaper *Res Publica* was forced by court order to stop publishing for a few weeks in early 2001 until it paid off



two fines it had received after losing a libel suit for an article accusing the head of state television and radio of corruption. In March, a district court overturned its earlier decision to free journalist Moldosali Ibrahimov, who had been sentenced to two years in prison in June 2000 for libel over his report that a judge had engaged in bribery. In June, the ministry of justice rescinded the April and May registrations of 16 new media outlets, claiming that already registered media outlets had to be re-registered first. Many press freedom advocates maintain that the decision represents another attempt by the government to stifle freedom of expression.

All religious organizations must register with the State Commission on Religious Affairs and the ministry of justice to obtain status as a legal entity. After the events of September 11, the government increased its efforts to monitor and restrict Islamic groups that it regards as a threat to national security. Freedom of assembly and association is respected inconsistently, with local authorities sometimes using registration requirements for demonstrations to inhibit this right. On May 1, police prevented a march of some 1,000 protestors organized by opposition parties in Bishkek. The same day, they detained six demonstrators in Djalalabad, including the local coordinator of the Kyrgyz Committee for Human Rights (KCHR), who were protesting declining living conditions and calling for President Akayev to resign.

While some nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operate with little or no state interference, others, including the KCHR, have faced harassment by the authorities. In March 2001, an unknown assailant attacked Toleskan Ismailova, the president of the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, causing her to lose consciousness. Opposition politician Topchubek Turgunaliyev, who had been found guilty in 2000 on politically motivated charges of plotting to assassinate President Akayev, was granted a presidential pardon in August 2001 following considerable pressure from foreign governments and international and domestic human rights groups.

A 1992 law permits the formation of trade unions and the right to bargain collectively. Most workers belong to the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Kyrgyzstan, the successor to the Soviet-era labor organization. To help stem the tide of growing Russian emigration from the Kyrgyz Republic over the last several years, President Akayev in December 2001 signed into law a bill making Russian an official language alongside Kyrgyz.

Despite various legislative reforms in the court system, the judiciary is not independent and remains dominated by the executive branch. Corruption among judges is reportedly widespread, and police frequently use violence against suspects during arrest and interrogation. Conditions in the country's prisons, which suffer from overcrowding, food shortages, and a lack of other basic necessities, remain poor.

Personal connections, corruption, organized crime, and widespread poverty limit business competition and equality of opportunity. Women are underrepresented in government and politics, and domestic violence, rape, and trafficking of women and girls into forced prostitution abroad are serious problems.

## Laos

Polity: One party

Economy: Statist

Population: 5,400,000

PPP: \$1,471

Life Expectancy: 52

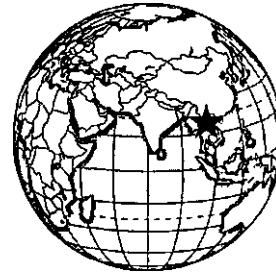
Ethnic Groups: Lao Loum (68 percent), Lao Theung (22 percent), Lao Soung [includes Hmong and Yao] (9 percent), Vietnamese and Chinese (1 percent)

Capital: Vientiane

Political Rights: 7

Civil Liberties: 6

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Signaling its intent to move slowly on market reforms, Laos's ruling party used its March 2001 party congress to bolster the standing of President Khamtay Siphandone and other hardliners, while offering no fresh initiatives to speed up the Communist country's halting transition to a market economy. The Lao Peoples' Revolutionary Party's (LPRP) lack of zest for deeper reforms, including privatizing the large state enterprises that dominate the economy, reflects its concern that boosting the private sector could undermine the party's tight grip on power by reducing its control over the economy. Meanwhile, ethnic Hmong rebels in the rugged northern highlands appeared to pull back in 2001 after stepping up their low-grade insurgency in 2000.

This landlocked, mountainous Southeast Asian nation won independence from Paris in 1953 following six decades as a French protectorate and occupation by the Japanese during World War II. Backed by Vietnam's Viet minh rebels, Communist *Pathet Lao* (Land of Lao) guerrillas quickly tried to topple the royalist government in Vientiane. Following several years of political turmoil, Communist, royalist, and neutralist forces in 1960 began fighting a three-way power struggle. Amid its own civil conflict, Laos was drawn into the Vietnam War in 1964, when the United States began bombing North Vietnamese forces operating inside Laos. A 1973 ceasefire left Laos in the hands of a coalition government, but the Pathet Lao seized power in 1975 following the Communist victory in neighboring Vietnam. The guerrillas set up a one-party state under Prime Minister Kaysone Phomvihane's LPRP.

With Laos's centralized economy a shambles, the LPRP in 1986 began freeing prices, encouraging foreign investment, and privatizing farms and some state-owned enterprises. Partially unshackled, the economy grew by seven percent per year on average from 1988 to 1996. At the same time, the LPRP continued to reject calls for political reforms, jailing two officials in 1990 who called for multiparty elections. Following Kaysone's death in 1992, the party named as LPRP president Khamtay Siphandone, the prime minister and a veteran revolutionary. The party presidency is considered the most powerful post in the country. Khamtay later also became state president.

By the late 1990s, economic growth had slowed and the government's use of central-bank financing for irrigation and other public works projects had helped send inflation to triple digits. After the government tightened its fiscal and monetary policies, inflation fell steadily, dropping to 9 percent by February 2001 from a peak of 167 percent in mid-1999.

Prior to the LPRP's seventh congress in 2001, many diplomats and observers expected the party to launch deeper reforms in an effort to sharpen the economy's competitiveness. The LPRP not only failed to announce fresh measures to boost the nascent private sector but also added only a few young faces to its Politburo and central committee. Moreover, Khamtay, 77, retained the party presidency. He is known to oppose more far-reaching economic reforms. Following the congress, the party named Bounnyang Vorachit, the deputy prime minister and the foreign minister, to replace Sisavath Keobounphanh as prime minister.

In the highlands, the Chao Fa and other armed Hmong groups have been waging low-grade insurgencies against the government since the Communist takeover. The Hmong are one of the largest of several upland hill tribes who, together with smaller numbers of non-hill ethnic minorities, make up roughly half the population. Ethnic Lao make up the remainder.

Laos's economy depends on agriculture, which makes up 51 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), and trade and sales of hydroelectric power to neighboring Thailand. Most foreign investors, the majority of whom were Thai, pulled out of Laos in the wake of the regional financial crisis that began in 1997 and have not returned. Direct foreign investment approvals declined to \$20 million in 2000 from their peak of \$2.6 billion in 1995. This has helped make the country more dependent on remittances from Laotians living abroad and on foreign aid. Donor contributions now make up more than 15 percent of GDP, up from 6.25 percent in the mid-1980s, just before Laos began its tentative market reforms.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Laotians cannot change their government through elections, and the ruling Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) tightly restricts most basic rights. The 1991 constitution makes the LPRP the sole legal political party and gives it a leading role at all levels of government. Little is known about how President Khamtay and other senior leaders set policy. The 99-member national assembly is a rubber-stamp body that lacks even the power to introduce bills. The LPRP vets all candidates for assembly elections, which are held once every five years, most recently in 1997.

Both Laotian forces and Hmong rebels reportedly have committed human rights abuses relating to the Hmong insurgency. In 2000, the Chao Fa rebel group killed more than 15 civilians in four separate incidents in Vientiane and Xieng Khouang provinces and in Saisomboune Special Zone, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Laos's human rights record in 2000. During counterinsurgency operations in 2000, government troops burned down one village in northern Laos, beat some villagers nearly to death, and brutally beat some suspected insurgents, the report added.

The poorly equipped Hmong rebels have little chance of overthrowing the government, and the goals of their insurgency are not clear. The Hmong and other ethnic minorities face some discrimination in mainstream society and have little input into governmental decisions affecting their lands and the allocation of natural resources, the U.S. State Department report said.

Laos's party-controlled courts provide citizens with little means of addressing government human rights abuses and other grievances. The judiciary "is subject to executive influence, suffers from corruption, and does not ensure citizens' due pro-

cess," according to the U.S. State Department report. The report noted, however, that government and party officials appear to exert less influence over the courts than in the past. Police at times arbitrarily arrest and detain suspects, abuse detainees, and detain defendants who have been cleared by courts, the report also said. In prisons, authorities provide inmates with minimal food and health care and sometimes use "degrading treatment" against prisoners, especially suspected insurgents, according to the report.

There are no accurate figures on the number of Laotian political prisoners, although authorities are holding at least four. Two of them served in the pre-1975 government and two served in the present regime before being detained in 1990 for advocating multiparty politics, the U.S. State Department report said.

The government has in recent years scaled back its monitoring of ordinary civilians. The security service, however, still occasionally searches homes without warrants, monitors some telephone and other personal communications, and maintains a sporadically active system of neighborhood and workplace committees that inform on the population, according to the U.S. State Department report.

The government owns all newspapers and broadcast media and keeps a tight lid on their content. Authorities said in June that they would introduce a new law requiring journalists to slant their news coverage to favor the government, Reuters reported. Current regulations already subject journalists who do not file "constructive reports" or who attempt to "obstruct" the LPRP's work to jail terms of between 5 and 15 years. Freedom of the press, and of free speech generally, are also restricted by Penal code provisions that broadly forbid slandering the state, distorting LPRP or state policies, inciting disorder, or disseminating information or opinions that weaken the state.

The government monitors e-mail, controls all domestic Internet servers, and blocks access to some political Web sites, the U.S. State Department report said. The National Internet Control Committee issued sweeping regulations in 2000 that criminalized "disturbing the peace" and "reporting misleading news" over the Internet. The number of Laotian Internet users is not known.

Authorities have in recent years arrested and detained some Laotians based on their religious beliefs, forced some Christians to renounce their beliefs, and closed several churches, according to the U.S. State Department report. They also prohibit Laotians from printing religious texts or distributing them outside congregations and restrict the import of foreign religious texts and materials, the report added. In a country where more than half the population is Buddhist, the LPRP controls the Buddhist clergy. It requires monks to study Marxism-Leninism, attend certain party meetings, and weave party and state policies into their Buddhist teachings. Authorities have, however, permitted some temples to receive support from abroad, expand their training of monks, and emphasize traditional teachings.

Many Laotian women hold important civil service and private sector jobs. On the whole, however, women face some employment discrimination and are underrepresented in government and politics, the U.S. State Department report said. The report also said that Laos is "a source and transit country for trafficking in persons," and that many Laotian women and children are believed to be victims of trafficking.

The regime tightly controls trade unions. The law requires all unions to belong to the party-controlled Federation of Lao Trade Unions, and workers lack the right to bargain collectively. Strikes are not expressly prohibited, but they occur rarely. In any case, with subsistence farmers making up 85 percent of the workforce, few Laotian

workers are unionized. Consistent with its policy on trade unions, the government also prohibits nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that have political agendas. However, it permits some professionally and socially oriented NGOs to function.

## Latvia

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy  
Economy: Mixed cap-  
italist

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 2  
Status: Free

Population: 2,400,000

PPP: \$6,264

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Latvian (57 percent), Russian (30 percent), Belarusian (4 percent), Ukrainian (3 percent), Polish (3 percent), other (3 percent)

Capital: Riga



### Overview:

Left-of-center parties, led by the Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party (LSDWP), swept to victory in the March 2001 local elections. Ongoing economic problems, particularly in rural areas, were credited with helping to secure their wins in a number of city councils, including the most influential one in the capital city of Riga. Privatization of the remaining large-scale enterprises, including the Latvian Shipping Company, continued to be delayed throughout the year.

After having been ruled for centuries by Germany, Poland, Sweden, and Russia, Latvia gained its independence in 1918, but was annexed by the U.S.S.R. during World War n. More than 50 years of Soviet occupation saw a massive influx of Russians and the deportation, execution, and emigration of tens of thousands of ethnic Latvians. In 1991, Latvia regained its independence in the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Following the October 1995 parliamentary elections, nonparty businessman and former Agriculture Minister Andris Skele was chosen to lead a tenuous six-party coalition government in December. The year 1997 was marked by continual government instability, with Skele surrendering the premiership to Guntars Krasts of the right-wing nationalist For Fatherland and Freedom /LNNK (FF/LNNK) in late summer.

In the October 1998 parliamentary elections, Skele's newly created People's Party received the most votes, although Skele remained unpopular among many political forces for his often authoritarian and abrasive style. After nearly two months of negotiations, parliament finally approved a new 46-seat minority government led by Vilis Kristopans and consisting of his center-right Latvia's Way, FF/LNNK, and the center-left New Party, along with the tacit support of the left-wing Alliance of Social Democrats. The People's Party was excluded from the ruling coalition, which most observers predicted would not survive for long because of the ideological diversity of its members and its minority status in parliament. In June 1999, Latvian-Canadian academic Vaira Vike-Freiberga was elected the country's first female president, succeeding Guntis Ulmanis, who had served as head of state for six years.

After only nine months in office, Prime Minister Kristopans stepped down in July 1999, precipitating the collapse of his minority coalition government. Kristopans' brief term had been plagued by various policy defeats and political crises, culminating in the virtual isolation of the prime minister's party in its opposition to Vike-Freiberga's candidacy for president. Latvia's Way, the People's Party, and FF/LNNK put aside enough of their differences to agree to form a new 62-seat majority coalition led by Kristopans' political rival, Andris Skele, as prime minister.

Following months of growing strains within the ruling coalition over privatization issues and personality conflicts, Prime Minister Skele resigned in April 2000 after the collapse of his government. On May 5, Riga Mayor Andris Berzins of Latvia's Way was chosen prime minister. The new government, the ninth since independence in 1991, included the previous coalition's three parties.

In the March 2001 municipal elections, left-of-center political parties scored victories in Riga and several other cities, largely by capitalizing on the public's discontent with the national government's handling of economic and social issues, including high rural unemployment. Voter turnout was 62 percent of the country's 1.3 million eligible voters. In Riga's 60-seat city council, the LSDWP secured 14 seats, followed closely by the leftist For Human Rights in a United Latvia with 13, FF/LNNK with 11, the People's Party with 6, and Latvia's Way with 5; several other parties captured 1 or 2 seats each. Gundars Bojars of the LSDWP—and son of LSDWP chairman Juris Bojars—was chosen mayor of Riga. In May, the LSDWP signed an unlikely coalition agreement with FF/LNNK, which refused to include For Human Rights in a United Latvia. With the addition of six smaller parties, the coalition had a slim majority of 34 seats. However, FF/LNNK withdrew from the unstable coalition just three months later.

Problems surrounding the privatization of Latvia's remaining state-owned industries continued in 2001. The third attempt to privatize the Latvian Shipping Company (LASCO) failed in April when no bidders paid the required \$5 million security deposit by the deadline. In December, the government adopted new guidelines for LASCO's sale, with 51 percent of the company to be sold on the stock exchange. The director of the Latvian Privatization Agency, Janis Naglis, was dismissed in November for alleged procedural violations; several earlier attempts to oust him from office had contributed to crises at the national government level.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Latvians can change their government democratically. However, Latvia's citizenship laws have been criticized for disenfranchising those who immigrated to Latvia during the Soviet period and who must now apply for citizenship. Moscow continues to accuse Riga of discriminating against the country's 700,000 Russian speakers, mostly ethnic Russian. The constitution provides for a unicameral, 100-seat parliament (*Saeima*), whose members are elected for four-year terms by proportional representation, and who in turn select the country's president. According to international observers, the most recent national legislative elections in 1998 were free and fair.

The government respects freedom of speech and the press. Private television and radio stations broadcast programs in both Latvian and Russian, and newspapers publish a wide range of political viewpoints. However, many media outlets routinely report rumors and accusations as fact without benefit of hard evidence. Freedom of worship

is generally respected in this country in which the three largest denominations are Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Russian Orthodoxy.

Freedom of assembly and association is protected by law, and gatherings occur without governmental interference. Workers have the right to establish trade unions, strike, and engage in collective bargaining. Although Latvia has adopted various anti-corruption measures, a lack of transparency in political party financing and corruption among some government officials remain problems.

While the government generally respects constitutional provisions for an independent judiciary, reform of the courts has been slow and judges continue to be inadequately trained and prone to corruption. In October 2001, Judge Janis Laukroze was shot dead near his apartment building in the first murder of a judge in the history of independent Latvia. The legal system has been criticized for being slow to charge accused Nazi war criminals, including Konrads Kalejs, whom his adopted home of Australia agreed in May 2001 to extradite to Latvia. However, Kalejs died in November at an Australian nursing home at the age of 88. Severe backlogs in the court system have led to lengthy delays in reviewing cases and to large numbers of persons being held in pretrial detention. In one prominent case, a former chairman of Banka Baltija, Alexander Lavent, who was arrested in connection with the bank's collapse in the mid-1990s, was held in detention for several years before his conviction on fraud charges in December 2001. Lavent filed complaints with the European Court of Human Rights regarding his lengthy incarceration. Prison facilities remain severely overcrowded and suffer from inadequate sanitary conditions.

Out of the country's nearly 700,000 Russian-speakers, some 550,000 are registered noncitizens, most of whom are ethnic Russians. Noncitizens are barred from running in state and local elections and from holding some civil service jobs. In early December 2001, President Vaira Vike-Freiberga called for the abolition of a provision in the country's election law requiring candidates for parliament and local elections to be fluent in Latvian; possible amendments to the law could be presented to parliament in early 2002. Less than two weeks later, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) announced that it would end its nine-year mission in Latvia at the end of 2001, noting that the country was in full compliance with OSCE standards, including those regarding the rights of ethnic minorities.

Women possess the same legal rights as men, although they frequently face hiring and pay discrimination and are underrepresented in senior-level business and government positions.

## Lebanon

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (military- and foreign-influenced, partly foreign-occupied)  
Economy: Mixed statist  
Population: 4,300,000  
PPP: \$4,705  
Life Expectancy: 71  
Ethnic Groups: Arab (95 percent), Armenian (4 percent), other (1 percent)  
Capital: Beirut

Political Rights: 6  
Civil Liberties: 5  
Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Syria's continuing presence in Lebanon dominated Lebanese political life throughout 2001. Reconciliation between Christian Maronites and Muslim Druze, based on a shared antipathy for Syria, and a sharp crackdown on anti-Syria demonstrators underscored the deep divisions within the Lebanese political hierarchy. Syria withdrew its troops from Beirut, but maintained its armed presence in the rest of the country. The radical Islamist group Hezbollah continued to effectively run the country's south, as the government again resisted international pressure to exert central control over the region. Hezbollah uses the territory to launch attacks against Israel. In the wake of the September 11 terror attacks in the United States, Lebanon refused American entreaties to categorize Hezbollah as a terrorist group. Lebanon continued to face serious economic difficulties in 2001.

Lebanon gained full sovereignty from France in 1946. An unwritten National Pact in 1943 gave Christians political dominance over the Muslim population through a mandatory six-to-five ratio of parliamentary seats. After three decades during which non-Christians tried to end this system, a civil war erupted between Muslim, Christian, and Druze militias in 1975, claiming over 150,000 lives before it ended in 1990. Complicating the situation was the presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which, after having been expelled from Jordan in 1971, used Lebanon as a base for attacks against Israel and constituted an occupying force. Syria sent troops into Lebanon to support the government in 1976.

The Lebanese assembly ratified a peace plan put forward by the Arab League on November 5, 1989, in Taif, Saudi Arabia. The Taif Accord maintained the tradition of a Maronite Christian president indirectly elected to a six-year term, but it transferred most executive power to the prime minister, a Sunni Muslim, by agreement. Parliament is evenly split between Muslims and Christians. Syria continues to occupy the country with approximately 30,000 troops.

In the wake of rising domestic criticism of Syria's occupation, Syria redeployed its troops throughout the country in June, withdrawing completely from Beirut. Viewing the move as largely symbolic, Lebanese stepped up their vocal opposition to Syria's overbearing presence in their country.

In August, Lebanon's Maronite Christian patriarch, Nasrallah Sfeir, convened a historic meeting of reconciliation with Druze leader Walid Jumblatt. Despite historic



enmity between Lebanon's Christian and Muslim Druze communities, both groups share a deep resentment of the Syrian presence. Within days of the meeting, protests against the Syrian presence ensued, led mostly by banned Christian groups. Lebanese and Syrian security forces swiftly clamped down. The crackdown brought back to the surface the deep-seated sectarian tensions that have plagued Lebanese political life for decades.

Tensions in the country's south continued to simmer in 2001. After Israel withdrew its forces from a 440-square-mile security zone in June 2000, the Shiite, pro-Iranian, and Syrian-backed Hezbollah militia filled the power vacuum. Despite international and United Nations pressure to mobilize its army along the Israeli border, Lebanon has only apportioned some police and army personnel to towns and villages within the former security zone, but not at the actual border. Publicly, Lebanon says it will not act as Israel's "border guard."

Throughout the year Hezbollah repeatedly attacked Israeli troops along the border, especially those patrolling the area of Shebba Farms. Lebanon considers Shebba Farms its own territory; Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon was certified as complete by the UN and in full compliance with UN resolution 425, which stipulated the terms of the withdrawal. Hezbollah continues to hold three Israeli soldiers it kidnapped from Shebba Farms in October 2000. The soldiers are feared dead. While Hezbollah cites Israel's presence in the area as its reason for attacking, its leadership repeatedly makes clear its intention to use Lebanon as a staging ground from which to fight farther into Israel proper. Throughout 2001 Israel responded to several Hezbollah attacks with air strikes against Syrian military installations in Lebanon.

In August, the UN voted to reduce its peacekeeping force along the border between Lebanon and Israel. The move reduces the 4,500 troops in the area by 20 percent, with the ultimate aim of downgrading their role from peacekeepers to observers. Lebanon criticized the plan and blamed Israel for pressuring the UN.

Lebanon's economy worsened in 2001, creating further difficulties for Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's already enormous task of reforming a severely depressed economy in need of foreign investment. In the middle of the year, Lebanon's public debt stood at 150 percent of gross domestic product, or \$25 billion. According to *The Economist* magazine, Lebanon is the world's most indebted country. The Israeli withdrawal from the south has revealed a region severely underdeveloped and littered with land mines. Lebanese and other nongovernmental organizations estimate the cost of rebuilding the south at \$1.3 billion, citing infrastructural, agricultural, educational, and health projects, along with de-mining, as major priorities.

Lebanon suffers from a brain drain as hundreds of thousands of educated Lebanese have left in recent years. In light of the prime minister's proclivity for ambitious public spending, which drew past accusations of driving up the nation's debt in his previous term as premier, many critics express doubt over his ability to improve the economy.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

The Lebanese government is not sovereign in its own country. Syrians, who consider Lebanon part of Greater Syria, continue to occupy the country with approximately 30,000 troops. The 128-member parliament, elected in September 2000, follows the Syrian line on internal and regional affairs.

Shortcomings in the electoral system limit the right of Lebanese citizens to change

their government. Despite huge electoral gains by opposition candidates—who claimed 92 out of the 128 parliamentary seats—the elections in 2000 generated pronounced criticism over alleged irregularities and Syria's overbearing influence in Lebanon's electoral process. The parliamentary elections were neither prepared for nor carried out impartially. According to the constitution, a president is to be elected by parliament every six years. In actuality, Syria's choice of president is simply ratified by parliament. Just prior to the election of Emile Lahoud as president in October 1998, parliament amended a constitutional requirement that senior government officials resign their posts at least two years before running for office.

The judiciary is influenced by Syrian political pressure, which affects the appointments of key prosecutors and investigating magistrates. The judicial system comprises civilian courts, a military court, and a judicial council. International standards of criminal procedure are not observed in the military court, which consists largely of military officers with no legal training. The average case is tried in minutes. Extragovernmental groups, such as Palestinian factions and Hezbollah, detain suspects and administer justice in areas under their control, generally without due process safeguards.

While the government generally tolerates public demonstrations, those protesting against Syria are dealt with swiftly. In August, 150 members of two anti-Syrian Christian groups were arrested while staging public demonstrations against the Syrian occupation. Violent clashes ensued over the next several days, with undercover police and Syrian agents reportedly beating and arresting protestors. Many were charged with "defaming" the president, harming the reputation of the "sisterly Syrian army," and collaborating with Israel. Military tribunals were convened. Several members of parliament criticized the arrests, saying they were unconstitutional and the charges vague. The army alleged that Lebanon's Christians were posing a threat to state security. The arrests produced a major political crisis between President Emile Lahoud, an ally of Syria, and Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who claimed he was taken by surprise by the crackdown and heard about it only after the fact while visiting Pakistan. As international condemnation of the arrests mounted, the authorities relented, releasing most of those arrested by the end of August.

The following month, a report issued by the Lebanese Foundation for Permanent Civil Peace suggested Lebanon is suffering from greater factionalism than one year ago and is closer to civil war. The report noted that a more repressive climate exists in Lebanon today, especially with respect to public gatherings and demonstrations. It cautioned the government against "exploiting the national unity excuse" when cracking down on protestors.

Arbitrary arrest and detention are commonplace. Security forces use torture to extract confessions. Prison conditions do not meet international standards. After the Israeli withdrawal from the country's south, roughly 2,000 militiamen of the now-defunct South Lebanon Army (SLA) remained in Lebanon rather than seek refuge in Israel. In hastily arranged collaboration trials, many were sentenced in batches and without adequate representation. Some former SLA members and those related to them were the targets of violence during the year. Some had their homes or stores fired upon and bombed.

While Lebanon enjoys greater press freedoms than its patron, Syria, the government has not abated its crackdown on independent broadcasting, which flourished during the civil war. Some candidates in the parliamentary elections were denied television

coverage. In 1998, a government decree banned two of the country's four satellite television stations from broadcasting news or political programming. Since the crackdown began in 1996, the government has licensed only five television stations, three of which are owned by government figures; it has also licensed six radio stations that may carry news and 20 stations that may carry only entertainment. Fifty-two television stations and 124 radio stations have been closed. The appropriation of frequencies is a slow and highly politicized process.

Print media are independent of the government, though their content often reflects the opinions of the various local and foreign groups that finance them. Insulting the dignity of the head of state or foreign leaders is prohibited. All foreign print media are subject to government approval.

There were several instances of official harassment of individual journalists in 2001. In June, Lebanese-American journalist Raghida Dergham was charged with "dealing with the enemy" after attending a seminar in Washington, D.C., that featured an Israeli panelist. Lebanese law prohibits contact between Lebanese citizens and Israelis. An arrest warrant was issued for Dergham, and a military trial was convened. Dergham, who resides in the United States, was considered a fugitive.

In August, authorities arrested two journalists, Habib Younis and Antoine Bassil. While arrested during a sweep of anti-Syrian activists, the two were charged with "contacting the Israeli enemy," "illegal entry into Israeli territory," "disclosing information to the enemy," and "creating an association with a view towards undermining state authority." According to Reporters Sans Frontieres, the arrests were carried out without warrants and lawyers were not present during interrogation of the journalists. In December their case was referred to the Beirut Military Court.

Also in August, undercover security agents beat several journalists covering the anti-Syria protests. In separate cases, several journalists were sued and some were jailed on charges of "defaming the army" after writing critically about Lebanon's compulsory military service.

Rates of Internet access in Lebanon are substantial. In 2000 there were an estimated 230,000 users, and 19 Internet service providers in the country. Many cybercafes can be found in Beirut. Internet access does not appear to be closely monitored or controlled by the state.

Citizens may travel abroad freely, though internal travel is restricted in certain areas. Syrian troops maintain checkpoints in areas under their control. The government does not extend legal rights to some 180,000 stateless persons who live mainly in disputed border areas. In January 1999 the government announced a plan to lift travel restrictions imposed on Lebanon's Palestinian population; Palestinian travel documents were to be treated the same as passports. After 1995, Lebanon had required Palestinians once living in Lebanon to obtain visas to return.

Some 350,000 to 500,000 Palestinian refugees live without adequate electricity and water; they face restrictions on working, on building homes, and on purchasing property. Palestinians are denied citizenship rights. Lebanon insists that Israel repatriate all Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Lebanese authorities are loath to absorb the refugees into regular society for fear of upsetting the country's delicate sectarian balance. Palestinian refugee camps are noted breeding grounds of radical anti-Israel sentiment, and large numbers of their residents are heavily armed. Lebanese authorities warily avoid the often-violent camps.

Women suffer some legal and social discrimination. Although women commonly work in fields such as medicine, law, journalism, and banking, they are severely underrepresented in politics. Women constitute only two percent of parliament. Lebanon has ratified the UN Convention for the Eradication of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) but has not applied all its recommended laws. Women continue to receive smaller social security payouts than men, and female government employees often do not receive the same benefits as their male counterparts. Men convicted of so-called honor crimes—usually the murder of women deemed to have violated their families' honor—are often not punished severely. On average, one woman per month is murdered in a honor killing.

All workers except those in government may establish unions, strike, and bargain collectively. Foreign domestic workers are routinely abused by employers who pay them little or nothing and confiscate their passports to prevent them from leaving. Women are most vulnerable to brutality or sexual abuse. Lebanon has no written code to arbitrate domestic worker disputes.

## ↑ Lesotho

Polity: Parliamentary and traditional chiefs (transitional)  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 2,200,000  
 PPP: \$1,854  
 Life Expectancy: 53  
 Ethnic Groups: Sotho (99.7 percent), other, including European and Asian (0.3 percent)  
 Capital: Maseru

Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Status: Partly Free



**Trend Arrow:** Lesotho received an upward trend arrow for making progress in creating conditions for holding national assembly elections.

### Overview:

After many delays, Lesotho made progress in 2001 on holding general elections to extract the country from a political crisis that had erupted after voting in 1998. The Independent Electoral Commission in 2001 completed registering voters for elections to be held by mid-2002. Political parties, civil society groups, and the media observed the registration process. The new "mixed member" voting system, which was under debate by parliament at the end of 2001, would expand the number of national assembly seats by 40, to 120. The additional seats would be elected by proportional representation, while the others would continue to be chosen by the "first past the post" system of awarding seats to whomever gets the most votes. The new system was developed by the electoral commission and the Interim Political Authority (IPA), which were set up following postelection violence in September 1998 to oversee preparations for the polls. The IPA includes two representatives from each of the country's 12 main political parties. At least 16 parties are registered for the 2002 elections.

Lesotho's status as a British protectorate saved it from incorporation into South Africa. King Moshoeshoe II reigned from independence in 1966 until the installation of his son as King Letsie III in a 1990 military coup. Democratic elections in 1993 did not lead to stability. After violent military infighting, assassinations, and a suspension of constitutional rule in 1994, King Letsie III abdicated to allow his father's reinstatement. He resumed the throne following the accidental death of his father in January 1996.

Troops from South Africa and Botswana were sent to the mountain kingdom at the request of Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili under the mandate of the 14-country Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in September 1998 to quell army-backed violence and a potential overthrow of the government. The violence was touched off by the results of national assembly elections the previous May. Although international observers described the voting as free and fair, demonstrators rejected the results that gave the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) 79 of 80 national assembly seats. At least 100 people were reportedly killed before order was restored. An agreement drafted by the Commonwealth in 1998 allowed the elected, but highly unpopular, government to retain power, but stipulated that new elections be supervised by an independent election commission. The SADC, the United Nations, and the Commonwealth repeatedly have stepped in to mediate.

Prime Minister Mosisili told parliament in November 2001 that opposition leaders who were involved in the 1998 army mutiny would be charged with high treason. Citing a report by a judicial commission set up to investigate the mutiny, Mosisili said three opposition parties were responsible for the protest that spread through the capital in an aim to overthrow the government. He proposed that a special tribunal be set up to deal with the cases. Prosecution of those involved in the disturbances, however, could lead to more violence in 2002.

Entirely surrounded by South Africa, Lesotho is highly dependent on its powerful neighbor. Its economy is sustained by remittances from its many citizens who work in South African mines. A world slump in gold prices has led to job loss and decreased earnings, but there has been some recovery in the manufacturing sector. The International Monetary Fund in 2001 commended Lesotho for its privatization efforts.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

The people of Lesotho are guaranteed the right to change their leaders through free and fair elections, but mistrust and delays have marred the process. Legislative elections in May 1998 were determined to be generally free and fair, but the LCD's 60 percent vote translated into an almost total exclusion of opposition parties such as the Basotho National Party (BNP). The appearance of irregularities and the virtual elimination of opposition voices from government fueled protests against the results. Some nongovernmental organizations objected that the new mixed-member voting system was too confusing for most voters in Lesotho. Each voter received two ballots: one for candidates and one for political parties for proportional representation.

The senate, the upper house of the bicameral legislature, includes royal appointees and Lesotho's 22 principal traditional chiefs, who still wield considerable authority in rural areas. Any elected government's exercise of its constitutional authority remains limited by the autonomy of the military, the royal family, and traditional clan structures.

Courts are nominally independent, but higher courts are especially subject to outside influence. The large case backlog often leads to lengthy delays in trials. Mistreatment of civilians by security forces reportedly continues. Several nongovernmental organizations operate openly. Prison conditions are poor, but not life threatening.

The government generally respects freedom of speech and the press, but journalists have suffered occasional harassment and attacks. There are several independent newspapers that routinely criticize the government. There are four private radio stations, and extensive South African radio and television broadcasts reach Lesotho.

Freedom of religion in the predominantly Christian country is generally respected. The 1993 constitution bars gender-based discrimination, but customary practice and law still restrict women's rights in several areas, including property rights and inheritance. A woman is considered a legal minor while her husband is alive. Domestic violence is reportedly widespread but is becoming increasingly socially unacceptable. Women's rights organizations have highlighted the importance of women participating in the democratic process as part of a broader effort to educate women about their rights under customary and common law.

Freedom of assembly is generally respected, and labor rights are constitutionally guaranteed. However, the labor and trade union movement is weak and fragmented. Approximately ten percent of the country's labor force, which is mostly engaged in subsistence agriculture or employment in South Africa, is unionized. Although collective bargaining rights and the right to strike are recognized by law, they are sometimes denied by government negotiators.

## Liberia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 3,200,000

PPP: na

Life Expectancy: 50

Ethnic Groups: Indigenous tribes (95 percent),

Americo-Liberians (descendants of repatriated slaves) (5 percent)

Capital: Monrovia

**Ratings Change:** Liberia's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6, and its status from Partly Free to Not Free, because of further attempts to muzzle opposition voices, including the press, university students, and attorneys.

Political Rights: 6\*

Civil Liberties: 6

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Following months of threats, the United Nations in May 2001 imposed additional sanctions on Liberia because of the government's alleged arms-for-diamonds trade with the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in neighboring Sierra Leone. The sanctions included an international travel ban on senior Liberian officials and their families, extension of an arms embargo, and a moratorium on diamond exports. The government of President Charles Taylor faced ongoing military pressure in Liberia's northwest from dissidents

based in Guinea. Persecution of ethnic minorities in that region persisted. Although Taylor released some political prisoners and announced an amnesty for his political opponents in July 2001, few believed they would be safe if they returned to Liberia. Two lawyers were detained for three months during the year on contempt charges for publicly calling the detention of the president of the country's bar association unconstitutional.

Liberia was settled in 1821 by freed slaves from the United States and became an independent republic in 1847. Americo-Liberians dominated the country until 1980 when army Sergeant Samuel Doe led a bloody coup and murdered President William Tolbert. Doe's regime concentrated power among members of his Kranh ethnic group and suppressed others. Forces led by Charles Taylor, a former government minister, and backed by Gio and Mano ethnic groups that had been subject to severe repression, launched a guerrilla war from neighboring Cote d'Ivoire against the Doe regime on Christmas Eve 1989. In 1990, Nigeria, under the aegis of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), led an armed intervention force, preventing Taylor from seizing the capital but failing to protect Doe from being captured and tortured to death by a splinter rebel group. The war claimed more than 150,000 lives and forced approximately half of Liberia's population to flee their homes before a fourteenth peace accord proved successful in 1996.

Corruption is a major obstacle to economic growth. Diamond smuggling allegedly has provided income for Taylor, although he denies this. Liberia's infrastructure has deteriorated substantially in the past decade. The government also reportedly has used timber sales to help finance the RUF. An embargo on timber exports was not included in the United Nations sanctions because China threatened to veto the measure based on that provision.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Charles Taylor and his party assumed power after the 1997 elections which were generally free and fair. The votes for the presidency and a national assembly on the basis of proportional representation were held under provisions of the 1986 constitution. The polls constituted Liberia's most genuine electoral exercise in decades but were conducted in an atmosphere of intimidation. Taylor's victory reflected more of a vote for peace than for a particular personality, as many people believed that the only way to stop the war was to make him president. The European Union in November 2001 said considerable changes on the political, legal, and economic fronts were needed to guarantee free and fair elections in 2003. A key opposition leader and former presidential candidate, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, returned to Liberia during the year for a meeting with Taylor that never materialized.

Liberia's judiciary is subject to executive influence, corruption, and intimidation by security forces. Lawyers went on strike for a month to protest the October detention of two associates of the Liberian National Bar Association. They were released in December. The house of representatives had ordered them detained for contempt after they said the detention of the president of the bar association was unconstitutional. Human rights groups say security forces often ignore summonses to appear in court to explain disappearances. Security forces operate with impunity.

The London-based human rights group Amnesty International said in December 2001 that civilians had become the main targets in the conflict in the northwest. It said

the Armed Forces of Liberia, Anti-Terrorist Unit, national police, armed opposition groups based in Guinea, and RUF members fighting alongside Liberian security forces were responsible. Abuses included the torture of captives while in incommunicado detention, rape of women and girls, forced military recruitment of men and boys, and killings.

Numerous civil society groups, including human rights organizations, operate in the country, but their employees are subjected to repeated harassment by security forces. Human rights workers have been allowed access to prisons, where conditions are harsh and torture is used to extract confessions.

Liberia's independent media have survived despite years of war, assaults, and harassment at the cost of extensive self-censorship. Charles Taylor owns KISS-FM, the only countrywide FM radio station. State television and one private station broadcast only irregularly. Some members of the print media have received death threats and are under persistent surveillance. The government in 2001 banned private shortwave radio stations, including the Catholic radio station, Veritas, which had programming on human rights issues and had hoped to resume broadcasting after a two-year hiatus that was caused by technical problems.

The government in May said foreign journalists wishing to report in Liberia needed to give at least 72 hours' notice in writing to be allowed into the country. Authorities closed two daily newspapers, *The News* and *Guardian*, in November over alleged tax arrears and briefly detained Wilson Tarpeh, chairman of the board of directors of *The News*. The government in April dropped its case against four journalists who were charged with espionage in February after *The News* reported that the government had spent \$50,000 to repair helicopters while civil servants had gone for months without pay. They were released after writing a letter of apology.

Academic freedom is not guaranteed. Security forces stormed the University of Liberia in March and beat several students. Students had been protesting the detention of four journalists.

Societal ethnic discrimination is rife, and the government discriminates against indigenous ethnic groups that opposed Taylor during the civil war, especially the Mandingo and Krahn ethnic groups. Religious freedom is respected in practice, but Muslims have been targeted because many Mandingos follow Islam. Treatment of women varies by ethnic group, religion, and social status. Many women continue to suffer from physical abuse and traditional societal discrimination, despite constitutionally guaranteed equality.

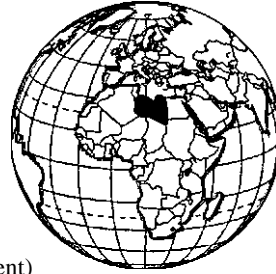
The right to strike, organize, and bargain collectively is permitted by law, but there is little union activity because of the lack of economic activity. Two umbrella unions cover some 60,000 workers, but most of them are unemployed. There is forced labor in rural areas, and child labor is widespread.



# Libya

Polity: One party      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 5,200,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$7,570  
 Life Expectancy: 75

Ethnic Groups: Arab-Berber (97 percent), other, including Greek, Italian, Egyptian, Pakistani, Turkish, Indian (3 percent)  
 Capital: Tripoli



## Overview:

Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi continued his campaign for international respectability in 2001. While his drive to improve relations with the United States and Europe yielded mixed results, his vision of a unified African state came closer to fruition in March with the formation of the African Union, intended to replace the Organization for African Unity (OAU). While the new union may be a victory for Qaddafi, it is undoubtedly less popular among Libyans, who suffer from rampant corruption, mismanagement, and severe restriction on their political and civic freedoms, and who tend to blame African immigrants for Libya's socioeconomic problems.

After centuries of Ottoman rule, Libya was conquered by Italy in 1912 and occupied by British and French forces during World War II. In accordance with agreements made by Britain and the United Nations, Libya gained independence under the staunchly pro-Western King Idris I in 1951. Qaddafi seized power in 1969 amid growing anti-Western sentiment regarding foreign-controlled oil companies and military bases on Libyan soil.

Qadhafi's open hostility toward the West and his sponsorship of terrorism have earned Libya the status of pariah. Clashes with regional neighbors, including Chad over the Aozou strip and Egypt over their common border, have led to costly military failures. Suspected Libyan involvement in the 1988 bombing of PanAm Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, prompted the UN to impose sanctions, including embargoes on air traffic and the import of arms and oil production equipment, in 1992. The United States has maintained unilateral sanctions against Libya since 1981 because of the latter's sponsorship of terrorism.

With the economy stagnating, unemployment at 30 percent, and internal infrastructure in disrepair, Qaddafi began taking steps in 1999 to end Libya's international isolation. That year, he surrendered two Libyan nationals suspected in the Lockerbie bombing. He also agreed to pay compensation to the families of 170 people killed in the 1989 bombing of a French airliner over Niger. In addition, he accepted responsibility for the 1984 killing of British police officer Yvonne Fletcher by shots fired from the Libyan embassy in London, and expelled the Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal organization from Libya. The UN suspended sanctions in 1999, but stopped short of lifting them permanently because Libya has not explicitly renounced terrorism. The United States eased some restrictions to allow American companies to sell food, medicine, and medical equipment to Libya, but maintained its travel ban. Britain restored diplomatic ties with Libya for the first time since 1986; the Libyan embassy in Britain reopened in

March 2001. The European Union (EU) lifted sanctions but maintained an arms embargo.

The two Lockerbie suspects went on trial under Scottish law in May 2000 in the Netherlands. One, a Libyan intelligence agent named Abdel Basset Ali Mohammed al-Megrahi, was convicted of murder in January 2001 and sentenced to life imprisonment; the other was acquitted for lack of evidence and freed. Following the trial, the Arab League called for a total lifting of UN sanctions, and all 22 of its members agreed to disregard them. The United States and Britain reiterated their demand that Libyan authorities renounce terrorism, take responsibility for the attack, and pay compensation to the victims' families. Libya has consistently denied government involvement in the attack, and its immediate response to the verdict was bizarrely mixed. No sooner had its assistant foreign minister publicly stated that Libya looked forward to improved relations with the United States than Qaddafi declared that the judges had acted under U.S. influence and might consider suicide, that the United States owes compensation to the "victims" of its foreign policy, and that he had evidence to exonerate al-Megrahi. The evidence never materialized, and observers attributed the contradictory Libyan positions to Qaddafi's desire to maintain a defiant posture for domestic consumption.

Qaddafi's diplomatic offensive continued in 2001 despite the U.S. decision in August to extend unilateral sanctions for five years. In September, Libyan officials sent an appeal to U.S. officials via the Italian foreign minister seeking improved U.S.-Libyan relations. The anti-American posturing appeared again in September, when Qaddafi accused the United States of inventing AIDS for use as a bioweapon. But Qaddafi was also one of the first Arab leaders to condemn the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. He called upon Muslim aid groups to assist Americans, and offered to help capture Saudi-bom terrorist Osama bin Laden through law enforcement cooperation and intelligence sharing. In November, Libya placed several intelligence officials under house arrest in connection with the 1989 French airliner bombing. One of the officials, Abdallah Senoussi, is deputy head of Libyan intelligence and Qaddafi's brother-in-law. He was sentenced to life imprisonment two years ago by a French court.

Once a leading advocate of pan-Arab unity, Qaddafi received little Arab support in the wake of Lockerbie and turned instead to promoting a united Africa. Though notorious for his past support for rebel insurgents and apparent attempts to destabilize a number of African countries, Qaddafi has used the numerous conflicts on the continent as an opportunity to step into the role of regional power broker. In 2001 he worked with Egypt on a peace plan for Sudan and mediated disputes between Sudan and Uganda, and Eritrea and Djibouti. He sent troops to the Central African Republic in November to support President Ange Felix Patasse in the wake of a failed coup in May. In March, he hosted an OAU summit in Sirte, at which leaders from 40 African countries backed the dissolution of the OAU and the formation of the African Union. Loosely based on the EU model, the African Union would include a pan-African parliament, a central bank, a supreme court, and a single currency. More than two-thirds of Africa's 53 countries have so far ratified the union. Still, the union is largely the product of Qaddafi's enthusiasm, and his promises of generous financial aid to many regional leaders have undoubtedly secured their support.

Despite his improved international stature, Qaddafi has become increasingly isolated at home. Ethnic rivalries among senior junta officials have been reported, while

corruption, mismanagement, and unemployment have eroded support for the regime. Disaffected Libyans see little of some \$10 billion per year in oil revenue, and have yet to reap the benefits of suspended UN sanctions as potential investors from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East stream in seeking oil contracts. Economists stress the need for deregulation and privatization, and Qaddafi has gradually lifted some state controls on the economy. He has also tried to encourage foreign investment in agriculture and tourism as well as oil. In November, 47 government and bank officials, including the finance minister, were sent to prison for corruption as part of an apparently ongoing investigation that may be aimed at cleaning up Libya's image. However, arbitrary investment laws, restrictions on foreign ownership of property, state domination of the economy, and continuing corruption are likely to hinder growth for years to come.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Libyans cannot change their government democratically. Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi rules by decree, with almost no accountability or transparency. Libya has no formal constitution; a mixture of Islamic belief, nationalism, and the socialist theory promoted in Qaddafi's *Green Book* provides principles and structures of governance, but the document lacks legal status. Libya is officially known as a *jamahiriyah*, or state of the masses, conceived as a system of direct government through popular organs at all levels of society. In reality, an elaborate structure of revolutionary committees and people's committees serves as a tool of repression. Real power rests with Qaddafi and a small group of close associates who appoints civil and military officials at every level. In 2000, Qaddafi dissolved 14 ministries, or General People's Committees, and transferred their power to municipal councils, leaving five intact. While some praised this apparent decentralization of power, others speculated that the move was a power grab in response to rifts between Qaddafi and several ministers.

The judiciary is not independent. It includes summary courts for petty offenses, courts of first instance for more serious offenses, courts of appeal, and a supreme court. Revolutionary courts were established in 1980 to try political offenses, but were replaced in 1988 by a people's court after reportedly assuming responsibility for up to 90 percent of prosecutions. Political trials are held in secret, with no due process considerations. Arbitrary arrest and torture are commonplace.

In what has been called the biggest political trial in recent memory, 300 Libyans and 31 other African nationals went on trial in January 2001 in connection with four days of clashes between Libyans and African expatriate workers in October 2000, in which at least seven people died. Five African expatriates and two Libyans were sentenced to death in May, while 160 defendants were freed and the rest received prison sentences ranging from one year to life. Some 150 professionals, including engineers, doctors, and academics, went on trial in March 2001 for belonging to or supporting the Libyan Islamic Group, a nonviolent group that is prohibited in Libya. According to Amnesty International, the defendants were arrested in 1998 and their whereabouts unacknowledged by authorities for three years. In August 2001, officials released 107 political prisoners, including one who had served 31 years in connection with an attempted coup in 1970. Hundreds of political prisoners reportedly remain in Libyan prisons. The trial of 16 health professionals accused of infecting nearly 400 Libyan children with HIV continued in 2001. The defendants, who include six Bulgarians and a Palestinian, face the death Penalty if convicted. Amnesty International has reported

allegations of torture and pretrial irregularities, including the denial of access to counsel, in the case. The judge in the case has postponed the verdict until February 2002. The death Penalty applies to a number of political offenses and "economic" crimes, including currency speculation and drug- or alcohol-related crimes. Libya actively abducts and kills political dissidents in exile.

Limited public debate occurs within government bodies, but free expression and free media do not exist in Libya. The state owns and controls all media and thus controls reporting of domestic and international issues. Foreign programming is censored, but satellite television is widely available in Tripoli. Members of the international press reported fewer restrictions on their movement and less interference from officials in recent years.

Independent political parties and civic associations are illegal; only associations affiliated with the regime are tolerated. Political activity considered treasonous is punishable by death. Public assembly must support and be approved by the government. Instances of public unrest are rare. In February 2001, riot police beat and fired tear gas at thousands of demonstrators trying to break into the British embassy in Tripoli. Authorities had originally permitted the demonstration, which was held to protest the verdict in the Lockerbie trial. At least 30 people were arrested.

About 98 percent of Libyans are Sunni Muslim. Islamic groups whose beliefs and practices differ from the state-approved teaching of Islam are banned. According to the U.S. State Department, small communities of Christians worship openly. The largely Berber and Tuareg minorities face discrimination, and Qaddafi reportedly manipulates, bribes, and otherwise incites fighting among tribes in order to maintain power.

Qaddafi's pan-African policy has led to an influx of African immigrants in recent years. Poor domestic economic conditions have contributed to resentment of these immigrants, who are often blamed for increases in crime, drug use, and the incidence of AIDS. In late September 2000, four days of deadly clashes between Libyans and African nationals erupted as a result of a trivial dispute. Thousands of African immigrants were subsequently moved to military camps, and thousands more were repatriated to Sudan, Ghana, and Nigeria. Security measures were taken, including restrictions on the hiring of foreigners in the private sector. The incident proved an embarrassment to Qaddafi, who blamed "hidden forces" for trying to derail his united-Africa policy.

Women's access to education and employment have improved under the current regime. However, tradition dictates discrimination in family and civil matters. A woman must have her husband's permission to travel abroad.

Independent trade unions and professional associations do not exist. The only federation is the government-controlled National Trade Unions Federation. There is no collective bargaining, and workers have no legal right to strike.

## Liechtenstein

Polity: Principality and Political Rights: 1

parliamentary democracy Civil Liberties: 1

Economy: Capitalist-statist Status: Free

Population: 30,000

PPP: na

Life Expectancy: na

Ethnic Groups: Alemannic (88 percent), other, including Italian and Turkish (12 percent)

Capital: Vaduz



### Overview:

Liechtenstein implemented measurable steps in 2001 to make its notoriously opaque banking system more transparent. Parliamentary elections resulted in the appointment of a new prime minister. A political standoff between Prince Hans-Adam II and the government continued in 2001, with the prince threatening to leave for Austria if his proposed constitutional reform is not put to referendum.

Liechtenstein was established in its present form in 1719 after being purchased by Austria's Liechtenstein family. Native residents of the state are primarily descendants of the Germanic Alemanni tribe, and the local language is a German dialect. From 1938 until 1997, the principality was governed by a coalition of the Progressive Citizens' Party (FBP) and the Fatherland Union (VU). The FBP was the senior partner for most of this period. Liechtenstein's constitution, adopted in 1921, has been amended several times.

One of the world's most secretive tax havens, Liechtenstein has recently faced accusations that it is a money laundering haven, favored by foreign organized crime syndicates, including drug cartels and international terrorists, who have taken advantage of secrecy laws. In 2000, the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) an international anti-laundering group attached to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), listed the country as "non-cooperative" for its secrecy laws. The OECD classified Liechtenstein as a "harmful" tax haven. Approximately \$63 billion of client money is managed among 17 local banks in Liechtenstein. The FATF blacklisting led to a marked decrease of capital inflow into Liechtenstein's banks.

In June 2001, in a determined effort to burnish its image, Liechtenstein established the Institute for Compliance and Quality Mangement (ICQM) to teach local bankers and lawyers how to identify illegal banking practices. Liechtenstein also took steps to reveal the identity of banking clients. In November, the United States announced it would seek to freeze assets in Liechtenstein banks linked to the Qaeda terrorist network.

On the political front, Prince Hans-Adam and the government remained in dispute over the degree of the royal family's powers. The prince, one of the only European monarchs whose powers are not largely ceremonial, promotes constitutional reform. He would like sole authority to appoint judges presiding over illegal banking cases. Some members of parliament claim the prince wants to centralize more authority in his own hands. The prince has threatened to arrange a referendum on constitutional reform, saying he will relocate to Austria should he lose the vote. Such a move would raise the question of how Liechtenstein would be governed.

Prince Hans-Adam faced a reprimand by the European Court of Human Rights in 1999 for abusing his subjects' freedom of speech. The court fined the prince for refusing to reappoint a judge he had dismissed for suggesting that the supreme court, and not the prince, should have the last word in constitutional matters. The prince, who has ruled the principality since 1989, has ignored the legislature on several occasions, most notably when he had the country join the European Economic Area (EEA), despite deputies' doubts.

Parliamentary elections in February ushered in a new prime minister. Otmar Hasler, head of the FBP, assumed leadership after his party captured 13 out of 25 seats in the unicameral *Landtag* (legislature). Hasler unseated Mario Frick, prime minister since 1997. Frick's VU party captured 11 seats in the latest elections, with the Free List party (FL) taking 1 seat.

Liechtenstein's economy is closely intertwined with Switzerland's. Its official currency is the Swiss *franc*. To reduce the country's economic dependence on Switzerland, Prince Hans-Adam led the principality into membership not only in the EEA but also in the United Nations, the European Free Trade Association, the World Trade Organization, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Liechtensteiners can change their government democratically. The prince exercises legislative powers jointly with the *Landtag*. He appoints the prime minister from the *Landtag*'s majority party or coalition, and the deputy chief of the five-member government from the minority. Parties with at least eight percent of the vote receive representation in the parliament, which is directly elected for four years on the basis of proportional representation. The sovereign possesses power to veto legislation and to dissolve the *Landtag*. Participation in elections and referenda is compulsory.

The government respects freedom of speech. Two daily newspapers are published, each representing the interests of one of the two major political parties, as is one weekly newsmagazine. There are two television stations, one owned by the state and one private. While there is only one private radio station, residents regularly receive radio and television broadcasts from neighboring countries.

In 1998 and 1999, Liechtenstein received a high number of asylum seekers who were given temporary protection. The number of asylum seekers reached almost two percent of the total population of Liechtenstein. A strict policy prevents significant numbers of second- and third-generation residents from acquiring citizenship.

Although Roman Catholicism is the state religion, other faiths are practiced freely. Roman Catholic or Protestant religious education is compulsory in all schools, but exemptions are routinely granted.

Liechtensteiners enjoy freedom of association. The principality has one small trade union. Workers have the right to strike, but have not done so in more than 25 years. The prosperous economy includes private and state enterprises. Citizens enjoy a very high standard of living.

The independent judiciary, subject to the prince's appointment power, is headed by a supreme court that includes civil and criminal courts, as well as an administrative court of appeals and a state court to address questions of constitutionality.

Although only narrowly endorsed by male voters, the electoral enfranchisement of women at the national level was unanimously approved in the legislature in 1984

after defeats in referenda in 1971 and 1973. By 1986, universal adult suffrage at the local level had passed in all 11 communities. In the 1989 general elections, a woman won a Landtag seat for the first time. Three years later, a constitutional amendment guaranteed legal equality.

## Lithuania

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Mixed capitalist  
Population: 3,700,000

PPP: \$6,656

Life Expectancy: 73

Ethnic Groups: Lithuanian (80 percent), Russian (9 percent),  
Polish (7 percent), Belarusian (2 percent), other (2 percent)

Capital: Vilnius

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

Less than one year after regaining the premiership, Prime Minister Rolandas Paksas stepped down in June 2001 in the face of a deepening government crisis. Two days earlier, a key ruling coalition party had asked for his resignation following differences over economic policy, particularly plans for privatizing the country's major utilities. Paksas' successor, former Lithuanian Communist leader Algirdas Brazauskas, pledged to continue reform efforts to secure the country's membership into NATO and the European Union (EU).

Lithuania merged with Poland in the sixteenth century and was subsequently absorbed by Russia in the eighteenth century. After gaining its independence at the end of World War I, Lithuania was annexed by the Soviet Union in 1940 under a secret protocol of the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact. The country regained its independence with the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991.

In the 1992 parliamentary elections, the Lithuanian Democratic Labor Party (LDDP), the successor to the Communist Party, won 79 of 141 seats. Brazauskas became the country's first directly elected president in 1993. With two LDDP-led governments tainted by financial scandal in the wake of a banking crisis, the Homeland Union/Lithuanian Conservatives (HU/LC) secured the most votes in parliamentary elections in 1996, followed by the Christian Democrats. The two parties formed a center-right coalition government, and Gediminas Vagnorius of the HU/LC was named prime minister. In January 1998, Lithuanian-American and independent candidate Valdas Adamkus was narrowly elected president over former Prosecutor-General Arturas Paulauskas.

Following months of growing tensions between Adamkus and Vagnorius over political, economic, and personal issues, in mid-April 1999, Adamkus called on Vagnorius to resign. After stepping down on May 3, Vagnorius was succeeded by Vilnius mayor and HU/LC member Rolandas Paksas on May 18. However, Paksas' term in office lasted less than six months, when he resigned on October 27 in protest over the contro-

versarial sale of part of the state-owned Mazeikiu Oil complex to the U.S. energy company Williams International. On October 29, President Adamkus nominated HU/LC member and parliamentary First Deputy Chairman Andrius Kubilius as prime minister, the same day on which the Williams deal was formally concluded. On November 2, parliament approved Kubilius by a vote of 82 to 20.

Faced with the public's dissatisfaction over its economic austerity policies, the ruling HU/LC experienced a resounding defeat in both the March 2000 local elections and the October 2000 parliamentary vote. In the municipal poll, the newly created center-left New Alliance (Social Liberals), led by Arturas Paulauskas, captured the most seats. In the national legislature, the Social Democratic Coalition, which united four leftist parties, including the LDDP, secured the most votes, while the HU/LC came in a distant fourth. The coalition, led by Brazauskas, had campaigned on a platform of greater attention to social issues and increased support for the country's agricultural sector. However, the informal New Policy electoral bloc, which was composed of the ideologically diverse Liberal Union, New Alliance (Social Liberals), Center Union, and Modern Christian Democratic Union parties, bypassed the Social Democratic Coalition to form a new centrist government. The bloc obtained a bare parliamentary majority by also securing the support of two smaller parties. In late October, parliament confirmed Paksas as the new prime minister, returning him to the post one year after the end of his previous tenure in that position. Paulauskas was named parliamentary chairman.

After just eight months in power, the unstable national ruling coalition of right- and left-wing parties collapsed in June 2001. On June 18, the New Alliance (Social Liberals) called on Prime Minister Paksas to resign following disagreements regarding the budget and privatization plans for the country's energy sector. Paksas stepped down two days later and was replaced in July by Brazauskas, the chairman of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP), which was created in January from the merger of the LDDP and the Social Democratic Party. The more ideologically compatible - and thus theoretically more stable - LSDP and New Alliance (Social Liberals) subsequently formed a new ruling coalition government.

Brazauskas' history as Lithuania's last Communist leader fueled speculation that he would slow reform measures necessary for EU and NATO membership. While stressing that he would place a greater emphasis on social programs than his predecessors, Brazauskas also maintained that his government would continue with various economic and social reforms. By the end of 2001, Lithuania had completed 23 of 31 chapters in EU accession negotiations and had become a member of the World Trade Organization.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Lithuanians can change their government democratically. The 1992 constitution established a 141-member parliament (*Seimas*), in which 71 seats are selected in single-mandate constituencies and 70 seats are chosen by proportional representation, all for four-year terms. A July 2000 amendment to the electoral law changed the single-mandate district contests from a majority (more than 50 percent of the vote) to a plurality, or first-past-the-post races. The president is directly elected for a five-year term. The 1996 and 2000 national legislative elections and the 1997-1998 presidential vote were conducted freely and fairly. In August 2001, parliament adopted a constitutional amendment granting all permanent residents the rights to run and vote in local government elections.



The government generally respects freedom of speech and the press. There is a wide variety of privately owned newspapers, and several independent, as well as state-run, television and radio stations broadcast throughout the country. Freedom of religion is guaranteed by law and enjoyed in practice in this largely Roman Catholic country.

Freedom of assembly and association is generally respected. Workers have the right to form and join trade unions, to strike, and to engage in collective bargaining. However, ongoing problems include inadequate or employer-biased legislation, management discrimination against union members, and the court system's lack of expertise in labor-related issues.

While the judiciary is largely independent from the executive branch, there is a severe lack of qualified judges, who consequently suffer from excessive workloads. There have been credible reports of police abuse of suspects and detainees, and overcrowding in prisons and pretrial detention facilities remains a serious problem. In February 2001, Kazys Gimzauskas became the first person in Lithuania to be convicted of war crimes against Jews during World War II. However, he was released into the care of his family and medical personnel because he was terminally ill. Another alleged war criminal, Antanas Gecas, died in September in Edinburgh after Scotland refused to extradite him to Lithuania on the grounds that he was too ill to stand trial.

The rights of the country's ethnic minorities are protected in practice. In 1992, Lithuania extended citizenship to all those born within its borders, and more than 90 percent of non-ethnic Lithuanians, mostly Russians and Poles, became citizens. Women are underrepresented in upper-level management positions and earn lower average wages than men.

## Luxembourg

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 1
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 1
Population: 400,000	Status: Free
PPP: \$42,769	
Life Expectancy: 78	
Ethnic Groups: Celtic, Portuguese, Italian, others	
Capital: Luxembourg	



### Overview:

Luxembourg's Grand Duke Henri de Luxembourg officially opened a session of parliament in October 2001, signifying the first time since 1877 that a member of the royal family has performed this duty. By the close of the year, Prince Henri had received an 88 percent approval rating since his father abdicated his 36-year reign as constitutional monarch and handed over power to his son in September 2000.

After centuries of domination and occupation by foreign powers, the small landlocked Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was recognized as an autonomous, neutral state in 1867. After occupation by Germany in both world wars, Luxembourg abandoned its neutrality and became a vocal proponent of European integration. Luxembourg joined

NATO in 1949, the Benelux Economic Union (with Belgium and the Netherlands) in 1948, the European Economic Community (later the European Union) in 1957, and the European Monetary Union in 1999.

Luxembourg's multiparty electoral system is based on proportional representation. Executive authority is exercised by the prime minister and the cabinet on behalf of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg. While the grand duke's role is largely ceremonial, all bills must be signed by him before becoming law and he maintains the power to dissolve parliament. The government is appointed by the sovereign, but is responsible to the legislature. Luxembourg's current constitution, adopted in 1868, has been revised several times.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Luxembourgers can change their government democratically. Voting is compulsory for citizens, and foreigners may register to vote after five years of residence. The prime minister is the leader of the dominant party in the 60-member, unicameral chamber of deputies (parliament), for which popular elections are held every five years. The grand duke appoints the 21 members of the council of state, which serves as an advisory body to the chamber. In the June 1999 parliamentary elections, the Christian Social People's Party (PCS) won 19 seats; the Democratic Party (PD), 15; the Socialist Workers' Party of Luxembourg (POSL), 13; the Committee for Democracy and Pensions (ADR), 7; the Green Alternative (PVA), 5; and the New Left Party (NL), 1.

The constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press. Print media are privately owned, and all media are free of censorship. The government issues licenses to private radio stations. Radio and television broadcasts from neighboring countries are freely available. In April, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that the conviction and sentencing of Marc Thorne for quoting a newspaper report on corruption was a breach of Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

Although guest and worker foreigners constitute nearly 40 percent of the population, antiforeigner incidents are infrequent. Luxembourg's population grew 12 percent in the 1990s, and it is expected to nearly double by 2025. EU citizens who reside in Luxembourg enjoy the right to vote and to run in municipal elections.

The constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the government respects that right in practice. Roman Catholicism is the predominant religion. There is no state religion, but the state pays the salaries of Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek and Russian Orthodox, and Jewish clergy, and several local governments subsidize sectarian religious facilities. The Anglican Church and Muslim community applied for financial support, but after four years of government consideration, these religious groups have yet to receive any.

All workers have the right to associate freely and to choose their representatives. Approximately 57 percent of the labor force is unionized. Unions operate free of governmental interference. The two largest labor federations are linked to, but organized independently of, the POSL and PCS. The right to strike is constitutionally guaranteed. The law mandates a maximum workweek of 40 hours.

The independent judiciary is headed by the supreme court, whose members are appointed for life by the grand duke. Defendants are presumed innocent. They have the right to public trials and are free to cross-examine witnesses and to present evidence in court.

Women are underrepresented in government and politics. They constitute just 16.7 percent of parliament, holding only 10 of the 60 seats. Women constitute 38 percent of the workforce. The law mandates equal pay for equal work and encourages equal treatment of women. According to the International Confederation of Trade Unions, Luxembourg, with the highest per capita income in the EU, has one of the widest gender pay gaps in the EU. The differences are least in the highest-paid professions and more substantial at lower salary levels. To date, there have been no work-related discrimination lawsuits in the courts.

## Macedonia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4\*  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 2,000,000  
 PPP: \$4,651  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Macedonian (67 percent), Albanian (23 percent), Turkish (4 percent), Roma (Gypsies) (2 percent), Serb (2 percent), other (2 percent)  
 Capital: Skopje



Ratings Change: Macedonia's civil liberties rating declined from 3 to 4 because of numerous reported abuses against civilians by both government security organs and Albanian insurgents.

### Overview:

In 2001, the long-simmering Macedonian-Albanian conflict erupted into open warfare. In February, the so-called National Liberation Army (NLA), composed of local Albanians with experience in the 1999 Kosovo war, began an armed revolt against the Macedonian government. Numerous human rights violations were committed by both sides in the conflict, including forced expulsions and apparent massacres of both combatants and civilians, along with widespread property destruction. Nevertheless, intensive diplomatic efforts by both local politicians and international officials managed to prevent the conflict from spreading out of control as had happened in the recent Balkan wars in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Macedonia declared its independence from the former Yugoslavia as an independent state in 1991. Internally, the country suffers from severe social and political polarization between its two primary ethnic groups, Macedonian Slavs and ethnic Albanians, and from a very poor economy. Externally, Macedonia for much of the past decade has suffered from disputes with neighbors over various issues: over its name (with Greece); over the status of the Macedonian language (with Bulgaria); and over its northern border (with Yugoslavia). Most of these external disputes have been successfully resolved over the past few years. The international community has tried in various ways to support Macedonia's fragile existence; the most notable example of this came in April, when the European Union signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Skopje, considered to be the first step down the road toward EU accession.

Three sets of multiparty parliamentary elections have been held in the country since 1991, and postindependence governments have been careful to include Albanian parties in the ruling coalition. Parliamentary elections in 1998 resulted in the first transfer of power from the left-of-center governmental coalition that had ruled Macedonia since independence to a grouping of opposition parties.

Macedonian-Albanian relations deteriorated precipitously after the Kosovo war in 1999. By 2000, Albanian guerrillas who had participated in the Kosovo conflict were operating in Macedonia (often using NATO-occupied Kosovo as their base). Early NLA actions, which were concentrated in northern areas around the Albanian-populated towns of Kumanovo and Tetovo, involved attacks against Macedonian government police and military units. Among the NLA's political demands were changes to the Macedonian constitution, greater use of the Albanian language in official institutions, and an increase in the number Albanians in the civil services.

NLA attacks encouraged revenge attacks by both Macedonian government forces and civilian mobs, with violent demonstrations involving attacks on Albanian property breaking out in several cities during the year. The two ethnic groups formed a variety of loosely controlled guerrilla and paramilitary groups during the year, which made it exceptionally difficult to implement a stable ceasefire in 2001.

A national unity government composed of the leading Macedonian and Albanian parties was formed in May, but disagreements within the coalition led to little progress in ending the insurrection. In August, an attempt at a political solution to the conflict, held during negotiations in the town of Ohrid, was successful. Under the terms of the Ohrid agreement, the NLA agreed to hand over some 3,800 weapons to NATO troops, although most observers believe the insurgents had far more weapons than that at their disposal.

Persistent disruptions of the ceasefire, however, and obstructionism by Macedonian hardliners in the government made it impossible for the Macedonian parliament to ratify the constitutional changes until November 16. Whether these changes will be enough to repair the damage to interethnic relations in Macedonia—or the estimated \$800 million in damage to the country's fragile economy—remains an open question.

Plans are under way to assemble an international force of some 600 to 1,000 troops led by NATO and the EU to provide security for unarmed Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) monitors, who would observe the current ceasefire. Parliamentary elections scheduled for late 2001 have been postponed until some point in 2002.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Macedonia's most important constitutional problem is satisfying the demands of the Albanian minority for a more privileged status within the country. According to the Ohrid agreement, ratified by the Macedonian parliament in November, references in the Macedonian constitution to Macedonia as the "land of the Macedonian people" have been eliminated, and the Albanian language has been made an "official" language in municipalities where Albanians compose at least 20 percent of the population. Additional constitutional reforms include granting more self-government to local municipalities; increasing the number of Albanians in the police force from their current level of about 5 percent of the total force to 25 percent by 2003 (which will be achieved by hiring some 1,000 Albanian police officers); a devolution of the powers of the central government from Skopje to local municipalities; and the granting of an amnesty for Albanian insurgents.

Macedonians are afraid these changes will only prove to be the prelude to the possible secession of Albanian-populated areas in the country, or their annexation by a "Greater Kosovo." These fears are exacerbated by demographic trends in the country; if current trends continue, Albanians will probably be the majority population in Macedonia by 2015.

The Macedonian constitution guarantees freedom, of religious belief and practice. Sixty-six percent of the population are Orthodox Christian, and 30 percent are Muslim, while the remaining 4 percent belong to a variety of different religious groups. A number of religious sites were destroyed or damaged in the fighting during the course of the year, including the thirteenth century Orthodox monastery of St. Atanasie and the Holy Virgin, in August.

On the whole, the government does not repress the media. During the course of the year, however, media outlets on both sides of the ethnic divide were often accused of fanning ethnic animosity with sensationalistic stories about atrocities committed by the opposing side. One of the major problems facing the media remains the lack of professionalism and proper journalistic training.

Women in Macedonia enjoy the same legal rights as men, although lingering patriarchal social attitudes limit women's participation in nontraditional social roles in the economy and in government. Domestic violence and trafficking in women from former Soviet republics remain serious problems. In Muslim areas, many women are effectively disenfranchised because proxy voting by male relatives is widespread.

## Madagascar

Polity: Presidential democracy	Political Rights: 2
Economy: Mixed statist	Civil Liberties: 4
Population: 16,400,000	Status: Partly Free
PPP: \$799	
Life Expectancy: 54	
Ethnic Groups: Malayo-Indonesian tribes, Arab, African, Indian, French	
Capital: Antananarivo	



### Overview:

Madagascar in 2001 continued its hesitant process of consolidating democratic institutions, although a weak party system complicates efforts at governance. Presidential elections occurred in December. President Didier Ratsiraka was forced into a controversial runoff by his main challenger, Marc Ravalomanana, the mayor of Antananarivo, the country's capital. First-ever senate elections, part of a policy to extend democratic governance, finally took place after a long delay. Public policy debates about constitutional reform also took place.

Madagascar, the world's fourth-largest island, lies 220 miles off Africa's southeastern coast. After 70 years of French colonial rule and episodes of severe repression, Madagascar gained independence in 1960. A leftist military junta seized power from

President Philbert Tsiranana in 1972. A member of the junta, Admiral Didier Ratsiraka, emerged as leader in 1975 and maintained power until his increasingly authoritarian regime bowed to social unrest and nonviolent mass demonstrations in 1991. Under a new 1992 constitution, opposition leader Albert Zafy won the presidency with more than 65 percent of the vote.

President Zafy failed to win reelection after being impeached by the supreme court in 1996. Ratsiraka won a narrow victory in a December 1996 presidential runoff election that was deemed mostly free and fair by international observers. His campaign pledges of commitment to the democratic rule of law have been honored indifferently.

The development of a number of institutions mandated by the new, democratic constitution has been slow, and political influence appears to have undermined the independence of the supreme court. A decentralization plan was narrowly approved in a 1998 referendum that was boycotted by the country's increasingly fractious opposition. A long history of irregular financial dealings continued as the International Monetary Fund refused to release scheduled aid.

Legislative elections in May 1998 were viewed as more problematic than preceding polls since Madagascar's transition to multiparty politics in 1992. The Council of Christian Churches and several political groups, for example, noted that the elections were marred by fraud and other abuses. Ratsiraka's party, the Association for Madagascar's Renaissance (AREMA), won 63 of 150 parliamentary seats and emerged as the leading force in a coalition government. A new party led by Norbert Ratsirahonana, a former prime minister, fared well in and around the capital of Antananarivo.

Race and ethnicity are important factors in Madagascar's politics. Its mostly very poor population is divided between highland Merina people of Malay origin and coastal peoples mostly of black African origin. A referendum on a new constitution held in 1998 resulted in a narrow victory for the changes proposed by President Ratsiraka, which increased the power of the presidency.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens have the right to change their government democratically. The president is directly elected by universal adult suffrage. Since 1992 one president has been defeated in elections and another impeached by the parliament. The legislature is bicameral. The lower chamber, the national assembly (*Antanimieram Pirenena*), has 150 members, directly elected for five-year terms. The upper chamber, the senate, has 90 members, two-thirds of them elected by an electoral college, the remainder nominated by the president, all for six-year terms. AREMA (*Avant-garde de la Revolution Malgache*) holds the presidency and, since the 1998 elections, is the largest party in the national assembly. It also won 49 of the 60 seats in the senate in senatorial elections on March 2001. A 1998 constitutional referendum gave the president the power to appoint or dismiss the prime minister (who may come from a party that has a minority of seats in the assembly); formerly the national assembly had this power.

Presidential elections in Madagascar took place in December. President Didier Ratsiraka decided to run again for office despite his pledge in 1996 that he would not. He faced four main candidates, including Ravalomanana, the mayor of Antananarivo, who campaigned as an advocate of economic efficiency and improved governance. In November authorities in Madagascar closed food processing factories belonging to him,

allegedly because he had a large overdue tax liability. Another candidate included former President Albert Zafy, who beat Ratsiraka in the 1993 elections but was impeached in 1996 for violating the constitution.

Despite massive anti-Ratsiraka demonstrations alleging widespread government fraud, official results gave Ravalomanana 46 percent of the vote, while Ratsiraka won 40 percent. A runoff was required to take place by mid-February 2002.

In November 1999 municipal polls resulted in overall success for independents who did not have close identification with particular party affiliations. Elections were held in December 2000 for provincial councils, as the next step in the government's decentralization policy. Approximately 150 parties are now registered amid a welter of shifting political alliances. Opposition parties exist and are active. Parties in Madagascar suffer from internal divisions and a lack of resources.

Political and civic organizations exercise their right to affect the public policy process. In 1999, for example, opposition leaders and the Madagascar Council of Christian Churches undertook a public information campaign to revise the constitution to limit the powers of the president. In May 1999, former president Albert Zafy announced the Herim Panavotam Pirenena (HPP), an alliance of opposition parties. In 2000, opposition parties not represented in the legislature formed the *Cellule de Crise* (Crisis Cell) to unite against the ruling coalition. In January 2001, demonstrations occurred in the capital with opposition supporters calling for Ratsiraka to step down. They were enraged that their leader, opposition member of parliament Jean-Eugene Voninahitsy, had been jailed for insulting the head of state.

Overall the judiciary is demonstrating increasing autonomy, despite the supreme court's clearly unconstitutional decision that allowed the postponement of elections in 1997. Lack of training, resources, and personnel hampers the courts' effectiveness. Case backlogs are prodigious. Most of the 20,000 people held in the country's prisons are pretrial detainees who suffer extremely harsh conditions. In many rural areas, customary law courts that follow neither due process nor standardized judicial procedure often issue summary and severe punishments.

In general the press enjoys considerable freedom. Several daily and weekly newspapers publish material sharply critical of the government and other parties and politicians. The state monopoly of radio and television has been abolished. In addition to state radio and television, at least ten private radio stations are now broadcasting, and rebroadcasts of Radio France International are available throughout the country.

Approximately 45 percent of the workforce is female. Malagasy women hold significantly more governmental and managerial positions than women in continental African countries. At the same time, they still face societal discrimination and enjoy fewer opportunities than men for higher education and official employment.

The right to free association is respected, and hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, including lawyers' and human rights groups, are active. The government does not interfere with religious rights. More than half of the population adhere to traditional Malagasy religions and coexist with Christians and Muslims. In 1997, the Rally for Madagascar's Muslim Democrats was registered as the country's first Islamic political party.

Workers' rights to join unions and to strike are exercised frequently. Some of the country's labor organizations are affiliated with political groups. More than four-fifths of the labor force is employed in agriculture, fishing, and forestry at subsistence wages.

## Malawi

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 10,500,000  
PPP: \$586  
Life Expectancy: 39

Political Rights: 4\*  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Partly Free



Ethnic Groups: Chewa, Nyanja, Lomwe, Ngonde, Tumbuku, Yao, Sena, Tonga, Ngoni, Asian, European  
Capital: Lilongwe

**Ratings Change:** Malawi's political rights rating declined from 3 to 4 because of intimidation waged by a group linked to the ruling party and other efforts to crack down on the political opposition.

### Overview:

Fear grew in 2001 that Malawi was on the way back to the kind of authoritarian rule that preceded the 1994 election that brought President Elson Bakili Muluzi to power. A group known as the Young Democrats that is linked to the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) waged a campaign of intimidation during the year against the government's opponents and the press. The Young Democrats are a reminder of the Young Pioneers, who waged their own terror campaign against the opponents of the late President Hastings Kamuzu Banda. Fear of authoritarianism was further fueled when the minister of presidential affairs said in November that it was the right of the people to allow Muluzi to run for a third term in office.

President (later "President for Life") Hastings Kamuzu Banda ruled Malawi for nearly three decades after the country gained independence from Britain in 1963. Banda exercised dictatorial and often eccentric rule through the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and its paramilitary youth wing, the Malawi Young Pioneers. Facing a domestic economic crisis and strong international pressure, he accepted a referendum approving multiparty rule in 1993. Muluzi won the presidency in an election in 1994 beset by irregularities, but seen as largely free and fair. The army's violent December 1993 dispersal of the Young Pioneers helped clear the way for the polls.

A justice and peace commission formed by the Roman Catholic Church in Malawi protested an increase in "state-sponsored violence" in 2001 aimed at silencing government critics. Four people went on trial on treason charges in 2001 after the government claimed a coup was in the making. Opposition leaders denounced the allegations as a pretext to crack down on its opponents. Parliament in November voted to dismiss three judges, one of whom faces charges linked to issuing judgments favorable to opposition parties. Also during the year, several members of parliament were dismissed, but a high court judge granted an injunction to suspend their expulsion.

Malawi's economy is dependent on tobacco. Higher production and better prices were expected to boost economic growth in 2002 and 2003.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

The citizens of Malawi are guaranteed the right to choose their leaders. Suffrage is universal except for serving members of



the military. The opposition appealed the results of the 1994 elections, which were considered Malawi's first generally free and fair multiparty elections. The results of the June 1999 presidential poll went to the courts as well. Three presidential contenders sued the electoral commission, contending that Bakili Muluzi failed to win votes from more than half of the eligible electorate. Muluzi won 51 percent, compared with 44 percent for leading opposition candidate Gwanda Chakuamba, of the Malawi Congress Party and the Alliance for Democracy (MCP-AFORD). The supreme court upheld the results of the election. In polls for the national assembly in 1999 the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) managed to retain a narrow majority, winning 99 seats compared to 94 for MCP-AFORD.

Violence erupted in opposition strongholds of northern Malawi after the 1999 election results indicated wins for the UDF. Supporters of MCP-AFORD attacked the mosques, shops, and homes of suspected UDF supporters.

The judiciary has demonstrated broad independence in its decisions, but due process is not always respected by an overburdened court system that lacks resources and training. A legal resource center has been established under the Law Society of Malawi.

Rights of free expression and free assembly are generally respected. Many human rights and other nongovernmental organizations operate openly and without interference. Police brutality is still said to be common, either while detainees are in custody or when they are just released. Arbitrary arrest and detention are common. Appalling prison conditions lead to many deaths, including suffocation from overcrowding. President Muluzi in July 2001 freed hundreds of prisoners to commemorate Malawi's independence.

Freedom of speech and the press is guaranteed. It is generally respected in practice, but there were a number of attacks on the press in 2001. The government has used libel and other laws to harass journalists. A broad spectrum of opinion is presented in the country's two dozen newspapers. The state-owned Malawi Broadcasting Corporation controls television and most radio service, which reaches a larger audience than print media do. There are four private radio stations.

In August 2001, a correspondent with African Eye News Service allegedly was attacked by members of the Young Democrats for insulting Muluzi. In May, the owner of Karora Printers and the editor of the independent *Dispatch* newspaper were charged with "publishing false information likely to cause public fear and alarm" following a series of articles about Muluzi that included allegations of corruption.

Religious freedom is usually respected, but Muslims were targeted in post-election violence in 1999 in protest against the ruling party. President Muluzi is a Muslim. Malawi is 75 percent Christian and about 20 percent Muslim. About 60 percent of Malawi's ten million people have no access to land, and the issue is a potential breeding ground for social unrest. The issue is unlikely, however, to produce a crisis similar to that in Zimbabwe.

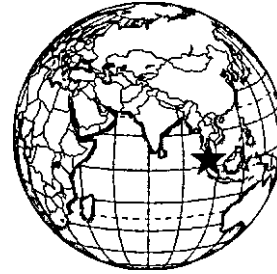
Despite equal protection of the law under the 1995 constitution, customary practices maintain de facto discrimination against women in education, employment, and business. Traditional rural structures deny women inheritance and property rights, and violence against women is reportedly routine.

The right to organize and to strike is legally protected, with notice and mediation requirements for workers in essential services. Unions are active but face harassment and occasional violence during strikes, and there have been reports of union employ-

ees being fired for their political views. Collective bargaining is widely practiced, but not specifically protected by law. The tobacco industry banned the use of child labor in October 2001 after an international outcry and the threat of sanctions.

## Malaysia

Polity: Dominant party    Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist      Civil Liberties: 5  
 Population: 22,700,000    Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$8,209  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Malay and other indigenous (58 percent),  
 Chinese (27 percent), Indian (8 percent), other (7 percent)  
 Capital: Kuala Lumpur



### Overview:

With its Muslim-majority population and export-led economy, Malaysia was affected deeply in 2001 by both the September terrorist attacks in the United States and the global economic slowdown. In his twentieth year in office, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, seeking to regain support among moderate Malays who deserted the ruling party at the 1999 parliamentary elections, used the terror attacks to link the main opposition Pas party to Islamic extremism. For its part, Pas, which says it wants to turn Malaysia into an Islamic state, divided the opposition with its strident criticism of the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan. Elections are not due until 2004, but speculation abounded whether Muslim Malays, who make up 60 percent of Malaysia's population, would be drawn more toward Mahathir's moderate brand of Islam or toward Pas's anti-American diatribes and its goal of imposing Islamic law. During the year, the government also banned all political rallies and, for the first time in years, used the Draconian Internal Security Act to arrest opposition leaders.

Meanwhile, slumping demand for computer chips and other Malaysian exports helped push the economy into recession. With exports making up some 60 percent of gross domestic product, prospects for an economic recovery depend in part on how soon downturns end in two of Malaysia's main trading partners, the United States and Japan.

Malaysia was founded in 1963 through a merger of the former British colony of Malaya with the British colonies of Sarawak, Sabah, and Singapore (Singapore withdrew in 1965). The ruling National Front coalition has won at least a two-thirds majority in all general elections since 1957. The Front consists of 12 mainly race- and ethnic-based parties, led by the conservative, Malay-based United Malays National Organization (UMNO). Since becoming prime minister in 1981, Mahathir, the UMNO leader, has helped transform Malaysia from a sleepy backwater into a high-tech exporter. Arguing that economic development must come before individual liberties, he has also sharply restricted freedom of expression and other basic rights.

Malaysia's economy notched up nearly a decade of growth averaging more than eight percent annually until 1997, when the regional financial crisis caused growth to

slow sharply. By then, poor banking supervision—and, many Malaysians argued, outright cronyism—had left companies saddled with huge debts. This placed many at risk of bankruptcy and threatened the health of the banking system. At the same time, the fixed rate of the *ringgit* made it impossible for the government to boost exports through devaluation. As the economy slid into recession in 1998, Mahathir loosened fiscal and monetary policies to stimulate growth. Rejecting this approach, Anwar Ibrahim, the deputy prime minister and Mahathir's heir apparent, said the government should adopt tight policies to restore investor confidence and stanch capital outflows. In September 1998, Mahathir sacked Anwar and had him detained on corruption and sodomy charges. Anwar was later convicted and jailed for abuse of power while covering up corruption in a trial that international and domestic observers said was politically motivated. Throughout the fall, police forcibly broke up unprecedented antigovernment demonstrations in Kuala Lumpur and several other cities that drew thousands of students and middle-class Malaysians calling for political reform.

Amnesty International declared Anwar a prisoner of conscience, echoing a widespread belief among Malaysians that Mahathir's real aim in prosecuting Anwar was to sideline him from politics. Mahathir's crude treatment of Anwar contributed to a large swing in the ethnic-Malay vote to Pas from UMNO in the November 1999 parliamentary elections. While the National Front kept its two-thirds majority in parliament, UMNO itself lost 20 seats and Pas gained an equal number, overtaking the Chinese-based Democratic Party (DAP) as Malaysia's largest opposition party. Overall, the National Front won 148 seats, led by UMNO with 72. A new opposition Alternative Front coalition won 42 seats: Pas, 27; DAP, 10; and the National Justice Party (*Keadilan*), a new secular party formed by Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Ismail, 5. *Parti Bersatu Sabah*, an opposition party based in Sabah state, won three seats. Turnout was 72 percent. Following the election, Mahathir said that this upcoming term would be his last. The Alternative Front, meanwhile, named Pas President Fadzil Noor parliamentary opposition leader.

Since the election, both Mahathir, 76, and Pas have tried to woo ethnic-Malay voters with appeals to Malay unity and their competing visions of the proper role of Islam in a modern nation. Long a champion of Muslim Malay interests but within a secular, tolerant society, Mahathir in 2001 tried unsuccessfully to convene a meeting of Malay parties, warned of growing Islamic radicalism in Malaysia—a thinly veiled barb at Pas—and argued that a Pas-led government, with its Islamic strictures, would be harmful to both moderate Malays and non-Muslims alike.

In conjuring up images of a Pas-led government trampling on basic rights, Mahathir seemed to be trying to shore up his support among ethnic-Chinese voters. They went solidly to UMNO in 1999 and could again be crucial swing votes in the next national elections. Pas's condemnation of Washington's response to the terror attacks appeared to be aimed at bolstering its support among Malays. It risked, however, alienating moderate Muslims and proved to be too divisive for the DAP, which in October pulled out of the Alternative Front.

In addition to waging a war of ideas, Mahathir used the Internal Security Act during the year to arrest 10 opposition activists (most of them senior Keadilan members) for allegedly planning armed antigovernment protests, and 12 Pas members or supporters for allegedly planning an Islamic-based revolt. At year's end, 16 remained in jail.

Weakened by slumping exports and low world prices for plantation crops, palm oil, and rubber, Malaysia's economy shrank by 1.3 percent year-on-year in the third

quarter of 2001, the first decline since the first quarter of 1999. Economists estimated that the economy would eke out marginal growth for the year after growing by 8.5 percent in 2000. The government predicted that unemployment would rise to 3.9 percent at the end of 2001, up from 3.1 percent in late 2000.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Malaysians face many hurdles to changing their government through elections, as well as restrictions on many basic rights.

The government gives itself an overwhelming advantage in elections through its selective allocation of state funds to supporters, use of security laws to restrict freedoms of expression and assembly, and partisan use of broadcast media. Despite these obstacles, the opposition Pas in 1999 retained control of Kelantan state and captured oil-rich Terengganu for the first time.

Malaysia's constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and cabinet. The house of representatives, which currently has 193 members, is directly elected for five-year terms. Over time, the government has concentrated power in the prime minister's hands, while parliament has become less of a forum for real debate, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Malaysia's human rights record in 2000. The report noted, however, that opposition legislators vigorously question government officials in parliament.

Opposition parties say the government uses its control of state funds to punish and deter support for the opposition. Pas is awaiting a ruling on its suit against the federal government and Petronas, the state energy firm, to regain control of offshore oil revenues due to Terengganu state. The federal government stopped paying the revenues, which previously made up four-fifths of Terengganu's budget, nine months after Pas won control of the state in the 1999 elections. Kuala Lumpur now disburses the revenues directly to Terengganu schools, hospitals, and communities. Elsewhere, the National Front-controlled states of Malacca and Penang withdrew some state business in 2000 from banks, contractors, and professionals suspected of supporting opposition parties.

Underscoring the difficulties facing Pas and other groups in taking on the federal government in court, observers have questioned the judiciary's independence in political cases. "Since 1988, government action, constitutional amendments, legislation restricting judicial review, and other factors steadily have eroded judicial independence and strengthened executive influence over the judiciary," according to the U.S. State Department report. Domestic and international human rights groups roundly condemned as politically motivated both Anwar's six-year prison sentence in 1999 for abuse of power and a nine-year sentence in 2000 for sodomy.

At the same time, courts ruled against Kuala Lumpur in at least two sensitive cases in 2001. A lower court in May ordered the release of two opposition activists detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA), while the high court in June overturned a ruling coalition candidate's victory in a 1999 state election in Sabah after finding that the election roll included nonexistent voters. In another development, the Malaysian Bar Council denounced in March the more than 70 multimillion-dollar libel suits brought since 1994 against journalists and other media defendants. The group said the litigation had a "chilling" effect on free expression.

Malaysia's police have in recent years killed dozens of criminal suspects. Press reports suggest that some of the police killings may have been appropriate under the

circumstances. Authorities have prosecuted officers in some death cases. Police also at times torture, beat, or otherwise abuse ordinary prisoners and detainees, according to Amnesty International. Following its first public inquiry, Malaysia's official Human Rights Commission ruled in August that police used excessive force in breaking up a November 2000 Keadilan rally just outside Kuala Lumpur. The commission, however, lacks enforcement powers and can only recommend government action.

Despite recent improvements in food and water rations, conditions in detention centers for illegal aliens still "pose a threat to life and health" because of reportedly inadequate food, health care, and sanitation, the U.S. State Department report said. Ordinary prisons are poorly maintained and overcrowded.

Domestic and international human rights groups criticized the government's use of the ISA in 2001 to jail several political opponents. Overall, the government detains hundreds of suspects each year under the ISA and two other acts that also permit long-term detention without judicial review or formal charges—the 1969 Emergency Ordinance and the 1985 Dangerous Drugs Act (DDA). Both the ISA and the Emergency Ordinance allow authorities to detain suspects for up to two years. The DDA allows the government to detain suspected drug traffickers for successive two-year intervals, with periodic review by an advisory panel.

Enacted in 1960 to mop up the remnants of a Communist insurgency, the ISA has in recent years been used for long-term detention of suspected Communist activists, ordinary criminal suspects, and members of "deviant" Muslim sects. Officials also occasionally detain mainstream opposition politicians for under 60 days. Deputy Home Minister Zainal Abidin said in July that authorities were holding some 69 people under the ISA. At year's end, five of the ten opposition politicians and activists arrested under the ISA in April remained in jail under two-year detention orders. They included Keadilan deputy leader Tian Chua, its youth chief, Mohamad Ezam Noor, and social activist and media columnist Hishamuddin Rais. At least 11 Pas members or supporters arrested later in the year under the ISA for violating a ban on political rallies also remained in jail. Two student leaders arrested under the ISA in July were released within the month.

The government also continues to prosecute political opponents under laws that, unlike the ISA, do require trials. At year's end, courts continued to hear the cases of two opposition leaders charged in 2000 under the Sedition Act and a third who was charged that year under the Official Secrets Act. In addition, social activist Irene Fernandez began an unprecedented sixth year on trial in 2001 over a 1995 report by her watchdog group, *Tenaganita* (Women's Force), that detailed alleged abuse and torture of migrant workers at detention camps. Fernandez faces up to three years in prison if convicted of violating the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA) ban on publishing "malicious" news. Lim Guan Eng, the DAP deputy leader, spent 12 months in jail in the late 1990s for publicly criticizing the government's handling of statutory rape allegations against a former state chief minister. Lim was convicted under the PPPA and the Sedition Act, which restricts public discussion of sensitive issues such as race and religion.

Political news coverage and editorials in Malaysia's main private newspapers strongly support the government line. Most major papers are owned by businessmen and companies close to the ruling National Front. Among smaller papers, many Chinese-language publications offer fairly balanced coverage and several Malay-language papers are pro-opposition. Responding to antigovernment criticism in the Malay press,

authorities in 2000 refused to renew the permits of several opposition political weeklies. They also restricted *Harakah*, the Pas newspaper, to two editions per month from twice-weekly. Officials used provisions in the PPPA that permit the government to ban or restrict allegedly "subversive" publications and require newspapers to renew their licenses annually.

State-run Radio Television Malaysia and the two private television stations generally offer flattering coverage of the government and rarely air opposition views. Federal authorities have sat on a long-standing request for a radio license by the opposition government in Kelantan; every other state has its own station.

Opposition groups faced a new stumbling block to reaching supporters after the government in July banned all political rallies, stating they posed threats to national security. Following the ban, police denied permits for Pas to hold political meetings, broke up several unauthorized gatherings, and used the ISA to arrest at least a dozen Pas members or supporters. They included Nik Adli Nik Aziz, the son of a leading PAS official. The government claimed the men belonged to a subversive movement that officials referred to as the Malaysian Mojahedin Group.

Prior to the ban, police had forcibly broken up many of the dozens of antigovernment demonstrations held since Anwar's 1998 jailing and arrested hundreds of protesters, including many opposition leaders. Courts acquitted many of those arrested, but sentenced some to jail terms of one to three months. Many were accused of violating the 1967 Police Act, which requires permits for all public gatherings except for workers on picket lines. Antigovernment speeches and demonstrations were rare in Malaysia prior to Anwar's arrest and sentencing.

Malaysia has thousands of active nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), but authorities have refused to register some groups. The 1966 Societies Act requires any NGO with more than six members, including political parties, to register with the government. University students are legally barred from being active without their school's permission in any political party, NGO, or trade union. The Universities and University Colleges Act also bans political rallies and meetings on campus.

Islam is Malaysia's official religion, but Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and other religious minorities worship freely in this secular country. The government restricts the rights of Muslims to practice teachings other than Sunni Islam by monitoring the Shia minority and periodically detaining under the ISA members of "deviant" sects. Partly to prevent the opposition Pas from spreading its political message through mosques, authorities keep close tabs on sermons in state-affiliated mosques.

*Sharia* (Islamic law) courts run by each of Malaysia's 13 states have authority among Muslims over family and property matters. The interpretations of Islamic law in many states favor males in inheritance matters, and many NGOs say the Islamic courts discriminate against women, particularly in divorce matters, according to the U.S. State Department report. Pas-controlled administrations in Kelantan and Terengganu have imposed on Muslims some religion-based dress, dietary, and cultural restrictions.

Despite continued gains, women are still underrepresented in the professions, civil service, and politics. The government has in recent years introduced programs to promote women's equality in education and employment, adopted a law against domestic violence, and created programs to help victims of spousal abuse and rape. Some convicted rapists receive heavy punishments, including caning, but women's groups say many others receive sentences that are too light.

Some ethnic Chinese and Indians as well as many Malays criticized the government's April decision to extend by ten years a long-standing policy that aims to boost the economic status of ethnic Malays and indigenous people through favored treatment in many areas. These include property ownership, higher education, civil service jobs, and in business affairs. Critics say the system should be based on need rather than race. The government says the quotas have improved racial harmony. They were established in 1971 in response to anti-Chinese riots in 1969 that killed nearly 200 people. Despite some gains in wealth and professional achievement, Malays remain poorer on average than ethnic Chinese.

Indigenous people in peninsular Malaysia and the Borneo states generally have little input into government and business decisions affecting them. Indigenous people in Sarawak state on Borneo Island allege that land they consider theirs under customary rights is being encroached on by state and private logging and plantation companies. State governments in peninsular Malaysia are moving slowly in carrying out federal orders to transfer individual land titles to many of the roughly 100,000 indigenous Orang Asli people there, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Most Malaysian workers can join trade unions, with the exception of police and defense officials and small numbers of "confidential" and "managerial and executive" workers. The law permits a union to represent only workers in single, or similar, trades or industries. This prevents the formation of broad-based unions spanning multiple industries. In the export-oriented electronics industry, the government discourages national unions in favor of factory-level unions. Labor laws restrict strikes by allowing the government to refer labor disputes to the Industrial Court and prohibiting strikes while disputes are before that court. In practice, workers rarely strike. Unions, however, bargain collectively in many industries. Less than ten percent of Malaysian workers are unionized.

## Maldives

Polity: Presidential	Political Rights: 6
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 5
Population: 300,000	Status: Not Free
PPP: \$4,423	
Life Expectancy: 61	
Ethnic Groups: Sinhalese, Dravidian, Arab	
Capital: Male	



### Overview:

Consisting of a 500-mile-long string of 26 atolls in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives achieved independence in 1965 after 78 years as a British protectorate. A 1968 referendum set up a republican government, ending 815 years of rule by the ad-Din sultanate.

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom has ruled since 1978, when he won his first of five five-year terms under the country's tightly controlled presidential referendum process. Under the 1968 constitution, Maldivians cast straight yes or no votes in these referenda on a single candidate chosen by the *Majlis* (parliament). A 1998 constitu-

tional amendment allows citizens to declare their candidacies for the presidential nomination, although candidates cannot campaign for the nomination. At the most recent presidential referendum on October 16, 1998, Gayoom won the approval of a reported 90.9 percent of participating voters. He faced four minor challengers for the Majlis's nomination.

The most serious threat to Gayoom's survival came in 1988, when Indian commandos crushed a coup attempt by a disgruntled businessman reportedly backed by Sri Lankan mercenaries. In the aftermath, the autocratic Gayoom strengthened the National Security Service and named several relatives to top government posts.

Gayoom's administration uses arrests and other intimidation to prevent dissidents from winning seats in the Majlis. Authorities detained three politicians while they were campaigning for the most recent Majlis elections, held on November 19, 1999, and reportedly tortured at least two of them, London-based Amnesty International said in January 2000.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Maldivians cannot change their government through elections and face restrictions on freedom of expression and many other basic rights. The 1998 presidential referendum took place "in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation," according to Amnesty International. In addition to making arrests prior to the 1999 parliamentary elections, authorities also banned public campaign events, permitting only small meetings on private premises.

Undergirding Gayoom's authority, the constitution grants the president broad executive powers and allows him to appoint 8 of the Majlis's 48 members. Nevertheless, recently the Majlis has rejected some government legislation and held lively policy debates.

The government has in recent years held several political prisoners, including Umar Jamal, one of the three candidates arrested in advance of the 1999 Majlis elections. Authorities placed Jamal under house arrest in 2000 and reportedly have charged him with trying to discredit the government, Amnesty International said in its report on human rights in the Maldives in 2000.

In a positive move, the government amended the 1990 Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) in 1998 to place some limits on police detention of suspects under investigation. Judges, however, can still authorize suspects to be detained without trial, on a monthly basis, if authorities have not started legal proceedings within 22 days after the arrest.

Because Gayoom can review high court decisions and appoint and dismiss judges, "the judiciary is subject to executive influence," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on the Maldives's human rights record in 2000. The report noted, however, that Gayoom has removed only two judges since 1987. Both judges were removed on the recommendation of the justice ministry because their qualifications were allegedly inadequate. Civil law is generally used in civil and criminal cases although it is subordinate to *Sharia* (Islamic law). The latter is used in matters not covered by civil law as well as in certain cases such as divorce and adultery. Under *Sharia*, the testimony of two women is equal to that of one man and men are favored in divorce and inheritance matters.

The government has in recent years imprisoned several dissidents under broadly drawn laws. The Penal code bans speech or action that could "arouse people against



the government." A 1968 law prohibits speech considered inimical to Islam, libelous, or a threat to national security. Under this law, the journalist Mohamed Nasheed spent nearly nine months in prison and under house arrest in 1996 and 1997 over a 1994 article criticizing election procedures. In addition, a court in 1994 imprisoned a Maldivian for six months under this law for making supposedly false statements about the government.

In this environment, journalists practice self-censorship, although less so than in the past, the U.S. State Department report said. Further restricting press freedom, the law allows authorities to shut newspapers and sanction journalists for articles containing allegedly unfounded criticism of the government. Moreover, regulations make editors responsible for the content of material they publish. Nevertheless, conditions for the media have improved somewhat since 1990, when authorities revoked the licenses of two outspoken publications and used the PTA to imprison several journalists, the last of whom authorities released in 1993. Today, newspapers such as the daily *Aafathis* criticize government policies and the state-run television station's news and public affairs programs discuss timely issues and criticize government performance. That station and the state-run Voice of the Maldives radio station, are the only broadcast media.

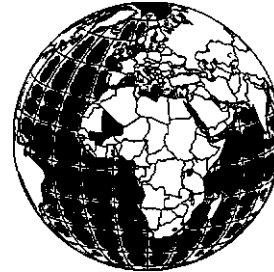
Women are increasingly entering the civil service, receive equal pay to that of men for equal work, and enjoy a 98 percent literacy rate, compared with 96 percent for men. However, traditional norms that oppose letting women lead independent lives outside their homes continue to limit educational and career opportunities for many women. The government has in recent years sponsored programs to help make women aware of their rights. Freedom of religion is restricted by the government's requirement that all citizens be Muslims, a legal ban against the practice of other religions, and a constitutional provision making Islam the state religion.

The Maldives has no known nongovernmental human rights groups. Workers lack the legal rights to form trade unions, stage strikes, or bargain collectively. In practice, no unions exist, although some workers have established informal associations that address labor issues. Employers often prevent foreign workers from leaving their work sites and meeting with Maldivians, according to the U.S. State Department report. The Maldives has about 27,000 foreign workers out of a total workforce of 70,000 to 75,000. Most workers are in the informal sector, although some work in the country's high-end tourism industry, which provides 40 percent of foreign exchange revenues.

The economy grew by 7.6 percent in 2000, according to the World Bank, which at year's end had not yet estimated growth for 2001. With 80 percent of the country's area being one meter or less above sea level, the government is concerned that the low-lying islands will be vulnerable if global warming leads to a rise in sea levels.

## Mali

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Political Rights: 2  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Economy: Mixed statist  
Status: Free  
Population: 11,000,000  
PPP: \$753  
Life Expectancy: 46  
Ethnic Groups: Mande (50 percent), Peul (17 percent), Voltaic (12 percent), Tuareg and Moor (10 percent), Songhai (6 percent), other (5 percent)  
Capital: Bamako



### Overview:

Following widespread domestic criticism, President Alpha Oumar Konaré withdrew provisions in a constitutional referendum, drafted by the national assembly, that would have given him limited immunity. The immunity would have covered civil suits but still held him liable for felonies. Opposition parties in parliament claimed the provisions had been altered after they helped draw them up. The ruling Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) party suffered a split in 2001, adding more competition ahead of presidential and legislative elections scheduled for 2002. Mali continued to enjoy favorable attention from Western donors in 2001 because of the country's persistent efforts at democratic reform.

After achieving independence from France in 1960, Mali was ruled by military or one-party dictators for more than 30 years. After soldiers killed more than 100 demonstrators demanding a multiparty system in 1991, President Moussa Traoré was overthrown by his own military. Traoré, and his wife, Mariam, were sentenced to death in January 1999 for embezzlement. Traoré had received the death sentence in 1993 as well, for ordering troops to fire on demonstrators in 1991. Sentences for both Traoré and his wife have been commuted to life imprisonment. After the 1991 coup, a national conference organized open elections that most observers judged free and fair. Konaré and his ADEMA party won the presidency in 1992 and 1997.

Mali has taken on a leading regional role in fighting small-arms trafficking and child labor. Despite steady economic growth, the country remains desperately poor, with about 65 percent of its land area desert or semidesert. About 80 percent of the labor force is engaged in farming and fishing. Principal exports are cotton, livestock, and gold. Hundreds of thousands of Malians are economic migrants across both Africa and Europe.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Mali's people first chose their government freely and fairly in presidential and legislative elections in 1992. In 1997, little more than a quarter of registered voters participated as President Alpha Oumar Konaré was overwhelmingly reelected against a weak candidate who alone broke an opposition boycott of the presidential contest. The first round of legislative elections in 1997 was voided by the constitutional court, although international observers saw incompetence rather than fraud as the principal problem. Konaré's

Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) holds 130 of 147 national assembly seats, and allied parties hold 12. The opposition occupies 5.

ADEMA won 62 percent of the localities in local elections in 1999, while moderate opposition groups won most of the remainder. Radical opposition parties boycotted the polls as they had in earlier presidential and parliamentary elections. One group, however, broke rank and won ten localities. The central government in the capital, Bamako, stopped administering land use, schools, health centers, transport systems, and other services after the 1999 local elections. Those polls gave local government administrations more power.

Since the end of military rule, Mali's domestic political debate has been open and extensive. There are at least 75 political parties. The government holds an annual Democracy and Human Rights Forum in which citizens can air complaints in the presence of the media and international observers.

The judiciary is not independent of the executive, but has shown considerable autonomy in rendering anti-administration decisions, which President Konaré has in turn respected. Reforms are under way. Local chiefs, in consultation with elders, decide the majority of disputes in rural areas. Detainees are not always charged within the 48-hour period set by law. There are often lengthy delays in bringing people to trial.

Mali's human rights record is generally good, although there are reports of police brutality. Prisons are characterized by overcrowding, inadequate medical care, and limited food. The government permits visits by human rights monitors. Independent human rights groups operate openly and freely.

Mali's media are among Africa's most open. At least 100 independent newspapers operate freely, and more than 120 independent radio stations, including community stations broadcasting in regional languages, broadcast throughout the country. The government controls one television station and many radio stations, but all present diverse views, including those critical of the government. Legislation in 2000 provided for reduced Penalties for libel, replacing jail terms with fines.

Mali is a predominantly Muslim, but secular state, and minority and religious rights are protected by law. Religious associations must register with the government, but the law is not enforced. Following terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in September 2001, Mali expelled about 36 Pakistanis from the Ahmadiyya Muslim group, as did other countries in West Africa.

No ethnic group predominates in the government or the security forces and political parties are not based on ethnicity. There have been long-standing tensions between the marginalized Moor and Tuareg pastoral groups and the more populous nonpastoral groups. This has been a main cause of political instability and violence, including the Tuareg rebellions of the early 1990s. A 1995 agreement ended the brutal, multisided conflicts between Tuareg guerrillas, black ethnic militias, and government troops. Former guerrilla fighters have been integrated into the national army.

Most formal legal advances in protection of women's rights have not been implemented, especially in rural areas. Societal discrimination against women persists, and social and cultural factors continue to limit their economic and educational opportunities. Women, however, hold some key portfolios in the cabinet. Violence against women, including spousal abuse, is tolerated and common. Female genital mutilation remains legal, although the government has conducted educational campaigns against the prac-

tice. Numerous groups promote the rights of women and children. Mali passed a law in 2001 banning the bartering of women.

Workers are guaranteed the right to join unions. Nearly all salaried employees are unionized. The right to strike is guaranteed, although there are some restrictions. The constitution prohibits forced labor, but thousands of Malian children have been sold into servitude on coffee and cocoa plantations in neighboring Cote d'Ivoire by organized traffickers. Mali now requires children under 18 to carry travel documents and it enacted a law in June 2001 that made child trafficking punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

## Malta

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Mixed capitalist-statist

Population: 400,000

PPP: \$15,189

Life Expectancy: 77

Ethnic Groups: Maltese (mixed Arab, Norman, Spanish, Italian, and English)

Capital: Valletta

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 1

Status: Free



### Overview:

In November 2001, the European Commission issued its annual report on European Union (EU) enlargement. It declared that accession negotiations with Malta could conclude in 2002 with the possibility of its acceding in 2004. The report highlighted Malta's progress, declaring that it is one of only two applicant countries that has a functioning market economy and could cope with competitive pressure and market forces in the EU. It stressed, however, the need for the Maltese government to continue implementing reforms, especially in the agricultural and environmental sectors. A national referendum is scheduled to be held in 2003 before Malta can accede to the EU. The opposition, the Malta Labor Party (MLP) led by Alfred Sant, continues to oppose EU membership and pledges to disregard the outcome of the referendum if the Labor Party wins the next general elections.

Since it gained independence in 1964 within the Commonwealth and then became a republic in 1974, Malta has carefully maintained its neutrality, balancing its links with Europe to the north with ties to Arab nations to the south. The strategically located archipelago, of which Malta is the largest island, was occupied by a long succession of foreign powers. From independence in 1964 to 1971, Malta was governed by the Nationalist Party (PN), which pursued its policy of firm alignment with the West. In 1971, however, MLP came to power and implemented its policy of nonalignment and special friendship with leftist governments in Libya and Algeria. The PN returned to power in 1987 and filed an application for membership in the EU in 1991. However, the MLP regained power in 1996 and suspended the application.

Prime Minister Alfred Sant, of the MLP, was ousted from his position in 1998, and the PN once again reclaimed power, with Edward Fenech Adami as prime minister. In 1999, the PN-dominated parliament installed Guido de Marco as president after he had served 22 years as deputy chairman of the party. The leading political parties, which have alternated in power with each other, have taken conflicting positions as to the direction in which Malta should lean: The currently ruling PN favors closer ties with Europe while the MLP formerly favored closer ties with Libya and Algeria but now favors strict neutrality.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Malta can change their government democratically. Members of the house of representatives, the country's unicameral legislature, are elected on the basis of proportional representation every five years. Parliament elects the country's president to a five-year term. Although the post is largely ceremonial, the president is charged with formally appointing a prime minister and the cabinet of ministers.

The constitution provides for freedom of the press. Since 1992, the government has sponsored programs to diversify the media. In addition to several Maltese-language newspapers, a few English-language weeklies are published. Malta's two main political parties own television and radio stations, as well as newspapers, which promote their political views. Italian television and radio are also popular. Malta has one of the lowest rates of Internet usage in Europe, with only an estimated four percent of the population having access to the Internet.

Roman Catholicism is the state religion. The government grants subsidies only to Roman Catholic schools. Students in government schools may opt to decline instruction in Roman Catholicism. Freedom of worship by religious minorities is respected. About 200,000 Maltese turned out for the pope's visit in May, when he beatified three Maltese.

Workers have the right to associate freely and to strike. There are more than 35 independent trade unions that represent more than 50 percent of the population. All unions are independent of political parties; however, the largest, the General Workers' Union, is regarded to have informal ties with the MLP.

The judiciary is independent of the executive and legislative branches. The president, on the advice of the prime minister, appoints the chief justice and nine judges. The constitution requires a fair public trial, and defendants have the right to counsel of their choice. In 1999, Malta abolished the death Penalty for all offenses, replacing it with life imprisonment.

A constitutional amendment banning gender discrimination took effect in 1993. While women constitute a growing portion of the workforce, they are underrepresented in management and political leadership positions. There are no women judges, and women make up only about nine percent of the members of parliament.

## Marshall Islands

Polity: Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs  
Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Status: Free  
Economy: Capitalist-statist  
Population: 100,000  
PPP: na  
Life Expectancy: 65  
Ethnic Groups: Micronesian  
Capital: Majuro



### Overview:

In July, the United States conducted a missile intercept test at the Kwajalein testing range. Shortly before the test, a Greenpeace activist was arrested by Marshall Islands police under pressure from the United States and threatened with deportation. At the same time, American officials arrived for the opening round of negotiations to discuss future economic funding under the Compact of Free Association between the Marshall Islands and the United States.

The Marshall Islands, consisting of the Ralik and Ratak chains of coral atolls in the central Pacific Ocean, were purchased by Germany from Spain in 1899. Japan seized the islands in 1914, governing them under a League of Nations mandate until the U.S. Navy occupied them in 1945. In 1947, they became part of the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under United Nations trusteeship. The Marshall Islands district drafted a constitution. On May 1, 1979, it came into effect, and the parliament chose Amata Kabua as the country's first president. He was subsequently reelected to four successive four-year terms, the last beginning in January 1996.

In 1983, the Marshall Islands signed a Compact of Free Association with the United States, which came into force in 1986. Under the Compact, the country is fully sovereign but the United States has control over defense and foreign affairs and is allowed to conduct missile testing at a base on Kwajalein Atoll. The Compact also includes an annual economic assistance package of \$65 million, which supports as much as 55 percent of the national budget.

Compact money rapidly expanded the service sector, but many government institutions failed, spending surpassed receipts, and there was little economic development. All this left the country saddled with a large foreign debt. The government introduced an austerity program in 1995 that was designed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to reduce the budget and the size of the civil service. In June, the ADB approved a \$12 million package of loans intended to strengthen the financial and economic management of the public sector in order to avert a budgetary crisis.

Negotiations for a new economic assistance package under the Compact began in Hawaii in 1999, but were postponed until July 2001 while President Kessai Note's administration developed long-term plans to submit to the United States. The current agreement expires in 2003. The Marshall Islands also petitioned the U.S. Congress to provide \$27 million to meet the shortfall in the \$45 million Compact Fund to settle 6,460 claims for injuries caused by nuclear testing in the region between 1946 and 1958.

Already 40 percent of the claimants have died without receiving compensation, and new reports reveal that the fallout from nuclear weapons tests was at least 20 times greater than the U.S. estimate. In March, former inhabitants of Bikini Island were awarded \$553 million in compensation for nuclear test cleanup costs and loss of land by the Marshall Islands Nuclear Claims Tribunal.

Amata Kabua's death in December 1996 left the country bereft of leadership. The president owed his political longevity to personal loyalties within parliament and a limited pool of viable alternative candidates. On January 14, 1997, parliament elected Imata Kabua, a long-time senator and a cousin of the late president, to finish the president's term, although the constitution mandates that the speaker of the senate should serve as acting president. In 1998, Imata Kabua won a narrow victory in a no-confidence motion, the first in the country's history. The opposition charged that Kabua misused government funds and that his administration lacked accountability and transparency. The public also strongly criticized his administration's proposal to rent remote, uninhabited islands to foreign countries as nuclear waste dumps. In December 1999, voters ousted Kabua's government in a public poll and gave the opposition United Democratic Party a majority in the parliament. Kessai Note was elected president by the parliament and took office in January 2000. He survived a no-confidence motion filed by Kabua and six other opposition senators in January 2001.

The Marshall Islands, along with several other Pacific Island countries, was implicated in allegations of money laundering activities and has been blacklisted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The government contested this claim but introduced measures to monitor the country's offshore banking activities. In November, measures to combat antiterrorist financing were included in a new series of anti-money-laundering laws.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of the Marshall Islands can change their government democratically. The 1979 constitution provides for a bicameral parliament: the 33-seat house of representatives (*Nitijela*) is directly elected for a four-year term, and this lower house chooses a president, who holds executive powers as head of state and head of the government, from among its members. The Council of Chiefs, or upper Iroji, has 12 traditional leaders who offer advice on customary laws. No legal restrictions exist against the formation of political parties.

The judiciary is generally independent, and the rule of law is well established. In recent years, the parliament amended the Judiciary Act and passed a new legislative act to strengthen the judiciary in order to prevent government intervention. The government respects the right to a fair trial. Both the national and local police honor legal civil rights protections in performing their duties.

The government generally respects freedom of speech and of the press, but journalists occasionally practice self-censorship on sensitive political issues. A privately owned weekly newspaper publishes in both English and the Marshallese language. The government's *Marshall Islands Gazette*, a monthly, contains official news and avoids political coverage. There are two radio stations; one is state owned, and both offer pluralistic views. A cable television company shows U.S. programs and occasionally covers local events. There are no restrictions on religious observance in this predominantly Christian country.

Freedom of assembly is respected in practice. The government broadly interprets constitutional guarantees of freedom of association, but no trade unions have been formed. There is no formal right to strike or engage in collective bargaining, but no legal constraint exists in practice.

Freedom of internal movement is unrestricted, except on Kwajalein Atoll, the site of a major U.S. military installation. This year, the Marshallese government joined with the United States to enforce a 12-mile exclusion zone for boats and planes around the test site. Responding to pressure from the United States, police also detained an Australian Greenpeace activist who had been camping on a nearby island for several months prior to the test.

Although inheritance of property and traditional rank are matrilineal, and women hold a social status equal to men in most matters, most women working in the private sector hold low-wage jobs, and women are underrepresented in politics and government. Domestic violence has increased, and traditional culture dissuades many victims of domestic violence from reporting the crime or prosecuting spouses through the court system.

## Mauritania

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (military-influenced)  
Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 2,700,000

PPP: \$1,609

Life Expectancy: 51

Ethnic Groups: Mixed Maur/black (40 percent), Maur (30 percent), black (30 percent)

Capital: Nouakchott

Ratings Change: Mauritania's political rights rating improved from 6 to 5, and its status changed from Not Free to Partly Free, following general elections that included opposition parties.

Political Rights: 5\*  
Civil Liberties: 5  
Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

Mauritania took a step towards political reform in October 2001 when it held municipal and national assembly elections that included a range of opposition parties. The European Union said the polls were smoothly organized and allowed for proper participation in an atmosphere of normalcy and democratic openness. However, the ruling Social Democratic Republican Party (PRDS) was the only party to present candidates in every constituency, and the electoral law was modified to ban independent candidates, whose seats went mainly to the PRDS. More than a dozen parties participated in the elections to choose 81 members of the national assembly. The PRDS won 64 assembly seats and opposition parties won 17. In the municipal polls, the opposition won 15 percent of available posts, which was its strongest showing to date. Harassment of some members of the opposition, however, was reported earlier in the year. New York-based Human



Rights Watch in June condemned what it said was ongoing repression of opposition parties and human rights activists in Mauritania.

After nearly six decades of French colonial rule, Mauritania's borders as an independent state were formalized in 1960. A 1978 military coup ended a civilian one-party state led by Moktaar Ould Daddah. He returned to Mauritania in 2001 after more than 20 years in exile. A 1984 internal purge installed Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya as junta chairman. In 1992, Ould Taya won the country's first, and deeply flawed, multiparty election. Ould Taya's PRDS ruled the country as a de facto one-party state after the main opposition parties boycotted national assembly elections in 1992 and 1996. The country's narrowly based authoritarian regime has gradually become liberalized, but most power remains in the hands of the president and a very small elite around him.

Mauritania's people include the dominant Beydane "white Maurs" of Arab extraction and Haratine "black Maurs" of African descent. Other, non-Muslim, black Africans inhabiting the country's southern frontiers along the Senegal River valley constitute approximately one-third of the population. For centuries, black Africans were subjugated and taken as slaves by both white and black Maurs. Slavery was outlawed in 1980, but remnants of servitude persist.

Mauritania is one of the world's poorest countries. Its vast and mostly arid territory has few resources. Much of the country's wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small elite who control an economy based on iron ore exports and fishing.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Mauritanians for the first time in 2001 were permitted to exercise their constitutional right to choose their representatives in relatively open competitive elections. The absence of an independent election commission, state control of broadcasts, harassment of independent print media, and the incumbent's use of state resources to promote his candidacy devalued Ould Taya's presidential victories in 1992 and 1997. In deeply flawed 1996 legislative elections, the military-backed, ruling PRDS won all but seven national assembly seats against a divided opposition. The umbrella Front of Opposition Parties dismissed the polls as fraudulent and boycotted the second round of the 1996 legislative polls and the 1997 presidential vote.

Mauritania's judicial system is heavily influenced by the government. Many decisions are shaped by *Sharia* (Islamic law), especially in family and civil matters. Opposition leader Chebih Ould Cheikh Malainine, of the Popular Front, was convicted in June with two others on charges of conspiracy against the state and was sentenced to five years in prison. Defense lawyers withdrew from the case, saying a fair trial could not be expected. Amnesty International said established court procedures were flouted during the trial and evidence tendered by the police was obtained from the defendants under duress. Prison conditions in Mauritania are harsh.

Numerous nongovernmental organizations operate, including human rights and antislavery groups. A handful of black-African activist groups and Islamist parties are banned. The banned *El Hor* (Free Man) Movement promotes black rights, while widespread discrimination against blacks continues. A few thousand blacks still live in conditions of servitude. A government campaign against the mainly black southern part of the country in the late 1980s culminated with a massive deportation of blacks to Senegal, and relations between the two countries remain strained.

Prepublication censorship, arrests of journalists, and seizures and bans of newspa-

pers devalue constitutional guarantees of free expression. About 20 privately owned newspapers publish on a regular basis. All publications must be officially registered. The state owns the only two daily newspapers and monopolizes nearly all broadcast media. Independent publications openly criticize the government, but all publications must be submitted to the interior ministry prior to distribution. Authorities in June 2001 censored an issue of *L'Eveil-Hebdo*. Article 11 of the constitution forbids dissemination of reports deemed to "attack the principles of Islam or the credibility of the state, harm the general interest, or disturb public order and security."

Mauritania is an Islamic state in which, by statute, all citizens are Sunni Muslims who may not possess other religious texts or enter non-Muslim households. The right to worship, however, is generally tolerated. Christians and non-Mauritanian Shiite Muslims are permitted to worship privately, and some churches operate openly.

Societal discrimination against women is widespread but is improving. Under Sharia, a woman's testimony is given only half the weight of a man's. Legal protections regarding property and equality of pay are usually respected only in urban areas among the educated elite. At least one-quarter of women undergo genital mutilation. The government has intensive media and education campaigns against this practice and the practice of forced feeding adolescent girls, known as *gavage*. A family code adopted in 2001 sets the minimum age for marriage at eighteen, requires couples to marry before an administrative authority, and sets a minimum wage.

Approximately one-fourth of Mauritania's workers serve in the small formal sector. The constitution provides for freedom of association and the right of citizens to unionize and bargain for wages. All workers except members of the military and police are free to join unions.

## Mauritius

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 1,200,000

PPP: \$9,107

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Indo-Mauritian (68 percent),

Creole (27 percent), Sino-Mauritian (3 percent), Franco-Mauritian (2 percent)

Capital: Port Louis

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

Mauritius enjoyed a relatively tranquil year in 2001 in political terms, although several corruption scandals did attract considerable notice. General elections were held in late 2000.

Opposition leader Anerood Jugnauth, a former prime minister and the leader of the Mauritian Socialist Movement (MSM), won a resounding victory and returned to the premiership.

Mauritius, which has no indigenous peoples, was seized and settled as a way station for European trade to the East Indies and India. Its ethnically mixed population is

primarily descended from Indian subcontinental immigrants who were brought to the island as laborers during its 360 years of Dutch, French, and British colonial administration. Since gaining independence from Britain in 1968, Mauritius has maintained one of the developing world's most successful democracies. In 1993, the island became a republic within the Commonwealth, with a largely ceremonial president as head of state.

Mauritius has achieved a stable democratic and constitutional order, and its focus on political competition rather than violent conflict demonstrates a level of political development enjoyed by few other African states. The political process is used to maintain ethnic balance and economic growth rather than dominance by any single group. In addition, political parties are not divided along the lines of the country's diverse ethnicities and religions.

The country's political stability is underpinned by steady economic growth and improvements in the island's infrastructure and standard of living. Unemployment and crime are rising, but the country's integrated, multinational population has provided a capable and reliable workforce that, along with preferential European and U.S. market access for sugar and garment exports, is attracting foreign investment. Economic development has been achieved, however, at the cost of the country's native flora and fauna, nearly all of which have been destroyed.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens have the right to change their government democratically. The head of state is a president, elected by the national assembly for a five-year term. Executive power resides in the prime minister. The legislature is unicameral; its sole chamber, the national assembly, has 62 members directly elected by universal adult suffrage and a maximum of 8 (currently 4) members appointed from unsuccessful parliamentary candidates who gained the largest number of votes. The members serve for five-year terms.

In a surprise move, in August 2000 President Cassam Uteem dissolved the national assembly and called early elections in August, in large part because of a series of corruption scandals that had led to the resignation of several cabinet ministers. In the elections, the victorious opposition alliance led by the MSM was allied with the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM). The MMM's leader, Paul Berenger, was subsequently appointed minister of finance. The previous incumbent had served since 1992. Some 80 percent of eligible voters went to the polls.

Since independence, Mauritius has regularly chosen its representatives in free, fair, and competitive elections. Decentralized structures govern the country's island dependencies. The largest of these is Rodrigues Island, which has its own government, local councils, and two seats in the national assembly.

The generally independent judiciary is headed by a supreme court. The legal system is an amalgam of French and British traditions. Civil rights are generally well respected, although cases of police brutality have been reported. Freedom of religion is respected. There are no known political prisoners or reports of political or extrajudicial killings.

The constitution guarantees freedom of expression and of the press, but all broadcast media are state owned and usually reflect government views. Several private daily and weekly publications, however, are often highly critical of both government and opposition politicians and their policies. Freedom of assembly and association is re-

spected, although police occasionally refuse to issue permits for demonstrations. Numerous nongovernmental organizations operate.

Nine labor federations include 300 unions. Women constitute approximately 20 percent of the paid labor force and generally occupy a subordinate role in society. The law does not require equal pay for equal work or prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. Women are underrepresented at the national university. The country is preparing a national gender action plan with the long-term objective of greater equality. It addresses the integration of gender issues into the mainstream of government and private sector activities, and the enactment of a domestic violence act.

Women are significantly underrepresented in the nation's political life. According to the Southern African Development Community, in 2000 the percentages of women in parliament and in the cabinet (5.9 percent and 4 percent respectively) were the lowest of the 14 member countries.

Tensions between the Hindu majority and Muslim and Creole minorities persist, despite the general respect for constitutional prohibitions against discrimination, and constitute one of the country's few potential political flashpoints.

In 2000, Mauritius registered an eight percent economic growth rate, and inflation hovered around five percent. Just 2.5 percent of the country's labor force is unemployed. Per capita income in Mauritius is one of the highest in Africa, while adult literacy is 83 percent. According to the United Nations Development Program Human Development Index for 2000, Mauritius was ranked as 71 out of 174 countries. Continuing concerns about corruption were reflected in demonstrations against fraud following a financial scandal at Air Mauritius.

## Mexico

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free

Population: 99,600,000

PPP: \$8,297

Life Expectancy: 75

Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (60 percent), Indian (30 percent), white (9 percent), other (1 percent)

Capital: Mexico City

**Trend Arrow:** Mexico received an upward trend arrow due to serious efforts by the government to reform the administration of justice, particularly law enforcement, as well as to ensure transparency in public transactions.



### Overview:

In 2001, the reform program of President Vicente Fox Quesada faced hard challenges posed by the legacy of more than seven decades of overwhelming political hegemony, including endemic corruption, of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). As Fox led a broad good-government coalition anchored by his center-right National Action Party (PAN)

on a quest to remake the country's political institutions and practices into those of a modern democratic state, unrealistic expectations held by supporters and critics alike proved to be one of his biggest headaches. Some significant reforms were enacted to fight the pervasive corruption which fuels Mexico's major social problems of poverty and crime and that has allowed the country to become a primary headquarters of the world's drug cartels.

According to a 2001 study by the Mexico chapter of Transparency International, some \$2.3 billion—approximately one percent—of the country's economic production goes to officials in bribes, with the poorest families paying nearly 14 percent of their income for bribes. Public safety, and related problems of corruption and rights violations by Mexico's police and military, headed the list of seemingly intractable difficulties that experts caution are likely to take a generation to solve, in part due to the large volume of existing legislation that needs to be reformed. Relations with a heavily split congress; the inability to reach a meaningful reform of immigration policy with the United States; and the continued marginalization of Mexico's indigenous peoples, roughly ten percent of the population, added to concern about whether Fox could successfully achieve his reform goals.

Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1810 and established itself as a republic in 1822. Seven years after the Revolution of 1910, a new constitution was promulgated under which the United Mexican States became a federal republic consisting of 31 states and a federal district (Mexico City). Each state has elected governors and legislatures. The president is elected to a six-year term. A bicameral congress consists of a 128-member senate elected for six years, with at least one minority senator from each state, and a 500-member chamber of deputies elected for three years, 300 directly and 200 through proportional representation.

Since its founding in 1929, the PRI has dominated the country by means of its corporatist, authoritarian structure maintained through co-optation, patronage, corruption, and repression. The formal business of government has taken place mostly in secret and with little legal foundation.

In 1988, PRI standard-bearer Carlos Salinas de Gortari won the presidential election through massive and systematic fraud. Most Mexicans believe Salinas actually lost to Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas, who headed a coalition of leftist parties that later merged and became the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Under Salinas, the toast of both the George Bush and Bill Clinton administrations in the United States, corruption reached unparalleled proportions, and a top antidrug official complained that Mexico had become a "narco-democracy," before fleeing to exile in the United States. Salinas conceded a few gubernatorial election victories to the PAN, which had supported his economic policies. In return the PAN dropped its demands for political reform and abandoned plans to establish a pro-democracy coalition with the PRD.

Until the outbreak of the Marxist-led Zapatista rebellion in the southern state of Chiapas on New Year's Day 1994, it was assumed that Salinas's handpicked successor, Luis Donaldo Colosio, would defeat Cárdenas and PAN Congressman Diego Fernández de Cevallos in the 1994 presidential election. The Zapatistas' demands for democracy and clean elections resonated throughout Mexico. Colosio was assassinated on March 23, 1994. Salinas substituted Zedillo, a 42-year-old U.S.-trained economist with little political experience, as the PRI candidate. Despite PRI hardliners' animosity toward the party's technocrats, the hardliners, popularly known as "dinosaurs," placed the

government machinery—the enormous resources of the state as well as the broadcast media—firmly behind Zedillo.

On August 21, 1994, Zedillo won, with nearly 50 percent of the valid vote, and the PRI won overwhelming majorities in both houses of congress. Both the PAN and the PRD disputed the elections' legitimacy, and only PRI legislators in the chamber voted to affirm the results. The next month, the reform-minded PRI secretary-general was assassinated, his murder the result of high-stakes PRI infighting. Zedillo took office on December 1, 1994.

Under Zedillo, a trend that had started with Salinas, or even before, accelerated, and Mexico became the leading supplier of illegal drugs to the United States, accounting for two-thirds of the cocaine and 20 to 30 percent of the heroin entering the country.

In 1996, opposition parties of the left and right won important municipal elections in three states. Post electoral conflicts took place in several regions. In the southern states of Guerrero, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Chiapas, where many of Mexico's indigenous people live, political violence continued to be a fact of life. However, the elections left the PRI governing just two of Mexico's 12 largest cities.

In April 1996, the main political parties, with the exception of the PAN, agreed on reforms aimed at bringing about fairer elections. The reforms introduced direct elections for the mayoralty of Mexico City and abolished government control of the federal electoral institute.

Mexicans went to the polls several times in 1997 and 1998 under substantially improved conditions, which included increased public financing of political parties and guarantees of fairer access to television during elections. For the first time, in 1997 voters chose the mayor of Mexico City, electing PRD opposition leader Cárdenas, rather than having the municipal chief appointed by the president. That year an opposition coalition made up of the PRD, the PAN, and two other parties took control of the lower house of congress following the July elections; and a consensus was reached whereby the presidencies of 61 house committees were allocated on an equitable basis. By year's end, the PAN held six governorships. Elections held in 1998 in several states for gubernatorial, legislative, and municipal posts showed an uneven ability of the opposition to build upon its successes in the state and federal elections. PRI candidates were able to win in contests that were not fixed, as the party won seven of ten gubernatorial contests.

In 1999, the PRI nominated, in first-ever open-party competition, Francisco Labastida, hailed by some as the politicians' return to the helm of a party ruled during the three previous administrations by technocrats. In September the PAN nominated Fox, governor of Guanajuato state, while Cárdenas took leave of the Mexico City mayoralty and announced he would again lead the PRD's national ticket.

In 2000, the pragmatic Fox teamed up with the small Green Party to form the Alliance for Change; an effort to make common cause with the PRD was rebuffed by a wary Cárdenas. Despite election-eve polls suggesting Fox would lose, on July 2, 2000, he won Mexico's presidency with 42.5 percent of the vote; former Interior Minister Labastida won 36 percent of the vote, and Cárdenas just 16.6 percent. By becoming nearly the largest party in the lower house of congress, the PAN won enough state governorships to put the long-ruling PRI in danger of becoming a regional party. The poor showing by

Cárdenas suggested that support for the PRD, which had made electoral reform its standard, was collapsing as PRI hegemony disappeared. The PRD's congressional representation sank from a high of 116 to 52 following the June election; its consolation

prize was winning the Mexico City mayoralty. However, the 2000 elections heralded an even more important role for the Mexican congress, in which no party commanded a majority in a body that less than a decade ago was regarded as a PRI rubber stamp.

Following his election, Fox selected an eclectic cabinet whose new faces signaled an end to the revolving door of bureaucrats in top positions and included leftist intellectuals, businessmen, and, as attorney general, a serving general—the latter choice bitterly opposed by human rights groups. Fox also announced plans to overhaul Mexico's notoriously corrupt and inefficient law enforcement agencies, breaking the political ties between the police and the presidency and removing the armed forces from the expanded internal security role assigned to them under Zedillo. In September two generals who had held important positions in the fight against insurgent groups and drug traffickers were arrested on drug charges, bringing to seven the number of generals prosecuted for their alleged involvement in the narcotics trade. Despite Mexico's booming economy, business leaders say soaring crime is costing them as much as ten percent of their profits.

In 2001, Fox's efforts to clean up Mexico's police and security forces won a significant vote of confidence in Washington, particularly as they were accompanied by serious efforts to attack kingpins of local drug cartels. However, the government's perceived slowness in stating its support for the United States in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks appeared to temper somewhat the rosy U.S. assessments of Fox's rule. A law enacted in August on Indian rights failed to satisfy many indigenous rights activists or their critics, and even caused the Zapatistas to break off all contact with the government shortly after its approval by congress. Two major criticisms of the law were that it did not precisely define Indian group rights and that it limited the rights of native peoples to create new municipalities. On the other hand, in what rights advocates hailed as an important test of his government's human rights commitment, on November 27 Fox announced the appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate up to 532 forced disappearances of leftist militants. Many were in federal custody before they disappeared, during the 1970s, and human rights advocates say the clandestine killings may have been orchestrated by two former presidents from the PRI. In December, Ernesto Fonseca Carillo, convicted for the 1985 murder of a U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agent, was acquitted on drug-trafficking charges, although he remained in prison for the killing.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Mexicans can choose their government democratically. In 2001, opposition parties made important gains in state and municipal contests in elections that were generally considered to be free and fair. In an important test case, in October 2001, the federal electoral tribunal overturned the victory of the ruling PAN candidate in Ciudad Juarez, along the U.S. border, saying that the party had improperly used its position of power to influence the vote. In November, Lazaro Cárdenas, the third-generation heir to a populist Mexican dynasty, led the PRD to victory in the governor's race in Michoacan state, despite an ongoing power struggle within the leftist party. Although all parties vying in the contest reportedly engaged in shady electoral practices ranging from election-day distribution of foodstuffs to outright vote buying, the Alianza Civica good-government group said the irregularities were insufficient to taint the outcome of the vote. That same month, the long-ruling PRI, out of power for the first time in more than seven

decades, attempted a renewal of sorts by promising 80 percent of party jobs" to women and those under the age of 30. In July, the PAN easily won the governor's race in the border state of Baja California, although the PRI wrested the mayoralty of Chihuahua from the PAN, and nearly beat the party in Ciudad Juarez, as well as scoring important successes in the states of Durango and Zacatecas. In October, the PRI won a majority of local municipal and congressional races in the southern state of Chiapas.

In 2001, President Vicente Fox Quesada promised a complete overhaul of Mexico's corrupt prison system and the adherence to a Mexican supreme court ruling that removed the last barriers for extraditing Mexicans to the United States to stand trial. Throughout the latter years of PRI rule, the judicial system was notoriously weak, politicized, and riddled with the corruption infecting all official bodies. In most rural areas, respect for laws by official agencies is still tenuous at best, particularly in towns and villages that receive a large influx of dollars from relatives involved in narcotics trafficking in the United States. Lower courts and law enforcement in general are undermined by widespread bribery, despite some early, significant efforts by the Fox government for reform. Mexico serves as a transit point for some 66 percent of the cocaine consumed in the United States, as well as being a producer of a significant amount of heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamines.

Constitutional guarantees regarding political and civic organizations are generally respected in the urban north and central parts of the country. Political and civic expression, however, is restricted throughout rural Mexico, in poor urban areas, and in poor southern states where repressive measures against the left-wing PRD and peasant and indigenous groups are still a serious problem. Civil society participation has grown large in recent years: human rights, pro-democracy, women's, and environmental groups are active. However, in December, 2001, Amnesty International issued a report that underlined the threats human rights activists still face from the government and the military, saying that while their jobs remain some of the most dangerous in the country, Fox had yet to institute measures that would halt the myriad abuses. "Activists are the victims of smear campaigns and fabricated accusations aimed at undermining their credibility and legitimacy," Amnesty reported, "their phones are tapped and their communications intercepted; they receive death threats and constant intimidation." The complaint followed the October 18, 2001, murder of human rights lawyer Digna Ochoa, whose clients included high-profile environmentalists, tortured by the military, and sympathizers with the Zapatistas.

Mexico's soaring crime rate and lack of effective law enforcement, characterized by an entrenched culture of bribery and disrespect for the law, are serious barriers to economic development. In early 2001, Fox announced a crusade to clean up Mexico's law enforcement system, urging Mexicans to report common crimes and announcing a citizen program to make the police more accountable by allowing public access to their files. Ten percent of all extortive kidnappings in Mexico, which ranks second only to Colombia in the greatest number of attacks in Latin America, are believed to be carried out by former or serving police officers. In July 2001, Amnesty International warned that torture remains a widespread practice "at all levels of Mexico's federal, state and municipal system.... What is worse, evidence shows that torture is still used to extract confessions and secure convictions in the context of poorly developed and ineffective criminal and forensic investigation services."

Despite reforms undertaken or promised by the Fox administration, opinion polls



show that most Mexicans do not think that the Mexican police are capable of dealing with the country's spiraling crime rate. Low standards of performance by Mexican law enforcement agencies can be traced, in part, to the fact that Mexican police officers frequently lack essential elements for their work, such as bulletproof vests, serviceable weapons, and adequate training. In recent years, dozens of law enforcement agents have died fighting the notorious Tijuana-based Arellano Felix drug cartel.

During the outbreak of the still-simmering Chiapas rebellion, Mexico's semi-autonomous military was responsible for widespread human rights violations. The growing role of the military in internal security—ostensibly to combat domestic terrorism, drug trafficking, and street crime—has contributed to grave human rights problems, particularly in rural areas. Because Mexico has no foreign enemies, the military serves largely as an auxiliary police force, and in places such as the states of Chiapas and Guerrero, army counterinsurgency units moving through local civilian populations like an occupying force continued to cause numerous rights violations. In late 1998, a small group of military officers staged a protest against the military court system and demanded the abolition of the exclusively military legal jurisdiction, which, in 2001, human rights groups continued to report, also exacerbates a widespread culture of impunity in rights prosecutions. The military justice system not only allows the military to restrict prosecution of members accused of rights violations to its courts, but in all cases tight restrictions are imposed on public access to information gleaned through subsequent investigation of the charges. In several recent documented cases, the army has planted evidence to justify illegal arrests, tortured suspects, failed to properly investigate alleged abuses, and obstructed civilian authorities, while producing unreliable information about the investigations.

Throughout 2001, there were credible reports about the continuing close links between drug traffickers and some members of the armed forces, contradicting official versions—including those espoused by U.S. officials—that have sought to portray the military as less prone to corruption and drug-cartel influence than civilian law enforcement is. In December 2001, six former members of an elite airborne unit were arrested and accused of protecting one of Mexico's most-wanted drug suspects.

The media, while mostly private, depend largely on the government for advertising revenue. In 2000, Fox pledged to end the PRI practice of buying favorable stories and vowed to respect the media's independence. Most observers agree that in 2001, the practice of paying reporters for favorable coverage appeared to be on the wane. Throughout the year, the freer and more critical news coverage afforded by the media was much in evidence, with Fox himself often the target of satirical cartoons and unflattering commentary by the reformed news outlets. Despite the improvements, however, violent attacks against journalists, including murder, are common, with reporters investigating police issues, narcotics trafficking, and public corruption at particular risk. Radio and television stations still operate under a law that allows the government to grant broadcast licenses at its discretion, rather than on the basis of professional criteria.

In 1992 the constitution was amended to restore the legal status of the Roman Catholic Church and other religious institutions. Priests and nuns were allowed to vote for the first time in nearly 80 years. Nonetheless, activist priests promoting the rights of Indians and the poor, particularly in southern states, remained subject to threats and intimidation by conservative landowners and local PRI bosses.

Mexico is a source country for trafficked persons to the United States, Canada,

and Japan, and a transit country for persons from various places, especially Central America and China. There are an increasing number of persons from Brazil and Eastern Europe transiting through Mexico, and some Salvadorans and Guatemalans, especially children, who are trafficked into Mexico for prostitution, particularly along the southern border. In his first year in office, Fox attempted to engage the United States on a wide range of border issues, including the trafficking of persons, and has tightened up security along the porous frontier shared with Guatemala. Internal trafficking is also a problem.

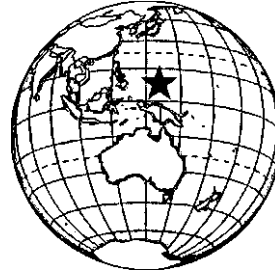
The *maquiladora* regime of export-only production facilities has created substantial abuse of worker rights. Most maquiladora workers are young, uneducated women who accept lower pay more readily, with annual labor turnover averaging between 200 and 300 percent. They have no medical insurance, holidays, or profit sharing, and female employees are frequently the targets of sexual harassment and abuse. The companies also discriminate against pregnant women in order to avoid having to give maternity leave. The state of neglect of these women is highlighted by the fact that during an eight-year period ending in 2001, as many as 67 were killed in sex crimes and 150 missing in the Ciudad Juarez area. The government consistently fails to enforce child labor laws; some 4.5 million children under 14 years of age—12 percent of the child population—have jobs in Mexico.

Domestic violence and sexual abuse remain serious problems in Mexico, although the Fox government has pledged to fight a problem that some experts say affects between five and seven of every ten Mexican women. Outside the confines of a few cosmopolitan urban areas and in indigenous regions in the south, violence and harassment targeting gays and lesbians are also serious problems; there are credible reports of extortion and beatings by police. In August 2000, a federal appeals court in San Francisco, California, granted a gay Mexican transvestite asylum in the United States, after saying he was a member of a particular "social group" persecuted in his homeland.

Dozens of labor and peasant leaders have been killed in recent years in ongoing land disputes, particularly in the southern states, where Indians constitute close to half the population. Most of Mexico's ten million Native Americans live in a situation of de facto apartheid, relegated to extreme poverty in rural villages lacking roads, running water, schools, and telephones. Both those who live in urban areas and those in the countryside face great pressure to abandon their customs, languages, and values, and access to their lands and natural resources is under constant attack. Upon taking office, Fox pledged to answer indigenous demands by overseeing a series of constitutional reforms that were designed to guarantee Indian rights. However, in December 2000, he had to back down from a plan to relocate poor Indians in newly created towns, after critics called it tantamount to the "ethnocide" perpetrated on indigenous peoples by Spanish settlers, who had herded them into villages where they were more easily exploited and taxed. Enactment in 2001 of the Indian rights law, which was itself criticized by Fox, a former proponent, led the president to suggest that still another measure might need to be considered by congress in 2002.

## Micronesia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal) Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 100,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 66  
 Ethnic Groups: Micronesian, Polynesian  
 Capital: Palikir



### Overview:

Elections for ten senatorial seats in the national congress were held on March 6, 2001. Negotiations with the United States to renew the Compact of Free Association continued throughout the year. In February, new legislation intended to crack down on money laundering was signed into law by President Leo Falcam.

The Federated States of Micronesia consists of 607 islands in the archipelago of the Caroline Islands located in the north Pacific Ocean. In 1899, Germany purchased the Carolines from Spain, and Japan seized the islands in 1915, ruling them from 1920 under a League of Nations mandate. During World War II, the United States occupied the islands, and they became part of the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific in 1947.

In 1978, four districts of the Trust Territory (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae) approved a constitution to create the Federated States of Micronesia. The United States granted the islands sovereignty in 1979, upon which the constitution took effect and the country elected its first president, Tosiwo Nakayama. In 1982, the territory concluded a Compact of Free Association with the United States, which came into force in 1986. Under the terms of the Compact, the country is fully sovereign, but the United States is responsible for defense. The United States obtains the right to maintain military installations on the islands and in exchange provides substantial financial assistance that averages \$100 million per year. Micronesians also have the right to live and work in the United States.

In 1991, the congress elected Bailey Olter of Pohnpei state, a former vice president under Nakayama, as the country's third president. Olter was elected to a second term in 1995 over Senator Jacob Nena of Kosrae state. After Olter suffered a stroke in July 1996, the congress installed Nena as acting president. In May 1999, Leo Falcam, the former vice president, replaced Nena as the new president. Falcam has identified the protection of cultural values, economic development, and the establishment of effective international partnerships as priorities for his administration.

Negotiations with the United States over the future of U.S. economic assistance under a renewal of the Compact of Free Association continued in 2001. Micronesia seeks continued annual grant aid of approximately \$80 million and access to many U.S. federal programs, including mail, educational, and health services. Micronesia also proposed a \$20 million trust fund. Talks continued throughout 2001, and the U.S. funding level will probably be tied to improvements in health, education, infrastructure, capacity building, good governance, and private sector development. U.S. fears over the

expansion of Chinese influence in the Pacific make Micronesia an attractive strategic location for the Pentagon.

As for aid from other countries, Micronesia met with the Consultative Group composed of development partners, international organizations, and donor countries. The group gave a positive review of the progress report prepared by the Micronesian government. Substantial public sector reform has already strengthened government finances and improved economic stability. The government recommended further reforms to strengthen capacity for accountability and transparency in social and economic management and in legal and regulatory systems, as well as the formulation of a long-term development strategy to make Micronesia more independent economically. In April, Japan announced an aid package of \$7 million for a road improvement project on the island of Yap, and it has continued to provide technical assistance to Micronesia's fishing industry.

The economy is dependent on fishing, subsistence agriculture, tourism, and U.S. aid. In anticipation of the expiration of the current Compact, the government has tried to bring in more foreign investment and expand the private sector. Like several other Pacific Island countries trying to develop an offshore banking industry, Micronesia had been linked to money laundering activities and was blacklisted by the United States and Western European countries. In February, President Falcam signed new legislation that established money laundering as a national crime, and which would enable the government to identify, trace, seize, and confiscate the proceeds of such crimes.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia can change their government democratically. The constitution provides for a unicameral, 14-senator congress. One senator is elected at large from each of the four states for a four-year term, with the remaining ten senators elected for two-year terms from single-member districts based on population. The president and vice president are selected by congress from among its four at-large members. Although an informal rotation system for the top elected offices of the country is in practice, the perceived political dominance of Chuuk state, which holds nearly half of the population and a proportionate number of congressional seats, has created tensions with the three smaller states. Politics are based on state, clan, and individual loyalties. Political parties are permitted, but none has been formed.

The judiciary is independent. Trials are conducted fairly, and prison conditions meet minimum international standards. The local police are under the control of the civil authorities. In cases where the police were found guilty of mistreating citizens, the officers were subsequently dismissed from the force.

Press freedom has increased in recent years. An independent weekly newspaper, *The Island Tribune*, launched in December 1997, explores controversial and politically sensitive issues. Each of the four state governments and one religious organization operate radio stations, and the residents of Pohnpei and Chuuk have access to cable television. The federal government publishes a biweekly information bulletin, *The National Union*, and the state governments produce their own newsletters. Other papers, including the *Pohnpei Business News* and *Micronesia Weekly*, generally avoid sensitive topics. There has been an increasing level of public discussion on various Internet sites, which provide outlets for citizens to share opinions on social and governmental issues.

Freedom of assembly and association is respected, but there are few nongovern-

mental organizations other than women's and student organizations. Religious freedom is respected in this overwhelmingly Christian country. Workers have the right to form or join associations, but no unions have been formed because of the small size of the wage economy. Current laws do not guarantee collective bargaining.

Domestic abuse is a growing problem. State and societal responses are inadequate, as domestic abuse is commonly regarded as a private, family matter. The number of physical and sexual assault cases against women outside the family context has been increasing. Women are increasingly active in the private sector and in low- and mid-level government positions, but they remain underrepresented at the highest levels of government.

## Moldova

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy  
Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Political Rights: 2  
Civil Liberties: 4  
Status: Partly Free

Population: 4,300,000

PPP: \$2,037

Life Expectancy: 68

Ethnic Groups: Moldovan/Romanian (65 percent),  
Ukrainian (14 percent), Russian (13 percent), other (8 percent)

Capital: Chisinau



### Overview:

In the decade since Moldova declared independence from the Soviet Union, this tiny country has struggled for every success. Although Moldova boasts a positive record for the conduct of free and fair democratic elections, in 2001 it became the first former Soviet state to return unreformed Communists to power. Likewise, despite joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, the country continues to have one of the highest poverty rates in Europe. In spite of strong hopes that the new government would fare better in negotiations with the self-declared Dnestr Moldovan Republic (Transnistria), talks continued to break down over the breakaway region's political status.

In 1991, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic declared independence and named Mircea Snegur, the chairman of the Communist supreme Soviet, the first president of a democratic Republic of Moldova. In 1994, Snegur's centrist Agrarian Democratic Party (ADP) won a majority of seats in the country's first free and fair popular election. Petru Lucinschi, also a former Communist, defeated Snegur in 1996. The Party of Moldovan Communists (PCM) won a plurality of votes in the 1998 parliamentary elections, but three centrist parties united to form a new majority. Moldova has undertaken important economic reforms, replaced the Soviet-era constitution, and joined NATO's Partnership for Peace. The country's successes have been tempered, however, by an extremely low standard of living and by the situation in Transnistria.

In 2000, Moldova ended direct election of the president and became a parliamentary democracy. In doing so, it ended a constitutional crisis that had set parliament and

President Petru Lucinschi against each other since the previous year. Opposed to the change, President Lucinschi refused to participate in the scheduled December balloting. The PCM nominated party leader Vladimir Voronin as its presidential candidate, and a coalition of center-right parties and independent members of parliament nominated Pavel Barbalat, the head of the constitutional court.

The constitutional court forced parliament to repeat its first vote because PCM leaders had violated secret balloting rules and pressured party members to choose Voronin. Parliament voted two more times in December but still failed to elect a president. When Barbalat's supporters boycotted a new round of voting on December 21, President Lucinschi dissolved the parliament and scheduled early elections to fill all 101 seats for February 25, 2001.

The Central Election Commission registered 12 parties, 5 electoral blocs, and 10 independent candidates. Only 3 parties received a mandate under an amended electoral code that increased the threshold for representation of independent candidates from three to four percent of the vote and for parties and blocs from four to six percent. The PCM won 71 seats; the Braghis Alliance, 19; and the Christian Democratic People's Front (FPCD), 11. Voter turnout was 69 percent. According to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the election was democratic and "met international standards." Authorities in Transnistria refused to let the Moldovan government set up polling stations on its territory. Instead, as in previous elections, Moldova invited the region's estimated 80,000 registered voters to cross the Nistru River to vote at special polling stations.

In April, Moldova's new parliament elected PCM leader Vladimir Voronin as president. Voronin pledged to nominate a non-Communist as prime minister, to maintain relations with Western nations and international financial organizations, and to transform the country "from an impoverished backwardness... into a modern, dynamically developing country." However, he and fellow party members have worried observers with promises to abolish the "bourgeois" post of president, to consider reversals in privatization, and to explore a union with Belarus and Russia. The PCM's efforts to introduce Russian as an official second language, to make Russian-language classes mandatory in schools, to reinstate Soviet-style territorial administration, and to restore the November 7 holiday commemorating the October Revolution are also disquieting.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Moldova is a parliamentary democracy in which citizens age 18 and older can change their government under a system of universal, equal, and direct suffrage. Voters elect members of parliament by proportional representation to four-year terms in the unicameral parliament. Parliament, in turn, elects the prime minister. Post-Soviet elections in Moldova have been free and fair. The self-declared government in Transnistria, however, severely limits the ability of voters in that region to participate in Moldovan elections.

In 2000, Moldova ended direct elections of the president and increased the powers of the government and the prime minister. That same year ended in crisis when parliament failed to elect a president according to the new rules. President Petru Lucinschi dissolved parliament and called for new elections in February 2001. Voters handed the PCM a solid victory, and control of parliament, with 50 percent of the vote. In April, the new parliament elected PCM leader Vladimir Voronin as president.

The constitution guarantees freedom of expression and access to public informa-

tion. In 2000, Moldovan courts issued two important rulings that affect the media. First, the constitutional court upheld a controversial civil code provision that imposes stiff fines on, and demands speedy retractions, from journalists found guilty of libel. Second, an appeals court upheld an order to revoke the licenses of eight radio and television stations that aired considerable Russian-language programming. The court found the stations in violation of a legal requirement that 65 percent of their broadcasts be in Romanian. Although parliament amended the law so that it only applies to programs produced domestically, the constitutional court struck down the amendments in 2001.

Also in 2001, parliament approved a controversial amendment to the press law that bans financial support from foreign governments for Moldovan media outlets. Following parliamentary elections in February, the OSCE criticized Moldova's electoral code for being "unnecessarily restrictive" on the media and thereby preventing voters from receiving "sufficient information to make a fully informed choice." Although the OSCE noted that state-owned media had provided unbiased coverage, it reported that privately held television stations and newspapers showed clear favoritism toward individual parties and candidates. In April, the Communist-dominated parliament fired the top executives at the state radio and television stations for allegedly airing programs that lacked political balance. Since then, however, journalists' groups such as the Independent Journalism Center of Moldova have been critical of the state television broadcaster for the same thing: exhibiting bias toward the ruling party and making little room for dissenting voices. In August, Moldova's Ministry of the Economy, Department of Privatization, Chamber of Trade and Industry, State Customs Office, and Journalists' Union opened the Center for Public Information, which will provide information on social and economic issues to the press.

Moldova's constitution guarantees religious freedom. A 1992 law that codifies religious freedom also requires religious groups to register with the government. The government has denied the Bessarabian Orthodox Church registration three times, on the grounds that the church is a schismatic movement of the Orthodox Church. In 2000, the church appealed to the European Court for Human Rights, and in 2001 the court ruled in its favor. However, Victor Stepaniuc, the head of the PCM's parliamentary group, expressed satisfaction with the outcome because the court did not actually order the government to register the church. Although religious education became mandatory in primary schools in 2000, lack of funding and debates about the curriculum have prevented instruction from commencing.

Moldovan citizens may strike, petition the government, and participate freely in social organizations, political parties, and trade unions. Private organizations must register with the state, and demonstrations require permits from local authorities. Moldovan law allows collective bargaining but prohibits strikes by government employees and essential workers.

Moldova's constitution calls for an independent judiciary. It also guarantees equality before the law and presumption of innocence. There is evidence that some prosecutors, judges, and law enforcement officials accept bribes. In 2001, parliament approved an amnesty that will lead to the release of approximately 1,500 prisoners, including disabled persons and pregnant women. According to the Interfax news agency, Moldova's 20 prisons house more than 10,000 prisoners.

The constitution preserves a variety of personal freedoms and entitlements such as the right to choose one's residence, move and travel freely, and have access to edu-

ation. It also calls for a market economy rooted in "fair competition." In 2000, the government approved plans to privatize the wine and tobacco industries and completed the privatization of 1.5 million hectares of agricultural land. In 2001, the International Monetary Fund praised the government for achieving moderate growth in gross domestic product, lower inflation, and higher exports. Despite accomplishments like these, Moldova remains one of Europe's most impoverished countries.

## Monaco

Polity: Principality and parliamentary democracy  
Political Rights: 2  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Economy: Capitalist-statist  
Status: Free  
Population: 30,000  
PPP: na  
Life Expectancy: na  
Ethnic Groups: French (47 percent), Italian (16 percent), Monegasque (16 percent), other (21 percent)  
Capital: Monaco



### Overview:

Following criticism from France and other countries in the international community in 2000 for not tightening its anti-laundering laws, the Principality of Monaco responded in 2001 by implementing a series of financial reform measures that included doubling the staff of its financial transactions monitoring unit, Siccfin, and signing cooperation agreements with several European countries to fight money laundering.

For 52 years, Prince Rainier III has been responsible for Monaco's impressive economic growth. Under his direction, the economy has ended its exclusive dependence on gambling revenue. Its main sources of revenue are tourism, financial services, and banking.

The Principality of Monaco is an independent and sovereign state and has been a full member of the United Nations since 1993. It is closely associated with neighboring France, whose currency, the *franc*, is the legal tender in Monaco. In 1997, the royal Grimaldi family celebrated its 700th anniversary of rule over the principality, although during that time, Monaco has been intermittently controlled by various European powers.

It achieved independence from France in 1861. Under a treaty ratified in 1919, France pledged to protect the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence of the principality in return for a guarantee that Monegasque policy would conform to French interests. France has promised that in return for reforming its banking practices and tightening the laws on anti-money-laundering, Monaco will be able to renegotiate the 1919 treaty with France.

With 32,000 residents, Monaco is home to only 5,000 Monegasques. Only Monegasques may participate in the election of the 18-member national council (legislature). The constitution also provides Monegasques with free education, financial assistance in case of unemployment or illness, and the right to hold elective office.



As head of state, Prince Rainier holds executive authority, formally appoints the four-member cabinet, and proposes all legislation. Legislation proposed by the prince is drafted by the cabinet and voted on by the national council. The prince holds veto power over the council. The prince also names the prime minister from a list of names proposed by the French government. In the elections that took place in February 1998, one party, the National and Democratic Union, won all seats in the legislature.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Monaco may change the national council and their municipal councils democratically. The council members are elected for five years by direct universal suffrage and a system of proportional representation. Under the 1962 constitution, the prince delegates judicial authority to the courts and tribunals, which adjudicate independently in his name. The judiciary includes a Supreme Tribunal, consisting of seven members appointed by the prince based on nominations by the national council; courts of cassation, appeal, and first instance; and a justice of the peace.

Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the constitution; however, denunciations of the Grimaldi family are prohibited by an official Monegasque Penal code. Two monthly magazines and a weekly government journal are published in the principality, and French daily newspapers are widely available. Radio and television are government operated and sell time to commercial sponsors, and all French broadcasts are freely transmitted to the principality. France maintains a financial interest in Radio Monte Carlo, which broadcasts in several languages.

Roman Catholicism is the state religion in Monaco, but adherents of other faiths may practice freely. The government does not, however, permit religious groups that are considered "sects" to operate.

Workers are free to form unions, but fewer than ten percent of workers are unionized, and relatively few of these reside in the principality. Trade unions are independent of both the government and the Monegasque political parties. Anti-union discrimination is prohibited. Union members can be fired only with the agreement of a commission that includes two members from the employers' association and two from the labor movement.

The rights of women are respected, and women are fairly well represented in all professions. Of the 18 members of the national council, 4 are women. The law governing transmission of citizenship provides for equality of treatment between men and women who are Monegasque by birth. Only men, however, may transmit Monegasque citizenship acquired by naturalization to their children; women are denied this right.

## Mongolia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Mixed capitalist (transitional)  
Population: 2,400,000  
PPP: \$1,711  
Life Expectancy: 63  
Ethnic Groups: Mongol (85 percent), Kazakh (7 percent), other (8 percent)  
Capital: Ulaanbaatar

Political Rights: 2  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Free



### Overview:

President Natsagiin Bagabandi of Mongolia's ruling, former Communist party easily won reelection in May 2001. His victory suggested that in a time of wrenching economic change, many Mongolians long for the social safety net they enjoyed under Communist rule. Bagabandi's victory, which came a year after his party returned to power by winning the more crucial parliamentary elections, came as Mongolians continued to face high unemployment and other hardships associated with the country's transition to a market economy. It also followed brutal winter weather that created hardships for herders by killing off more than one million livestock.

Once the center of Ghengis Khan's sprawling empire, Mongolia has been dominated for much of the past three centuries by China and Russia. Following two centuries of Chinese control over Mongolia, the Soviet Union backed a Marxist revolt in 1921 that led to the creation in 1924 of a single-party state under the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). For the next 65 years, Mongolia was a Soviet satellite state.

Mongolia's democratic transition began in 1990, when the MPRP responded to pro-democracy protests by legalizing opposition parties and holding the country's first multiparty elections. Facing an unprepared and underfunded opposition, the MPRP easily won parliamentary elections that year and again in 1992.

The dominant political issue in post-Communist Mongolia has been the pace and extent of economic reforms. Government efforts to foster a market economy have helped create a fledgling private sector but have also contributed to soaring unemployment and other social miseries. The MPRP government privatized retail businesses and ended collectivized herding, but had difficulty retooling the economy in order to survive the loss of Soviet subsidies. Many large industries went bankrupt, which threw thousands out of work.

Promising better economic management, the reformist opposition Democratic Union Coalition (DUC) won the 1996 parliamentary elections, sweeping the MPRP out of parliamentary power after 72 years. The DUC consists of the National Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party, and two smaller groups.

Prescribing shock therapy to speed Mongolia's economic transition, incoming Prime Minister Mendsaihan Enksaikhan tightened fiscal and monetary policies, freed prices, slashed pensions, and cut tariffs. The changes, however, coincided with sharp falls in world prices for two of Mongolia's biggest foreign exchange earners, copper and cash-

mere. The resulting drop in export revenues contributed to huge budget deficits. This gave the government little room to boost social spending at a time when Enksaikhan's radical policies were helping to send inflation and unemployment soaring.

Running a campaign that stressed social welfare issues, the MPRP's Bagabandi, a former parliamentary chairman, defeated the DUC's Punsalmaagiin Ochirbat, the incumbent, in the May 1997 presidential vote. Three years later, the MPRP swept back into power in the July 2, 2000, parliamentary elections. Under a 75.2 percent turnout, the MPRP captured 72 seats. During the campaign, MPRP chairman Nambar Enkhbayar, 42, who later became prime minister, pledged to seek a "third way" between his party's still-powerful conservative wing and the government's rapid economic liberalization policies. Many blamed these policies for the poverty rate's doubling since 1991 and the state welfare system's virtual collapse, although the loss of Soviet subsidies also contributed to the difficulties.

Bagabandi's reelection in 2001 was seen widely as yet another rejection of the DUC's policies, even though the president actually campaigned on pledges to speed up some economic reforms. Many voters were disillusioned with soaring unemployment, the country's poor welfare and education systems, corruption, and crime, Reuters reported after the election. Enkhbayar's government, meanwhile, tried to ease the pain of privatization. It gave the go-ahead in February to privatizing 18 large state-owned enterprises, but earmarked a minimum of five percent of the revenues for job creation programs and other social investment.

Adding to the hardship, two consecutive brutal winters have killed off millions of livestock, causing severe hardship to herders. Harsh weather killed at least 1.3 million livestock in the winter of 2001, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Some 40 percent of Mongolians rely for their livelihood on the country's 30 million livestock.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Mongolians can change their government through elections and enjoy most basic rights. The 1992 constitution vested executive powers in a prime minister and created a 76-seat *Great Hural* (parliament), which is directly elected for a four-year term. The constitution also vested some governmental powers in a directly elected president, who serves a four-year term. The president must approve candidates for prime minister and can veto legislation, subject to a two-thirds parliamentary override. President Natsagiin Bagabandi's rejection in 1998 of several parliamentary nominees for prime minister, which led to months of political gridlock, created a still-unresolved constitutional question over the correct role of the president in approving prime ministers.

Mongolia's judiciary is independent, but corruption among judges is "a concern," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Mongolia's human rights record for 2000. In a holdover from the country's Communist past, defendants are not presumed innocent. Despite recent government initiatives, conditions in pre-trial detention and prison continue to be life threatening because of insufficient food, heat, medical care and overcrowding. Roughly 100 prisoners died in custody in 2000, largely because of disease and prison mismanagement, down from about 200 such deaths in 1999, the State Department report said. Inmates often come to prison already suffering from illnesses or starvation because of the lengthy time many spend in police detention, where conditions are worse. Separately, recent reforms have helped curb po-

lice abuse of detainees and prisoners, although anecdotal evidence suggests that rural officials have been slow to adopt the new procedures, according to the State Department report. Raising questions about law enforcement in Mongolia, authorities have never identified any suspects in the 1998 murder of Sanjaasuren Zorig, the leader of the pro-democracy movement that ended single-party rule.

Mongolian media offer a range of independent and party views but practice some self-censorship, the U.S. State Department report said. The law places the burden of proof on defendants in slander and libel cases, which may have a chilling effect on the media. In a move that some journalists viewed as an attempt to harass the media, the incoming MPRP government shut down two papers in 2000 for failing to comply with laws on taxes, coverage of violence, and pornography.

The state-owned Radio Mongolia, the major source of news in the vast countryside, is free from political control. It faces competition from at least one private radio station that can reach most of the country as well as several small local FM stations. Mongolia also has at least two private television stations, but they have limited reach. The government has moved slowly in complying with a 1999 media law that required it to privatize all state-owned print media. It also must transform Radio Mongolia's parent company, Mongolian Radio and Television, into a public broadcasting service headed by an independent board of governors.

Parliament in 2000 approved the creation of an official human rights commission, which will be able to field complaints from citizens. Nongovernmental human rights groups (NGOs) actively investigate human rights abuses and publicize their findings. Women run many of Mongolia's most effective nongovernmental groups, including some that organize voter-education programs, lobby government officials, and promote women's rights and child welfare. Women also make up a majority of university graduates, doctors, and lawyers, and have helped set up and manage many of Mongolia's new trading and manufacturing companies. They are, however, underrepresented at the higher levels in government and the judiciary.

Domestic violence continued to be a serious problem, according to the U.S. State Department report, although there are no accurate figures on the number of victims. Mongolia's dire economic situation has undermined child welfare, as the government lacks the resources to meet many basic educational, health, and social needs of youths.

Mongolians of all faiths worship freely in this mainly Buddhist country. Some religious groups seeking to fulfill mandatory registration requirements, however, have faced demands for bribes and other harassment by local officials, the U.S. State Department report said.

Mongolian trade unions are independent and active, although the government's slimming down or selling of many state factories has contributed to a sharp drop in union membership to less than half the workforce. Many laid-off state employees now work in small, nonunionized firms or are self-employed. Collective bargaining is legal, but under current economic conditions employers enjoy considerable leverage and often unilaterally set wages and working conditions. The government prohibits strikes in sectors it considers essential, including law enforcement, utilities, and transportation.

## Morocco

Polity: Traditional  
monarchy and limited  
parliament

Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Population: 29,200,000

PPP: \$3,419

Life Expectancy: 69

Ethnic Groups: Arab and Berber (99 percent), other (1 percent)

Capital: Rabat

Ratings Change: Morocco's civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5 because of a continuing crackdown on free expression and assembly.

Political Rights: 5

Civil Liberties: 5\*

Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

In 2001, Morocco's opposition faced an increasingly aggressive government campaign to stamp out political dissent. Islamists and other human rights activists, who seized upon the more tolerant atmosphere that accompanied the accession of King Mohammad VI in 1999, found themselves the target of repression reminiscent of the late King Hassan's reign. But in light of attempts by the new king and his government to root out corruption, improve human rights, and rectify past abuses, the crackdown suggests that Hassan's powerful cronies, suspicious of any dissent, still play an influential role in the military and security services.

Morocco gained independence as a hereditary monarchy in 1956 after 44 years of French rule. Upon the death of his father, Mohammad V, in 1961, Hassan II assumed the throne and began a gradual and limited evolution of democratic institutions. Nevertheless, power remained highly centralized in the hands of the king, who appoints the prime minister and may dissolve the legislature at his discretion. Constitutional amendments passed in 1996 provide for a bicameral legislature with an upper house elected indirectly from various local government bodies and professional associations, and a 325-member, directly elected lower house, or house of representatives.

In March 1998, King Hassan responded to criticism of widespread fraud in the 1997 parliamentary elections by appointing a coalition government led by opposition socialist leader and former political prisoner Abderrahmane Youssoufi. Prime Minister Youssoufi leads a center-left government with broad support in the house of representatives. Pledging to transform Morocco's bleak human rights record, he has pursued a reformist program emphasizing social spending and respect for human rights. However, cabinet loyalists retained by the king restricted Youssoufi's ability to implement his agenda.

Hassan died in July 1999, leaving Mohammad VI a country with severe economic and social problems. Twenty percent of the population is unemployed, nearly half are illiterate, and a third live below the poverty line. The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, and thus at the mercy of the weather. A huge government debt threatens social spending, while some 50 percent of the budget pays for public sector salaries. Poverty has led to widespread grassroots support for Islamists, who traditionally step in with charity when the government fails to provide for its people.

Mohammad has attempted to win back public support by focusing primarily on socioeconomic issues. He has allocated funds for development projects in poverty-stricken areas and paid visits to rural communities to promote national reconciliation. The government has also taken steps toward political and economic liberalization. Upon taking power, Mohammad dismissed Driss Basri, the hardline interior minister apparently responsible for years of repression under Hassan. Freedom of expression and the press improved. Thousands of prisoners were freed, and exiled dissidents returned. A human rights center was established in 2000, and a state commission began issuing compensation to victims of past political repression. In addition, the government began privatizing state industries. The privatization of 35 percent of Maroc Telecoms in early 2001 was hailed by the International Monetary Fund as open and transparent.

But when opposition activists took advantage of the new mood of relative tolerance and intensified their calls for human rights, accountability for past abuses, and a truth commission, the military and security forces backtracked. The crackdown began with the arrests of some 800 people nationwide in December 2000 for participating in unauthorized demonstrations to mark the annual UN Human Rights Day. Thirty-six members of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights spent most of 2001 in court defending their participation in the demonstrations before being acquitted by an appeals court in November. The banned Islamist Justice and Charity group saw more than 100 of its members jailed during 2001, also in connection with the protests, and its newspaper and website banned. In January, officials ordered mosques closed after evening prayers—when Muslims traditionally gather for political discussion—in an effort to stamp out organized dissent. Journalists faced ongoing intimidation throughout the year as they were arrested or threatened, their newspapers seized, banned, or censored.

The evident gap between the government's proclaimed commitment to human rights and the current reality on the streets suggests a conflict within Morocco's power structure. However, attempts at liberalization may present a challenge to the old ruling elite. After the memoir of a former prisoner in one of King Hassan's secret detention facilities drew widespread attention in 2001, Mohammad allowed visits to the detention center and compensated former detainees. In January 2001, Prime Minister Youssoufi set up a judicial investigation after a parliamentary report found evidence that more than \$1 billion was diverted to cronies of the old regime through a state bank, Credit Immobilier et Hotelier (CIH), over the course of ten years. Named targets of the investigation include prominent political, union, and business leaders. The parliamentary report said that 52 state firms, mostly in real estate and tourism, may have misappropriated loans. In February, the government announced a larger campaign, involving media and NGOs, against corruption. The CIH investigation is being closely watched by observers; its outcome—whether powerful political figures or just bank officials are punished—will be a good indication of the balance of power between reformers and old-guard hardliners in the political establishment.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Moroccans' right to change their government democratically is limited. Although the house of representatives was elected in largely free balloting in 1997, its power is balanced by the 270-member upper house of parliament (Chamber of Advisors) and limited by the legal and de facto powers of the royal palace. The constitution grants vast executive power to the king, who rules through a cabinet of ministers. Constitutional reform that would

delineate executive authority, strengthen the legislature, and boost judicial independence would require the king's approval, and no reform appears imminent. Corruption and political interference pervade civil institutions, rendering them unfit to take on the responsibilities of governance. Provincial and local officials are appointed, while less powerful municipal councils are elected. Transparency and accountability are largely nonexistent.

Arbitrary arrest and detention occur, and prosecutors may extend administrative detention for up to a year. The king regularly pardons hundreds of prisoners during national and religious holidays. In November 2001, authorities released 56 political prisoners, including Mohamed Daddach, a Sahrawi whom Amnesty International called the longest-serving prisoner of conscience in Morocco. Dozens of other political prisoners remain in detention. The Moroccan Prison Observatory, an umbrella organization of local human rights groups, issued a report in May 2001 denouncing "rampant" corruption, violence, disease, and sexual abuse in Morocco's 44 prisons. According to the report, some 80,000 detainees, including children as young as 12, are crowded into prisons designed for less than half that number with inadequate food, sanitation, and medical care. Human rights groups continue to call for independent investigations of torture, disappearances, and other abuses against opposition activists in the 1970s. A commission set up in 1999 to compensate victims of abuse and the families of disappeared opposition activists began settling cases in 2000. The commission has received almost 6,000 cases.

The judiciary is subject to corruption, and bureaucratic and governmental interference. Although judicial reform has been identified as a high priority of the government, progress has been slow. Judges have been referred to disciplinary panels for punishment as a result of investigations into alleged corruption and misconduct. A number have been disbarred. In 2001, an ombudsman was established to investigate citizens' complaints about abuses involving the judiciary.

The press code allows confiscation and censorship of publications for libel, offensive reporting, or national security violations. The law also prohibits criticism of the monarchy, Islam, and Moroccan claims to Western Sahara. Broadcast media are mostly government controlled, and those that are not practice self-censorship. Foreign broadcasting is available via satellite. Violations against independent media, which increased sharply at the end of 2000, continued throughout 2001. In March, two directors of *Le Journal Hebdomadaire* were convicted of defaming the foreign minister and sentenced to two and three months' imprisonment. The student newspaper of the Islamic Justice and Charity group was seized in April. The editor of the weekly *Demain* magazine was threatened in July, its director sentenced to four months' imprisonment in November, and the magazine itself suspended indefinitely in December. *Demain* had criticized the royal family and alleged Youssoufi's involvement in an old plot to kill King Hassan. The foreign press suffered as well. Issues of two French papers were banned, and an article on ethnic Berbers was censored out of one paper's Moroccan edition. Issues of the Spanish *El Mundo*, *Cambio 16*, and *Epoca* were banned, and an *Epoca* photographer detained for coverage of Western Sahara. Authorities blocked access to Justice and Charity's website beginning in April. Internet access is mostly unrestricted, but prohibitively expensive for most Moroccans.

The interior ministry requires permits for public gatherings, and peaceful protests are usually tolerated. Morocco has 18 legal political parties, seven of which are part of the governing coalition. Under Mohammad, Islamists have assumed a more prominent

role, circulating literature and staging demonstrations. Authorities released Justice and Charity leader Abdessalam Yassine from more than ten years of house arrest in May 2000. However, Justice and Charity, which is said to be the largest Islamist group, remains banned, and Islamists and other human rights activists campaigning for improved rights and redress of past grievances were suppressed during 2001. About 130 members of Justice and Charity were jailed by courts in several Moroccan cities during the first half of the year for their participation in demonstrations marking Human Rights Day in December 2000. In May, 30 members of the Moroccan Association for Human Rights were sentenced to prison terms of three months and fined for taking part in the same demonstrations. An appeals court cleared them in November, but Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch urged authorities to guarantee the right to assembly and peaceful demonstration in law. Mosques were closed after evening prayers in January to prevent public gatherings where politics might be discussed.

Although many women pursue careers in the professions or in government, they face restrictions in advancement. Women's personal status is governed by the *moudouwana*, a code based on Islamic law that discriminates against women in divorce and inheritance matters. Efforts to reform the personal status code have stalled because of resistance from Islamists and conservative factions. A 2000 government draft law to ban polygamy, raise the legal age of marriage, and grant women greater protection in divorce was shelved after massive demonstrations by conservative Islamists. In April 2001, King Mohammad set up a commission to work on reforming the *moudouwana*, but no progress was made by year's end. Domestic violence is said to be common, though much of it goes unreported. A victim's family may offer her rapist the opportunity to marry her to protect her honor, and the law is relatively lenient toward a man who claims he killed his wife for adultery.

Islam is Morocco's official religion, and some 99 percent of Moroccans are Sunni Muslims. The government closely monitors mosque activities. Christianity and Judaism are tolerated and generally practiced freely. Proselytizing by Christians is prohibited; Baha'is may not practice or participate in communal activities.

Some 60 percent of Moroccans claim Berber heritage. Increasing tolerance by the government has resulted in the establishment of numerous Berber cultural associations. Such groups criticize government policies that make Arabic the only officially recognized language and prohibit the teaching of the Berber language, Tamazight, in schools. In June 2001, authorities prohibited Berbers from holding a public meeting to discuss strategies for promoting their rights. Nevertheless, progress continues. In July, King Mohammad announced the establishment of a royal cultural institute that would work toward integrating Tamazight into public education. And in September the king ruled that translators must be available at trials of Berbers and expatriates who do not speak Arabic.

Morocco's heavily unionized formal labor sector includes 17 umbrella federations, some of which are aligned with political parties and all of which are subject to political pressure. Workers may bargain collectively and strike. UNICEF has investigated child labor in Morocco, where more than a million children, including some younger than six, work in poor conditions for slave wages. Physical abuse of child laborers is reportedly common. The U.S. State Department estimates that more than 10,000 children work as prostitutes in Casablanca alone. The government has announced plans to fine parents if their children skip school, but most observers are skeptical about the authorities' ability to enforce the measure.



## Mozambique

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 19,400,000  
 PPP: \$861  
 Life Expectancy: 72  
 Ethnic Groups: Shangaan, Chokwe, Manyika, Sena, Makua (> 99 percent)  
 Capital: Maputo



### Overview:

President Joachim Chissano announced this year that he would not run for president in the next elections, scheduled for 2004.

On-again, off-again negotiations with the opposition RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance) party to resolve a political crisis resulting from contested 1999 national elections did not achieve any significant results. The country continued to suffer from the ravages of massive flooding early in the year that resulted in the displacement of approximately 235,000 people, as well as from economic dislocation resulting in part from its post-independence civil war.

Portuguese traders and settlers arrived in the late fifteenth century. Full-scale colonization did not begin until the seventeenth century. In 1962, FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) was established; it launched a military campaign to drive out the Portuguese. In 1975, Mozambique gained independence. A one-party system was implemented, with FRELIMO as the sole legal party and the party leader, Samora Machel, as president of the republic. Independence was followed by 16 years of civil war against the rebels of RENAMO, which had its origins as a guerrilla movement supported first by Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and later by South Africa.

In 1986, President Machel was killed in an airplane crash; Chissano became president. In 1989 FRELIMO formally abandoned Marxism-Leninism in favor of democratic socialism and a market economy. In 1992 a ceasefire was signed, followed by a full peace agreement. RENAMO recognized the government's legitimacy and agreed to begin operating as the opposition political party.

In 1994, the first multiparty elections were held. The elections attracted a 90 percent turnout and were judged a resounding success by Mozambicans and the international community despite a last-minute preelection boycott call by RENAMO, which accused FRELIMO of fraud. In response, in large part due to pressure from its international sponsors, RENAMO decided to participate at the last minute. Its leader, Alfonso Dhlakama, captured 33.7 percent of the presidential vote as against 53.3 percent for the incumbent, Chissano. The parliamentary vote was much closer, although FRELIMO won a narrow, but workable, majority.

The next round of presidential and legislative elections took place in December 1999. Chissano and the ruling FRELIMO were reelected, despite a strong showing by the opposition in both elections. The Carter Center, which observed the elections, determined that they showed signs of a maturing political system, although RENAMO complained vociferously of fraud, and resultant political unrest continued throughout

much of 2000. In addition, in 2000 a series of major floods seriously affected the Mozambican economy, killing 650 people and forcing 500,000 to flee from their homes.

Political divisions continued to characterize the country six years after negotiations ended 20 years of anticolonial and civil war. FRELIMO maintains its dominance of government institutions. RENAMO, its former guerrilla foe and now primary parliamentary opponent, has continued to complain bitterly of official manipulation of elections and the use of international aid to secure the ruling party's position. Abuses by myriad security forces and banditry are endemic. While economic growth has continued with extensive foreign aid, widespread corruption has damaged the government's standing.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Mozambicans are able to select their president and parliament through competitive electoral processes, although this freedom is constrained by the social, political, and economic ravages of years of civil war, in addition to a lack of familiarity with democratic practices. Democratic consolidation remains tenuous, but dialogue and conflict are largely channeled through the country's democratic institutions. The 1999 polls were marred by logistical and administrative difficulties, but were viewed by many Mozambicans and the international community as expressing the will of the people. These national elections were just the second since Mozambique adopted a pluralist multiparty system. In addition, Chissano's announcement that he would not run again in 2004 out of respect for the democratic process, both nationally and within FRELIMO, appears to reflect a willingness to accept the principles of democratic practice, including alternance in power.

Continued claims by RENAMO of election fraud, however, have resulted in a highly polarized political environment. In protest of alleged fraud, RENAMO deputies repeatedly walked out of parliament or otherwise interrupted its proceedings throughout 2000 and into 2001. At the peak of the boycott, RENAMO threatened to form a government of its own in the six northern and central provinces where it had won the most votes in the December elections.

A parliamentary ad hoc committee was set up to revise the country's electoral law. In 2002, the draft legislation is to be discussed with the government, current electoral bodies, political parties not represented in parliament, and the civil society. A number of procedural changes undertaken in 2001 within the parliament itself, including a strengthening of the committee system, resulted in that body's increased effectiveness and impact.

An antigovernment demonstration in November 2000 resulted in the deaths of more than 40 RENAMO supporters. Approximately 80 prisoners, mostly RENAMO backers, were suffocated under mysterious circumstances at about the same time. In April 2001 Parliament decided to extend the mandate of a commission set up to investigate the killings.

In December 2000, President Joachim Chissano and RENAMO'S Alphonse Dhlakama began an inconclusive series of meetings that continued sporadically into 2001, raising hopes that the political impasse could be attenuated. A key disagreement has been over the appointment of provincial governors, with Dhlakama insisting that RENAMO nominate governors for the six provinces where RENAMO had won a majority of votes in the 1999 general elections.

International assistance continues to play an important role in supporting Mozambique's democratization process. For example, more than 80 percent of those eligible registered to vote in the 1999 elections as part of a \$40 million election process

largely funded by the European Union and other donors. More controversially, some political campaigns were supported by foreign money. The National Elections Commission was criticized by opposition parties and some independent observers for alleged pro-FRELIMO bias. Parliament is active and is an important player in the political process, although its power is overshadowed by that of the executive branch.

Mozambicans have a choice in terms of parties, although ideological differences between FRELIMO and RENAMO have narrowed since the end of the civil war. RENAMO had created a broader opposition umbrella with ten parties, although that has partially splintered. Both parties are criticized for lacking compelling messages for the country's seven million voters. RENAMO has been accused of maintaining groups of armed former guerrillas. It has admitted that some former guerrillas may still be active, but that they have yet to be incorporated into the new police force, as provided for under the 1994 peace agreement.

The 1990 constitution provides for press freedom. With the opening up of independent newspapers, the share of the civil war era government newspapers has fallen. The most important media company to arise is the cooperative Mediacoop, which owns the successful Mediafax, sent to hundreds of direct subscribers but read very widely—the periodical *Mozambique Interview* and the weekly *Savana*.

The independent media have enjoyed moderate growth, but publications in Maputo have little influence in the largely illiterate rural population. Criminal libel laws are another important deterrent to open expression. The constitution protects media freedom, but the state controls nearly all broadcast media and owns or influences all of the largest newspapers. There are more than a dozen licensed private radio and television stations, which also exercise some degree of self-censorship. The opposition receives inadequate coverage in government media, especially in national radio and television.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), including the Mozambican Human Rights League, are free to operate openly and issue critical reports. International human rights and humanitarian groups are also allowed to operate in the country. There is no reported interference with free religious practice.

The Ministry of Justice's annual review published in March 2001 reports that the Mozambican judicial system is "sick" due to obsolete laws, which leads to a "frightful absence of ethics, zeal, and dedication" in entities charged with administering justice. Explicitly recognizing serious problems in the judicial sector, the government has pledged its commitment to deep reforms in the country's justice system. Mozambican law is based on Portuguese law, itself heavily influenced by Roman law. The 1990 constitution calls for the courts' independence from the legislature, ending their subordination to the parliament, as had been the case under the 1975 constitution. However, the court system was established under the previous constitutional framework.

Corruption within the legal sector remains a serious problem. A report by the Human Rights and Development Association (HRDA) in 1999 charged that rampant corruption within Mozambique's crumbling judicial system has robbed thousands of citizens of their right to a fair trial. The report suggested that Mozambique's constitution, which guarantees citizens the right to a speedy and fair trial with legal representation, was being undermined by the crisis. The HRDA report also criticized Mozambican jails as "massively overcrowded." The major Beira prison was built for only 120 inmates but currently holds between 600 and 700 prisoners.

Criminal suspects are usually detained for many months before appearing in court

without any formal defense. Then they are tried only in the official language, Portuguese, which many Mozambicans speak very poorly. Mozambique has only 170 judges or magistrates and an estimated 200 defense lawyers for a population of 15 million. These problems are compounded by bureaucratic red tape. Bribery of judges by lawyers is alleged to be common practice. For example, judges regularly set bail so low on serious crimes that suspects simply flee justice.

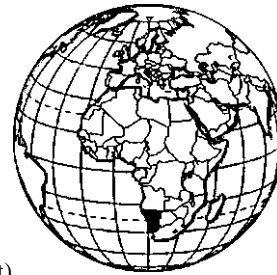
During the period of one-party rule, FRELIMO tightly controlled Mozambique's labor movement. The Organization of Mozambican Workers, the country's major trade confederation, is now nominally independent. The Organization of Free and Independent Unions, a more independent group, was formed in 1994. All workers in nonessential services have the right to strike. The right to bargain collectively is legally protected.

Freedom of assembly is broadly guaranteed, but limited by notification and timing restrictions. Women suffer from both legal and societal discrimination. Domestic violence is reportedly common, despite initiatives by the government and civic groups to reduce it. Despite some economic gains, the country remains among the world's poorest and suffers from one of the world's highest infant mortality rates.

## ↓ Namibia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 1,800,000  
 PPP: \$5,468  
 Life Expectancy: 46

Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Status: Free



Ethnic Groups: Ovambo (50 percent), Kavangos (9 percent), Herero (7 percent), Damara (7 percent), Nama (5 percent), Caprivian (4 percent), Bushmen (3 percent), Baster (2 percent), white (6 percent), mixed (7 percent)  
 Capital: Windhoek

Trend Arrow: Namibia received a downward trend arrow for attempts to limit the distribution of an independent newspaper that had been critical of the government's policies, and threats to bar the entry of homosexuals into the country.

### Overview:

President Sam Nujoma in November 2001 said he would not seek a fourth term in office, putting to rest questions about whether there would be a constitutional change similar to the one that allowed him to seek a third term in 1999. Human rights abuses in the northern Caprivi and Kavango regions abated somewhat in 2001, although there were continued reports of serious violations, including torture and extrajudicial killings. The Namibian Society for Human Rights said there had been "widespread and systematic acts or statements manifesting or inciting racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance" in the country. Nujoma in 2001 threatened to deport homosexuals who tried to enter Namibia. Press freedom suffered a setback during the year when the government banned the distribution of the independent *Namibian* newspaper in government offices.

Namibia was seized by German imperial forces in the late 1800s. Thousands of people were massacred by German troops in efforts to crush all resistance to colonial settlement and administration. The territory became a South African protectorate after German forces were expelled during World War I and was ruled under the apartheid system for 42 years after 1948. A United Nations-supervised democratic transition, with free and fair elections in which Nujoma was elected president, followed 13 years of violent guerrilla war, and Namibia achieved independence in 1990.

The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) scored a sweeping victory, and Nujoma was reelected in November 1994. Nujoma, the leader of the country's struggle against apartheid, has adopted an increasingly authoritarian governing style. He was easily returned to power with 77 percent of the vote for a third five-year term in the December 1999 elections that also saw SWAPO dominate national assembly polls. The party had succeeded in passing a bitterly contested constitutional amendment to allow Nujoma to seek another term.

Capital-intensive extractive industries such as diamond and uranium mining have drawn significant foreign investment and are the centerpieces of Namibia's economic growth. Most Namibians, however, continue to live as subsistence farmers, and many lack basic services. Insecurity in the northern Kavango region has taken its toll on the country's important tourism industry.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Namibia's 1999 elections were judged as largely free and fair and allowed Namibians to exercise their constitutional right to choose their representatives for the third time. There were some instances of government harassment of the opposition, as well as unequal access to media coverage and campaign financing. The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) retained its two-thirds majority in the 72-member national assembly in 1999, increasing its number of seats from 53 to 55. The Congress of Democrats and the Turnhalle Alliance each got 7 seats. The United Democratic Front won 2, and the Monitor Action group got 1 seat.

In 1998, the electoral commission was removed from the prime minister's office and reorganized as an independent agency. While the president will still appoint commission members, he does so on the advice of a board that includes representatives of civil society. Political discussion is generally open and vigorous. The ruling party's main base is among the country's largest ethnic group, the Ovambo, whose prominence within SWAPO has evoked allegations of ethnic discrimination.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, and the government respects this. In rural areas, local chiefs use traditional courts that often ignore constitutional procedures. The government in December 2001 appealed a high court ruling that required it provide free legal representation to 128 high-treason suspects. They had been in custody for nearly two years in connection with alleged secessionist activities in Caprivi. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees in December 2001 expressed concern that 80 suspected National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) fighters and collaborators had not yet appeared in court 18 months after they were detained. Critics accused Namibia of abandoning its neutrality in the Angolan war after it granted Luanda the right to use its territory to launch attacks against strongholds of UNITA under a December 1999 mutual defense pact.

Respect for human rights in Namibia is good, although allegations of abuses by

security forces, including torture and extrajudicial killings, have emerged from the Caprivi Strip, the Kavango region, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Fighting in Caprivi flared in October 1998 and in August 1999. Caprivi, a finger of land poking eastwards out of northern Namibia along its borders with Angola and Botswana, differs geographically, politically, and in its ethnic makeup from the rest of Namibia. It was used by South Africa in that country's operations against SWAPO guerrillas. Caprivians accuse the government of neglect in their province, which is among the country's poorest. UNITA has been accused of supporting Caprivi insurgents.

The Herero and Damara peoples are among the minority ethnic groups demanding larger government allocations for development in their home areas. Former guerrilla fighters of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia continue to demand jobs, land, and other benefits that they had been promised.

Namibia's constitution guarantees the right to free speech and a free press, and those rights are usually respected in practice. Private radio stations and critical independent newspapers usually operate without official interference, but reporters for state-run media have been subjected to indirect and direct pressure to avoid reporting on controversial topics, such as the Caprivi issue. The government received widespread criticism in 2001 for first barring government advertising in the independent *Namibian* newspaper, and then prohibiting that the paper be distributed in government offices. Measures included in a proposed defense bill that would have limited media coverage of security and defense issues was tabled in 2001. There are at least five private radio stations and one private television station. The state-run Namibia Broadcasting Corporation has regularly presented views critical of the government.

Freedom of assembly is guaranteed, except in situations of national emergency. Organizers of public meetings are required to obtain police approval, but the law is rarely enforced. Freedom of religion is guaranteed and respected in practice. Despite constitutional guarantees, women continue to face serious discrimination in customary law and other traditional societal practices. Although violence against women is reportedly widespread, there is greater attention being focused on the specific problems of rape and domestic violence. Women are increasingly involved in the political process, but remain underrepresented in government and politics.

Constitutionally guaranteed union rights are respected. The two main union federations are the National Union of Namibian Workers and the Namibia Federation of Trade Unions. Collective bargaining is not practiced widely outside the mining and construction industries. Informal collective bargaining is increasingly common. Essential public sector workers do not have the right to strike. Domestic and farm laborers remain the country's most heavily exploited workers, in part because many are illiterate and do not know their rights.

# Nauru

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 10,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 61  
 Ethnic Groups: Nauruan (58 percent), other Pacific Islander (26 percent), Chinese (8 percent), European (8 percent)  
 Capital: Yaren



## Overview:

Nauru was one of three countries threatened with limited economic sanctions by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in June as part of a revised blacklist of countries deemed to be havens for money laundering. President Bernard Dowiyogo was forced from office on March 29 in a political crisis over the alleged involvement of a Russian organized crime syndicate in Nauru's financial activities, and was replaced by former President Rene Harris. In September, Nauru agreed to accept about 800 mainly Afghan refugees from Australia while their applications were being processed, in return for a payment of \$20 million, and in December was asked by Australia to accept up to 400 more. The tiny Pacific island has enormous international debts and faces imminent bankruptcy.

Nauru, an eight-square-mile island 1,600 miles northeast of New Zealand in the west-central Pacific, became a German protectorate in the 1880s. Following World War I, Australia administered the island under a League of Nations mandate. The Japanese occupied Nauru during World War II, shipping 1,200 Nauru islanders to the island of Truk to work as forced laborers. In 1947, Nauru was made a United Nations Trust Territory under Australian administration. Greater autonomy was granted in 1966 with the election of a parliament, which was responsible for all matters except defense, foreign affairs, and the local phosphate industry. The country achieved full independence in 1968, and Hammer DeRoburt, who had been head chief of Nauru since 1956, became the first president in May 1968. Intense personal rivalries in the tiny, faction-ridden parliament have resulted in chronic political instability, with nine changes of government in the last five years.

As veteran politicians, Dowiyogo and Harris have continued to trade power over the past several years. In July 2000, Dowiyogo won back the presidency from Harris in a close run in the 18-member parliament. In March 2001, after a parliamentary no-confidence vote held in his absence during a debate on Nauru's tax-haven links to a Russian organized crime syndicate, Dowiyogo was ousted and Harris was elected once again by a vote of 9-6.

Phosphate mining gave Nauru a high per capita income, but 90 years of phosphate mining has left 80 percent of the land uninhabitable. In 1989, Nauru sued Australia in the International Court of Justice for additional royalties for mining done during the trusteeship period. Australia agreed to pay \$70.4 million over 20 years in an out-of-

court settlement reached in 1993. Phosphate reserves are likely to become exhausted by 2005. Future generations will draw income from the government's Nauru Phosphate Royalties Trust, but the trust has lost millions of dollars through failed investments, speculation in the Tokyo stock market, and international financial scams.

The government has carried out fiscal austerity programs, which have drastically reduced budgets, and has been compelled to develop alternative industries, one of which is to make Nauru an offshore banking center. Lack of legal controls, however, has invited the inflow of money (an estimated \$70 billion) from questionable sources for money laundering purposes. At the end of 1999, an OECD-sponsored financial action task force had put Nauru and other countries on a blacklist. The Nauruan government refused to answer to these accusations until four U.S. banks imposed a ban on U.S. dollar trade with the island in January 2000. In exchange for a lifting of the ban, the government agreed to institute new banking laws and conduct closer monitoring of banking activities. In August 2001, parliament passed legislation establishing a regulatory body to supervise offshore banking. Nevertheless, the task force deemed the measure to be insufficient, and when Nauru failed to meet a November 30 deadline to make "appropriate amendments" to the legislation, it was threatened with economic sanctions.

### Political Rights

#### and Civil Liberties:

Citizens of Nauru can change their government democratically. Voting by secret ballot is compulsory for all citizens over the age of 20. The 1968 republican constitution provides for an 18-member parliament, representing 14 constituencies, directly elected for a three-year term. Parliament elects the president, who serves as head of state and head of government, from among its members. The elected Nauru Island Council serves as the local government and provides public services. All changes in government have occurred peacefully and in accordance with the constitution, and multiple candidates competed in recent parliamentary elections. There have been ad hoc political parties since independence, but politics is generally based on personal loyalties and occasionally on issue-based coalitions.

The judiciary is independent, and the right to public trial is upheld. Many cases are settled out of court through traditional mediation procedures. The police force of fewer than 100 members is under civilian control. Some foreign workers have alleged that they receive inferior police protection compared with Nauruan citizens.

The government respects freedom of speech and of the press. There is no regular independent news publication, but the government puts out the *Nauru Bulletin*, a weekly newspaper. The state owns Radio Nauru, which carries Radio Australia and BBC broadcasts, as well as the local Nauru TV. In May 2000, police raided Nauru TV and confiscated a videotape of a parliamentary vote. In August, the government banned Agence France-Presse reporter Michael Field from entering Nauru to cover an annual summit meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum. Although no reason was given for the ban, Field had been regularly covering Nauru's involvement with money laundering issues. Four pro-independence activists from Irian Jaya, a province of Indonesia, were also banned from attending the meeting.

Freedom of religion is respected in law and in practice. Freedom of assembly and association is respected. Workers have the constitutional right to form independent unions, but successive governments have generally discouraged labor organizing and no trade unions have formed. The private sector employs only one percent of all sala-



ried workers. There is no legal basis for collective bargaining or holding strikes, and these activities rarely occur in practice.

Citizens enjoy freedom of domestic and foreign travel. Foreign workers must apply to their employers for permission to leave the country during the period of their employment contracts. Those who leave without permission are likely to lose their jobs. A law requiring foreign workers who are fired to leave the country within 60 days has created serious hardship for many foreign workers. Women legally possess the same rights as men, but they continue to face discrimination in education and employment. They are also underrepresented in government and politics; there are no female members of parliament.

## ↓ Nepal

Polity: Parliamentary democracy (insurgency) Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 23,500,000  
 PPP: \$1,237

Life Expectancy: 57

Ethnic Groups: Brahman, Chetri, Newar, Gurung,  
 Sherpa, Magar, Tamang, Bhotia, Rai, Limbu

Capital: Kathmandu

Trend Arrow: Nepal received a downward trend arrow because of civil liberties restrictions imposed by the government following increased attacks by left-wing rebels.



### Overview:

Civil liberties in Nepal were in limbo late in the year after the constitutional monarch, King Gyanendra, declared a state of emergency and ordered the 50,000-strong army to fight a Maoist insurgency that has claimed more than 2,000 lives since 1996. Wielding a new antiterrorism law, authorities rounded up dozens of lawyers, students, teachers, journalists, and other suspected members or supporters of the Maoist group, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), Amnesty International reported. Press reports suggested that by year's end the government had also shut down up to 30 trade unions, student groups, and other organizations allegedly linked to the Maoists.

The king's orders in November came three days after the Maoists broke a four-month ceasefire and less than six months after Gyanendra came to the throne following a palace massacre that killed King Birendra and nine other royal family members. The emergency measures restrict freedoms of the press, assembly, and movement. Announced by the government the same day, the antiterrorism law allows authorities to detain suspects for up to six months without trials. The insurgency and royal killings crimped tourism, trade, and industry.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah unified this Himalayan land in 1769. Following two centuries of palace rule, the left-leaning Nepali Congress (NC) party won Nepal's first elections in 1959. King Mahendra abruptly dissolved parliament and banned political parties in 1960, and in 1962 began ruling through a repressive *panchayat* (village coun-

oil) system. Many parties went underground until early 1990, when the NC and a coalition of Communist parties organized pro-democracy rallies that led King Birendra to legalize political parties that April. An interim government introduced a constitution that vested executive power in the prime minister and cabinet and turned Nepal into a constitutional monarchy. The king can wield emergency powers and suspend many basic freedoms in the event of war, external aggression, armed revolt, or extreme economic depression.

In Nepal's first multiparty elections in 32 years in 1991, Giraja Prasad Koirala, a veteran dissident, led the NC to victory and formed a government. Riven by intraparty conflicts, the NC was forced to call early elections in 1994 that it lost to the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist), or CPN-UML.

The Communists, however, failed to win a majority in the 205-seat parliament, which allowed the small, pro-monarchist National Democratic Party (RPP) to use its swing votes to broker the rise and fall of successive governments. Hopes for more stable government rose after the NC won a majority in elections held on May 3 and May 17, 1999. The NC won 111 seats; CPN-UML, 71; RPP, 11; and four smaller parties, 12. Turnout was 66 percent. The campaign centered on the problems of rampant official corruption, stagnant economic growth, the Maoist insurgency, and the continued presence of a decades-old Indian security post in Kalapani in far western Nepal.

The government's November 26 decision to use the army to fight the Maoists marked a sharp escalation in the conflict. As the army's supreme commander, the late King Birendra resisted the government's requests to use soldiers to suppress the Maoists. Though the Maoists have caused severe hardship in remote areas, analysts say the rebels are unlikely to topple the government in Kathmandu because the army is too strong. The state of emergency, meanwhile, will lapse after three months unless endorsed by parliament. If approved, it can last for up to six months, renewable only once for an additional six months.

Gyanendra acted after the rebels broke a ceasefire on November 23 with attacks on army posts in the northeastern Solukhumbu district that left up to 200 people dead, mostly rebels. Led by Baburam Bhattarai and Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the insurgency affected more than half of Nepal's 75 districts. The Maoists say they want an end to the constitutional monarchy and the feudal structure that persists in many parts of the country.

The Maoists had agreed to a ceasefire after Sher Bahadur Deuba, 55, in July became Nepal's 11th prime minister since the country's democratic transition began in 1990. The rebels apparently believed that Deuba, who was prime minister from 1995 to 1997, would be more flexible in negotiations than was his predecessor, veteran NC leader Koirala. The NC forced Koirala to stand down amid the continuing Maoist threat, a bribery case related to the illegal leasing of a passenger jet for state-run Royal Nepal Airlines, and fallout from the royal massacre. Koirala was widely criticized for the government's delay in releasing information about the June 1 palace killings. An apparently drunk Crown Prince Dipendra shot his parents—the late king and queen—to death along with seven other members of the royal family before killing himself.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Nepalese can change their government through elections, but face restrictions on many basic rights. Elections are free though not entirely fair because of irregularities or violence in some districts. In the 1999 elections, interparty clashes led to several election-re-

lated deaths and caused balloting to be postponed in dozens of districts. The 205-seat house of representatives is directly elected for a five-year term.

Under elected governments, Nepal's average income, literacy rate, and health indicators have shown gains. Wages, however, have remained largely stagnant in real terms, rampant corruption and smuggling have stunted economic development, and, according to local press reports, criminal gangs have penetrated politics. The government has made few reforms to Nepal's bloated, inefficient civil service, and ministries operate with little openness or accountability. Nepal's better-educated Brahmin, Chhetri, and in some cases Newari caste and ethnic groups, continue to play leading roles in politics, the civil service, and the military, although poorer groups are increasingly gaining influence in government.

The supreme court "has demonstrated independence; however, lower level courts remain vulnerable to political pressure and bribery of judges and court staff is endemic," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Nepal's human rights record in 2000. Corruption and the attitudes of officials largely prevent women from being able to secure their rights in courts, according to a 1999 report by the Kathmandu-based Institute for Legal Research and Resources. Because of heavy case backlogs and a slow appeals process, suspects often spend longer in pretrial detention than they would if convicted of the crimes for which they stand accused, the State Department report said.

Nepal's human rights record has improved considerably since the absolute monarchy ended, but serious problems remain. Many of the most severe abuses relate to the Maoist insurgency. The Maoists have killed, injured, and kidnapped civilians including suspected informers, landowners, local officials, teachers, and members of mainstream political parties, particularly the NC and the CPN-UML, according to the U.S. State Department, Amnesty International, and other sources. The rebels have also set up "people's courts" in some parts of Nepal that hand down summary justice. Adding to civilian hardship, the guerrillas fund themselves in part through extortion and looting. The Maoists reportedly also use children as soldiers, human shields, and couriers, the U.S. State Department report said.

Nepal's poorly equipped police force has been implicated in extrajudicial killings, disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions, rapes, and the torture of suspected Maoists and alleged supporters, the U.S. State Department, Amnesty International, and other sources have reported. Domestic human rights groups accuse the government of using tough security laws like the Public Security Act (PSA) to deter villagers from supporting the Maoists. As of late 2000, authorities had arrested some 5,866 suspected Maoists or alleged followers under the PSA since the beginning of the insurgency, according to the State Department report. Authorities had released 4,182 detainees, with 1,684 remaining either in custody or pretrial detention. The PSA allows officials to detain suspects for up to six months without filing charges. In addition to using the PSA against alleged rebels, authorities have also occasionally detained peaceful protesters under this act and under the 1970 Public Offenses Act. That law grants Nepal's 75 appointed chief district officers powers to detain suspects for up to three months under court orders.

In ordinary criminal cases, police at times commit extrajudicial killings and disappearances of suspects in custody, the U.S. State Department report said, and also torture and beat suspects to punish them or extract confessions. The government has generally refused to conduct thorough investigations and take serious disciplinary mea-

sures against officers accused of brutality. Prison conditions are poor, with overcrowding common and detainees sometimes handcuffed or fettered, according to the State Department report. Set up in 2000, the official Human Rights Commission has a mandate to investigate human rights violations but lacks enforcement powers and the resources to pursue cases in courts.

Conditions for journalists have worsened since the Maoist rebellion began. In recent years, authorities have detained several journalists on charges stemming from their coverage of the insurgency or for reporting allegations of police abuses and corruption. Immediately after King Gyanendra declared the state of emergency, authorities arrested ten journalists and computer operators from three leftist Kathmandu publications and warned the media to avoid any coverage that could "harm national dignity," according to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists.

Despite the risks involved, many of Nepal's hundreds of private newspapers and magazines vigorously criticize government policies. However, editors and writers at government newspapers such as the English-language *Rising Nepal* and the Nepali-language *Gorkhapatra*, both of which are major dailies, practice some self-censorship and generally slant coverage to favor government policies, the U.S. State Department report said.

In a society where only 38 percent of the population can read, many Nepalese depend on radio for their news. The government owns the influential Radio Nepal, whose political coverage favors the ruling party. In a key ruling supporting press freedom, the Supreme Court in July declared unconstitutional a government ban on private FM radio stations broadcasting their own news programs. The government owns Nepal's sole television station, although two private cable networks serve the Kathmandu Valley. Both the constitution and the Press and Publications Act broadly suppress speech and writing that could undermine the monarchy, national security, public order, or interethnic or intercaste relations.

Nepalese groups ranging from diehard Communists to hardline monarchists frequently hold political rallies. Successive governments, however, have largely barred protests or other public criticism of both China's occupation of Tibet and Indian abuses in Kashmir. The government generally allows political parties and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to function freely, although it enforces a constitutional ban on political parties that are based on religious, caste, ethnic, tribal, or regional lines. Moreover, both police and Maoist guerrillas occasionally threaten human rights activists to try to deter them from investigating rights violations, according to the U.S. State Department report. The insurgency has forced several NGOs working on agricultural and health-related projects in midwestern Nepal to curb their activities, the report added.

Women rarely receive the same educational or employment opportunities as men, and there are relatively few women in government and the civil service, the U.S. State Department report said. Laws relating to property, divorce, and several other areas discriminate against women. The supreme court has declared unconstitutional many of Nepal's land laws, but the government has not reformed the affected statutes. Even where adequate laws exist, often they are not enforced. Particularly in rural areas, women face systematic discrimination that often prevents them from enjoying basic rights such as voting or holding property, according to the U.S. State Department report.

Studies and newspaper reports suggest that domestic violence and rape continue to be serious problems. The government has taken few steps to curb violence against

women or to assist victims, and authorities generally do not prosecute domestic violence cases. Organized gangs each year traffic some 5,000 to 7,000 Nepalese girls to work in Indian brothels, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO). Most victims are from the Tamang and other minority communities. Because the majority of prostitutes who return to Nepal are HIV-positive, nearly all returnees are shunned and are unable to obtain help to rebuild their lives.

Abortion is illegal, and Nepal's jails hold many women convicted of murder for having abortions or committing infanticide. Some of the inmates are rape victims who terminated their pregnancies. In 40 percent of marriages the bride is under the age of 14, according to Unicef.

Members of the Hindu upper castes largely dominate parliament and the bureaucracy, and low-caste Hindus, ethnic minorities, and Christians face discrimination in the civil service, courts, and government offices, the U.S. State Department report said. The government in August formally banned discrimination against members of the lowest caste and said it would move to end the caste system. Although the constitution describes Nepal as a Hindu kingdom, the actual percentage breakdown between the Hindu majority and the considerable Buddhist minority is unknown. The country has more than 75 ethnic groups that speak 50 different languages.

Nepalese officials at times extort money from or otherwise harass Tibetan asylum seekers who cross the border into Nepal, according to the U.S. State Department report. Some 2,000 to 3,000 Tibetans escape into exile via Nepal each year, with most ending up in India. Nepal also provides asylum to some 97,000 Bhutanese refugees.

While export-oriented carpet factories have reduced sharply their use of child workers, smaller carpet factories and several other industries continue to depend on child labor. Up to 40 percent of Nepalese children work, although 60 percent of those who work also attend school, according to a 1996 ILO study. However, the ministry of labor's enforcement record is improving and the government has introduced a number of programs designed to reduce child labor, the U.S. State Department report said. In a related problem, Kathmandu and other cities have hundreds of street children.

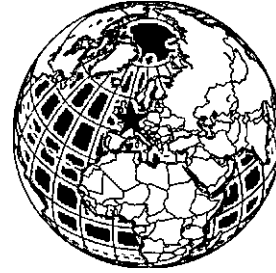
Illegal bonded labor is common on farms in the lowland Terai region, the western hills, and the Kathmandu Valley, according to the U.S. State Department and press reports. The government in 2000 abolished the feudal Kamaiya system in the southern Terai that had kept an estimated 200,000 mainly lower-caste workers and family members in bonded labor. News reports, however, suggested that authorities failed to provide most freed laborers with land or housing, and many ended up as squatters on open fields.

Nepal's trade unions are independent, but they have notched up few real gains for workers. By law, workers in certain "essential services," such as water supply, cannot stage strikes and 60 percent of a union's membership most vote in favor of a strike for the strike to be legal. Authorities weakly enforce laws on working hours and health and safety standards, the U.S. State Department report said. Only about 10 to 12 percent of workers in the formal sector are unionized. Overall, more than 80 percent of workers are engaged in subsistence agriculture.

## Netherlands

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Mixed capitalist  
Population: 16,000,000  
PPP: \$24,215  
Life Expectancy: 78  
Ethnic Groups: Dutch (91 percent), other (9 percent)  
Capital: Amsterdam

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Status: Free



### Overview:

The three-party coalition, which includes Prime Minister Wim Kok's Labor Party, the Liberal Party, and the Democrats-66 party has been in power since 1994. The "purple" coalition remains popular because of favorable economic conditions and reforms made within the extensive social welfare system. Nevertheless, the prime minister announced in August that he will not seek a third term and publicly endorsed Ad Melkert, the Labor parliamentary party chief, as his successor. The next general elections are expected in May 2002.

After the Dutch won independence from Spain in the sixteenth century, the House of Orange assumed sovereignty over the United Provinces of the Netherlands. A constitutional monarchy based on representative government emerged in the early 1800s. Queen Beatrix appoints the arbiters of executive authority (the council of ministers) and the governor of each province on the recommendation of the majority in parliament.

From the end of World War II until December 1958, the Netherlands was governed by coalitions in which the Labor and Catholic parties predominated. From 1958 until 1994, governments were formed from center-right coalitions of Christian Democrats and Liberals, with the social-democratic-oriented Labor Party usually in opposition. Since 1994, the Labor Party has been a member of the governing center-left coalition.

In July, the Dutch government ratified the Rome Statute, which provides for the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court. Once established, the court will be headquartered in the Netherlands.

### Political Rights

#### and Civil Liberties:

The Dutch can change their government democratically. A series of amendments to the original constitution has provided for welfare and democratic reform. The 150-member lower house, or Second Chamber, is elected for a four-year term by universal suffrage. The Second Chamber is empowered to debate bills and pass the approved measures to the upper house (First Chamber) for enactment. The 75 members of the upper house are indirectly elected for a period of four years. Local voting rights are accorded to foreigners after five years residence. The Netherlands is the only country in the European Union without elected mayors. Mayors are currently appointed by the government from a list of candidates submitted by the municipal council.

The press is free and independent, although journalists practice self-censorship when reporting on the royal family. All Dutch newspapers cooperate in the administration of the independent Netherlands News Agency. Radio and television broadcasters

operate autonomously under the supervision and regulation of the state and offer pluralistic views. Free speech is guaranteed, with the exception of the promotion of racism or the incitement to racism.

Freedom of religion is respected. Approximately 34 percent of the population is Roman Catholic; Protestants constitute 25 percent; and Muslims make up about 3 percent of the population. More than one-third of the population is unaffiliated with any religion. The government provides subsidies to church-affiliated schools based on the number of registered students.

A 24-member supreme court heads the country's independent judiciary, which also includes 5 courts of appeals, 19 district courts, and 62 lower courts. All judicial appointments are made by the crown on the basis of nominations by the parliament. Judges are nominally appointed for life, but retire at age 70. There is no jury system in Dutch courts.

Membership in labor unions is open to all workers, including military, police, and civil service employees. Workers are entitled to form or join unions of their own choosing without previous government authorization, and unions are free to affiliate with national trade union federations. Currently, about 28 percent of the workforce is unionized.

Immigrant groups face some de facto discrimination in housing and employment. Concentrated in larger cities, immigrants suffer from a high rate of unemployment. The government has been working for several years with employers' groups and unions to reduce minority unemployment levels to the national average. As a result of these efforts in recent years, the rate of job creation among ethnic minorities has been higher than among the general population. The Aliens Employment Act, which took effect in 2000, is intended to further increase the employment opportunities of minority groups and asylum seekers.

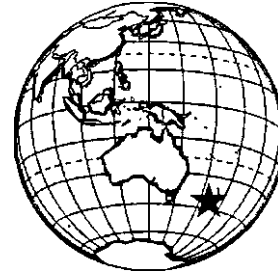
Gender-based discrimination is prohibited. Women are well represented in the government, education, and other fields. Women constitute 36 percent of the membership in the lower house and 26.7 percent in the upper house. Legislation to better regulate prostitution and end the 88-year-old ban on brothels went into effect in 2000. However, some reports indicate that smaller, conservative towns have been slow to implement this legislation.

In April the upper house approved legislation to legalize euthanasia and doctor-assisted suicide by a vote of 46 to 28. The Netherlands is the first country to make euthanasia legal. In 2000, the Dutch government voted to legalize same-sex marriages with the same pension, social security, and inheritance rights accorded to married heterosexual couples. A proposal to allow same-sex couples to adopt children was also approved. The new marriage law took effect in April 2001.

## New Zealand

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 3,900,000  
PPP: \$19,104  
Life Expectancy: 77  
Ethnic Groups: New Zealand European (74.5 percent), Maori (10 percent), other European (4.5 percent), Pacific Islander (4 percent), Asian and other (7 percent)  
Capital: Wellington

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Status: Free



### Overview:

With elections due by late 2002, Labor Prime Minister Helen Clark tried to drum up business in Asia for New Zealand's exports, while keeping public spending in check. Analysts said the government's tight budget unveiled in May was partly an effort to bolster Labor's credentials among business leaders. Trailing Labor in the polls, the conservative National Party in October named as its new leader 40-year-old Bill English, a former finance minister. Despite the global economic downturn, New Zealand's resource-based economy avoided a recession in 2001, although growth slowed late in the year. Analysts said the country's low public debt and inflation rate gave the government room to boost spending or to cut interest rates should flagging growth in Japan and other key markets prove too much of a drag on New Zealand's small, open economy.

New Zealand achieved full self-government prior to World War II, and gained full independence from the United Kingdom in 1947. Since 1935, political power in this parliamentary democracy has alternated between the mildly conservative National Party and the center-left Labor Party. Both parties helped to develop one of the world's most progressive welfare states.

Seeking to sharpen New Zealand's economic competitiveness in the face of increasing global competition, the Labor government in 1984 began cutting farm subsidies, trimming tariffs, and privatizing many industries. The harsh effects of the economic changes and a deep recession contributed to a National Party landslide in the 1990 elections. Rather than reverse course, however, Prime Minister Jim Bolger's government pushed the reforms even further by slashing welfare payments, reworking the labor law to discourage collective bargaining, and ending universal free hospital care. Bolger led the National Party to reelection in 1993 and again in 1996 before being forced to resign in 1997 by an intraparty coup led by Jenny Shipley, the transport minister. Heading a National Party faction favoring more conservative economic policies, Shipley tried to sell off government-owned shares of Wellington International Airport and other state assets.

Led by Clark, Labor won the November 1999 elections following a campaign dominated by questions about the accountability of state agencies and the Shipley government's controversial plan for electricity reform. Labor won 52 out of parliament's 120 seats and formed a coalition government with the small Alliance Party, which took 11.

Released in May 2001, the government's budget for the fiscal year ending in June



2002 keeps new spending to about \$262.4 million, or about 0.6 percent of gross domestic product. Clark, 51, also worked during the year to increase New Zealand's trade ties with Japan, China, Hong Kong, and other Asian markets. East Asia accounts for some 40 percent of New Zealand's exports and 30 percent of tourism dollars. Drought in some areas and the global economic downturn helped trim economic growth to 0.7 percent in the third quarter, down from 1.8 percent in the preceding quarter. By comparison, the economy grew by 3.4 percent in 2000. Economists, however, said that solid consumer confidence figures in December pointed to good retail sales growth, indicating that domestic demand would cushion the impact of the global downturn.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

New Zealanders can change their government through elections and face few restrictions on basic rights. Parliament is elected under a mixed proportional system that is designed to help smaller parties gain seats. The electoral system combines voting in geographic districts with proportional representation balloting. It also reserves six seats for members of the indigenous Maori population.

New Zealand's judiciary is independent, and defendants can appeal to the Privy Council in London. The government is responding to the serious problem of prison overcrowding by building new prisons. New Zealand's private newspapers and magazines cover politics vigorously and offer a range of political views. Following an outcry by domestic watchdog groups and the opposition National Party, the government in November withdrew a last-minute provision in an electoral bill that would have allowed for criminal defamation suits against articles written during election campaigns. The government said it would reintroduce the provision in 2002.

While Prime Minister Helen Clark and several other women hold senior government posts, women on the whole are underrepresented in government and politics. They also earned only 86 percent of men's average ordinary hourly wage, as of the second quarter of 2000. Despite numerous government initiatives aimed at curbing spousal abuse, violence against women is a continuing problem that affects all socioeconomic groups. A 1997 government-sponsored survey found that one woman in seven living with a male partner was abused physically or sexually by the partner in the previous 12 months. The survey also found that one in 16 women is sexually assaulted each year.

New Zealand's indigenous-Maori minority and tiny Pacific Islander population face unofficial discrimination in employment and education, according to the United States State Department's February 2001 report on New Zealand's human rights record in 2000. The government's Closing the Gaps Report in 2000 noted that Maoris continued to be found in disproportionate numbers on unemployment and welfare rolls, among school dropouts, in infant mortality statistics, among single-parent households, and among prison inmates. Though they make up just 15 percent of New Zealand's population, Maoris account for more than half of all inmates. The government has introduced numerous programs to help advance the social and economic status of Maoris and Pacific Islanders. By most accounts, many of these initiatives, like a policy of bringing more minorities into the public sector, have been only marginally successful. A special tribunal continues to hear Maori tribal claims to land and other resources stemming from the white settlement of New Zealand. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between the British and the Maoris leases Maori land in perpetuity to the white "settlers."

Led by the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, the main labor federation, unions

advocate forcefully for worker's rights and practice collective bargaining extensively. In a gain for unionized workers, the government in 2000 passed the Employment Relations Act, which promotes collective bargaining and strengthens unions. The act also requires management and workers to bargain in good faith to achieve either collective or individual employment agreements. The International Labor Organization had ruled that the previous Employment Contracts Act, since repealed, violated the Geneva-based group's standards on collective bargaining, the right to strike, and freedom of association. However, sympathy strikes, secondary strikes, and strikes over social or political causes are still illegal. Despite these provisions, the government did not interfere with a brief strike in 2000 expressing solidarity with Fijian trade unionists. Fewer than 20 percent of wage earners are unionized.

## Nicaragua

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 5,200,000  
 PPP: \$2,279  
 Life Expectancy: 68  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (69 percent), white (17 percent), black (9 percent), Indian (5 percent)  
 Capital: Managua



### Overview:

In the November 4, 2001, elections, ruling Liberal Party candidate Enrique Bolanos, a conservative businessman respected for his personal integrity, defeated Sandinista leader and former President Daniel Ortega, 54 to 45 percent, in a bitterly fought contest in which the two major parties stacked the deck against smaller-party participation. Bolanos, who served as vice president in the administrations of the two people who beat Ortega in presidential contests, faces the daunting task of repairing a country still bearing the scars of the wars of the 1970s and 1980s and battered from the effects of 1998's devastating Hurricane Mitch. Nicaragua's economic plight actually worsened in 2001, as the election contest was held during a prolonged drought. In September 2001 the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued a precedent-setting ruling that recognized and protected a Nicaraguan tribe's legal rights to its traditional lands, natural resources, and environment.

The Republic of Nicaragua was established in 1838, seventeen years after independence from Spain. Its history has been marked by internal strife and dictatorship. The authoritarian rule of the Somoza regime was overthrown in 1979 by the Sandinistas. Subsequently, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) attempted to establish a Marxist government, which led to a civil war. The United States intervened indirectly, using Argentine military veterans from that country's "dirty war" on behalf of the right-wing irregular army known as the Contras. The FSLN finally conceded in 1987 to a

new constitution that provides for a president and a 96-member national assembly elected every six years. Shortly before the 1990 elections, hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland were turned over to peasant cooperatives under a land reform program, while Sandinista leaders confiscated the best luxury properties and businesses for themselves.

In 1990, the newspaper publisher Violeta Chamorro easily defeated the incumbent, President Daniel Ortega. Her 14-party National Opposition Union (UNO) won a legislative majority in the national assembly. In February 1995, after passage of a law ensuring the military's autonomy, Humberto Ortega—Daniel's brother—turned over command of the military to General Joaquín Cuadra. The army was reduced from 90,000 to 15,000 troops, and former Contras were integrated into its ranks; however, the leadership remained essentially the same. The armed forces continued to own a profitable network of businesses and property amassed under the Sandinistas.

Chamorro was forbidden by law to seek a second term. The 1996 elections were held under the auspices of the five-member Supreme Electoral Council, an independent branch of government. During the campaign, Daniel Ortega portrayed himself as a moderate committed to national unity and reconciliation. Arnaldo Alemán ran on a platform that promised economic reforms, the dismantling of the Sandinista-era bureaucracy, a clean up of the army, and the return of property confiscated by the Sandinistas to its original owners. He defeated Ortega 51 to 38 percent, avoiding a runoff.

President Alemán's first priority was to reform the army and the police. Alemán named a civilian-led Defense Ministry, and a new military code was adopted. The size of the national police was reduced from 16,000 to 6,800. Its leadership, however, was still composed largely of old Sandinista cadres.

In 1999, a governability pact was agreed to by Alemán's right-wing Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC) government and the opposition, led by Daniel Ortega. Although the accord ended a 14-year congressional impasse, Nicaragua's smaller parties immediately protested that political power, including greater representation on both the supreme court and the Supreme Electoral Council, was being "carved up" between the two historical antagonists. The reforms guaranteed Alemán a seat in both the Nicaraguan and the Central American parliaments, thus assuring him immunity from prosecution. The 1999 imprisonment of Comptroller-General Agustín Jarquín, whose office was probing suspicious land deals allegedly conducted by Alemán, was viewed as an important setback for judicial independence. (Throughout his presidency, Alemán was dogged by charges that he enriched himself in office, although he has never faced formal legal proceedings.)

The controversial political reforms, part of 18 constitutional reforms signed into law by Alemán in January 2000, served to disenfranchise Nicaragua's indigenous communities, and came as judicial independence remained under attack and beset by high-level corruption, abetted and protected by the two largest parties' lock on power. The deal forced all parties to re-register, with their applications supported by 75,000 signatures. The Yátama Party, led by long-time Indian activist Brooklyn Rivera, was initially denied a place on the ballot as a result of the deal, but won an initial court ruling with the support of a broad range of political, Roman Catholic Church, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) representatives. Yátama's right to a place on the ballot, however, was overturned by the Nicaraguan supreme court, a highly politicized body with loyalties to the two major parties. At least one person died and 12 others were

injured during demonstrations protesting the ruling. In the November 2000 municipal elections Sandinista candidates won the key mayoralty of Managua, the capital city, as well as 48 of 151 other top municipal posts up for grabs, including 11 of 17 state capitals.

In early 2001, Ortega led the presidential contest according to public opinion surveys, but Bolanos's candidacy was enhanced by the decision of Conservative Party candidate, Noel Vidaurre, a distant third in public opinion surveys, to drop out of the race, and by clear indications by the U.S. embassy that Washington favored the PLC candidate over Ortega. During the race, Bolanos promised that, if elected, he would nullify the "pact" between the Sandinistas and the Alemán government. Bolanos also broadly hinted that the Sandinistas' campaign received funds from abroad and that one suspected source was Libyan President Muammar al-Qaddafi, whom Ortega visited in May 2001.

Although the Sandinista government was accused of violating individual rights and democratic principles, Ortega, whose party's core support came from Nicaragua's poor, apologized for past mistakes and pledged to support farmers and respect private property; he took the conservative Alemán *bete noir*, Agustín Jarquín, as his running mate. Both Ortega and Bolanos, who was stripped of property and twice imprisoned under Ortega's government, pledged to fight Nicaragua's endemic corruption. Whether he was a changed man or not, Ortega's third straight defeat in a presidential contest set the stage for a spirited contest for control of the Sandinista Party.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Nicaraguans can change their government democratically, although the rules governing the 2001 contest were stacked in favor of the two largest parties, a development that helped the Sandinistas pick up an additional eight congressional seats, despite the presidential loss. Political and civic activities continued to be constrained by occasional violence, corruption, and drug-related crime.

The judiciary is independent but continues to be susceptible to political influence and corruption. Large case backlogs, long delays in trials, and lengthy pretrial detentions have caused the supreme court and national assembly to initiate comprehensive structural reforms of the judicial system. The ministry of government oversees the National Police, which is formally charged with internal security; in practice, the police share this responsibility with the army in rural areas. In 1999, the army was called out to help police confront striking transportation workers. Reflecting enhanced civilian control, the conduct of security forces continues to improve, although abuses of human rights still occur. Abuses are particularly pronounced among members of the army carrying out rural law enforcement duties, as they occasionally kill criminal suspects instead of arresting them. Corruption continues to be a serious problem in the Nicaraguan National Police. Forced confessions to the police remain a problem, as do cases in which security forces arbitrarily arrest and detain citizens. Prison and police holding-cell conditions are poor.

Violent crime is increasing in Managua and other major Nicaraguan cities, although the country remains relatively tranquil compared to some of its Central American neighbors. With long coastlines on both the Atlantic and Pacific, a high volume of land cargo, and myriad jungle airstrips, Nicaragua is an important transshipment point for drugs making their way to the north from South America. The Panamanian highway in

Nicaragua's southwest region is a primary venue for narcotics traffickers, although smuggling by air is increasing and small aircraft are occasionally commandeered by traffickers for flights to other countries. The growing level of exposure of Nicaraguan society to the drug trade is evidenced by the significant increase in the local use of cocaine.

The print media are varied and partisan, representing hardline and moderate Sandinista, as well as pro- and anti-government, positions. Before leaving office, the Sandinistas privatized the national radio system, most going to Sandinista loyalists. There are five television stations, three of which carry news programming with partisan political content.

Violence against women, including rape and domestic abuse, remains a serious problem.

Like most Latin American countries, Nicaragua nominally recognizes the rights of its indigenous communities in its constitution and laws, but in practice those rights have not been respected. Indigenous peoples live in two autonomous regions—the Northern Autonomous Atlantic Region (RAAN) and the Southern Autonomous Atlantic Region (RAAS). These are primarily Miskito, Sumo, Rama, and Garifuna peoples. In 1998, Indian parties showed significant political strength in the March regional elections, in which 45 autonomous councils were chosen. Native American political rights were severely curtailed by legislation enacted in 2000 forcing parties to re-register with an amount of signatures that it was virtually impossible to achieve.

In a major development in 2001, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights found that Nicaragua had violated the rights of the Awas Tingni community of eastern Nicaragua. The government of Arnaldo Alemán was found to have granted licenses to foreign logging companies for the exploitation of Indian communities' ancestral lands without consulting the original inhabitants. The case was the first time the Costa Rica-based tribunal ruled on a land dispute between an Indian group and a government. Legal scholars say that the Indians' landmark victory is likely to have an important effect in numerous other land disputes throughout Latin America.

Labor rights are complicated by the Sandinistas' use of unions as violent instruments to influence government economic policy. By means of the public sector unions, the Sandinistas have managed to gain ownership of more than three dozen privatized state enterprises. The legal rights of non-Sandinista unions are not fully guaranteed. Citizens have no effective recourse when labor laws are violated either by the government or by violent Sandinista actions. Child labor is also a problem.

## Niger

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Status: Partly Free

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 10,400,000

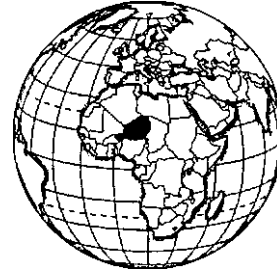
PPP: \$753

Life Expectancy: 41

Ethnic Groups: Hausa (56 percent), Djerma (22 percent), Fula (9 percent), Tuareg (8 percent), Beri Beri (4 percent), other (1 percent)

Capital: Niamey

Trend Arrow: Niger received an upward trend arrow due to the government's continued efforts at democratic reform, including making steps to improve the rights of women.



### Overview:

The government of President Mamadou Tandja reformed Niger's Penal code in 2001, making sexual harassment and performing female genital mutilation crimes. It also pledged to make labor sector reforms. Security forces clashed with demonstrators several times during the year as university students demanded payment of scholarship arrears and improvements in their living conditions. The violence prompted authorities to close Niger's only university in February. A dozen students in April were charged with murder stemming from unrest in February that left two dozen injured and one gendarme dead. Authorities in May banned a demonstration demanding the reopening of the university; classes later resumed. The government in March survived a no-confidence motion over its handling of the student unrest.

After gaining independence from France in 1960, Niger was governed for 30 years by one-party and military regimes dominated by leaders of Hausa or Djerma ethnicity. After 13 years of direct military rule, Niger was transformed into a nominally civilian, one-party state in 1987 under General Ah Seibou. International pressure and pro-democracy demonstrations led by the umbrella organization Niger Union of Trade Union Workers forced Niger's rulers to accede to the Africa-wide trend towards democratization in 1990. An all-party national conference drafted a new constitution that was adopted in a national referendum in 1992.

Mahamane Ousmane, of the Alliance of Forces for Change, won a five-year term as the country's first democratically elected president in 1993 in elections deemed free and fair. General Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara overthrew Ousmane in 1996 and won fraudulent elections later that year. Maïnassara was assassinated in April 1999 by members of the presidential guard. The head of the guard led a transitional government that held a constitutional referendum and elections that year.

Niger is struggling to implement unpopular structural reforms. The economy is based mainly on subsistence farming, small trading, herding, and informal markets. Uranium is the most important export, but world demand has declined.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

The people of Niger have had two chances, in 1993 and 1999, to change their leaders democratically. The July 1996

presidential election that followed the January 1996 military coup was held under a revised constitution and was not deemed free or fair by independent observers. Polls in 1999 were considered free and fair. Mamadou Tandja won the runoff with 60 percent of the vote.

Parliamentary elections in November 1996 were held in an atmosphere of intense intimidation and were boycotted by most opposition parties. In 1999, Tandja's party, the National Movement for the Development of Society, and its partner, the Democratic and Social Convention, achieved a two-thirds majority in the national assembly by winning 55 of the 83 seats. The other coalition, the Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism and the Rally for Democracy and Progress, won the other 28 seats.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, but it is subject to executive interference, is overburdened, and is limited by scant training and resources. Efforts at reform are under way. Family and business ties can influence lower courts. The supreme court on occasion has asserted its independence.

Respect for human rights has improved under the government of President Tandja. However, pretrial detention remains a problem, and detainees are often held for months or years without trial. Prisons are characterized by overcrowding and poor health and sanitary conditions. The International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian groups have unrestricted access to prisons and detention centers. Human rights and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operate openly and freely in the country, and publish reports that are often highly critical of the government.

Constitutional guarantees of freedom of assembly and association are generally respected. Political parties formed on religious, ethnic, or regional bases are barred. Constitutional protections for free expression are guaranteed, but these rights are not always guaranteed in practice. Criminal Penalties are exacted for violations such as slander. A government newspaper and at least a dozen private publications circulate; some of them are loosely affiliated with political parties. There are several private radio stations, some of which broadcast in local languages. Parliament opened a radio station in April 2001 as the Voice of the National Assembly. Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontières in October protested against the sentencing of the publishing director of *Le Canard Enchaîné*, Abdoulaye Tiemogo, to six months imprisonment for slander. Mauritanian journalists in December protested the adoption of a new tax bill that they said would effectively silence many independent newspapers, which could not afford higher taxes.

Freedom of religion is respected, although, at times, Muslims have not been tolerant of the rights of minority religions to practice their faith. Islam is practiced by more than 90 percent of the population. The government in 2000 banned six fundamentalist-oriented organizations following rioting by fundamentalist groups. Discrimination against ethnic minorities persists, despite constitutional protections. The Hausa and Djerma ethnic groups dominate government and business. Tandja is the country's first president who is from neither group. Nomadic people, such as the Tuaregs and many Peul, continue to have less access to government services. The Maïnassara regime in 1999 forged a peace pact with the Democratic Revolutionary United Front, which is composed mostly of minority ethnic Tobou people in southeastern Niger, ending the country's last serious insurgency.

Women suffer extensive societal discrimination, especially in rural areas. Family law gives women inferior status regarding property, inheritance, and divorce. In the east, some women among the Hausa and Peul ethnic groups are cloistered and may

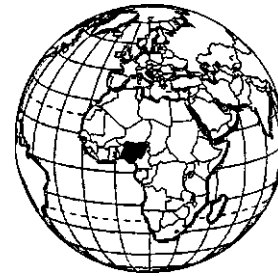
leave their homes only if escorted by a male and usually only after dark. Domestic violence against women is reportedly widespread. Several women's rights organizations operate in the country. Amendments to the Penal code in 2001 made sexual harassment and performing female genital mutilation illegal.

Niger's workers have the right to form unions and bargain for wages, although more than 95 percent of the workforce is employed in the nonunionized subsistence agricultural and small trading sectors.

## Nigeria

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 126,600,000  
PPP: \$853  
Life Expectancy: 52  
Ethnic Groups: Hausa and Fulani (29 percent), Yoruba (21 percent), Ibo (18 percent), other (32 percent)  
Capital: Abuja

Political Rights: 4  
Civil Liberties: 5\*  
Status: Partly Free



**Ratings Change:** Nigeria's civil liberties rating declined from 4 to 5 because of increasing inter-religious and inter-ethnic clashes, and a bloody crackdown by the military.

### Overview:

Violence on several levels wracked Nigeria in 2001, claiming thousands of lives and bringing the military under its most intense scrutiny since the return of democratic rule three years ago. Crime and vigilantism soared, fighting between Christians and Muslims continued, and tension among many of the country's 250 ethnic groups escalated. Southwest Nigeria was hit by a spate of political killings, including the shooting death of the country's justice minister, Bola Ige, in his home in December. The murder appeared to be rooted in local politics, which bodes poorly for the holding of peaceful elections in 2003. Heading off potential election-related violence will be a key challenge for the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The military ruled Nigeria for all but ten years since its independence from Britain in 1960 until 1999. Its generals and their backers argued that they were the only ones who could keep a lid on simmering tensions between Muslims and Christians on the one hand and the 122 million people who constitute the country's 250 ethnic groups on the other hand. The Hausa-Fulani from northern Nigeria dominated the military and the government from independence until Obasanjo, from the south, was elected. The north is largely Muslim while the south is mainly Christian.

Nigeria initially appeared to be emerging from several years of military rule under General Ibrahim Babangida in 1993, when presidential elections were held. Moshood Abiola, a Muslim Yoruba from the south, was widely considered the winner, but the military annulled the results. It continued to rule behind a puppet civilian administration until General Sani Abacha, a principal architect of previous coups, took power himself in November 1993. A predominantly military Provisional Ruling Council (PRC)



was appointed, and all democratic structures were dissolved and political parties banned. Abiola was arrested in June 1994 after declaring himself Nigeria's rightful president. He died in detention, after suffering from lack of proper medical care, just five weeks after Abacha himself died suddenly in June 1998.

The departure of the two most significant figures on Nigeria's political landscape opened possibilities for democratic change. General Abdulsalami Abubakar, the army chief of staff, emerged as the consensus choice of the military's PRC as the country's next leader and promised to oversee a transition to real civilian rule in 1999. Fraud and irregularities marred the polls, especially the presidential election, but most observers agreed that the election of Obasanjo reflected the will of the majority of voters. Obasanjo is a former general who led a military regime in Nigeria from 1976 to 1979, and spent three years in prison under Abacha.

Although the military has returned to the barracks under the civilian administration, abuses are still committed with impunity. When the military was deployed to central Taraba state in September 2001 to quell violence between members of the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups, 19 soldiers were abducted and killed. The army returned in force, torching settlements and killing more than 200 unarmed civilians. More northern states in 2001 introduced *Sharia* (Islamic law), which allows amputation, flogging, and decapitation as penalties. There were several clashes between Christians and Muslims during the year. The worst fighting left up to 1,000 people dead in the city of Jos.

The majority of Nigerians are engaged in small-scale agriculture, while most wealth is controlled by a small elite. Competition for resources often escalates into violence. Nigeria's agricultural and manufacturing sectors deteriorated considerably in the quest for oil, which accounts for more than 98 percent of Nigeria's export revenues and almost all foreign investment. Corruption has bled the country of billions of dollars in oil revenue. Economic reform is progressing slowly.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Nigerians exercised the right to change their government for the first time in 16 years in 1999. Although the voting was free, it was not fair in many areas in both the presidential and legislative polls. Irregularities occurred at each stage of the electoral process. During the presidential nominating convention, large sums of money were offered by both political camps to delegates to vote against political opponents. International observers witnessed serious irregularities during the presidential election, including the local purchase of false ballots and fraudulent tally sheets. The production of "ghost votes" in some states amounted to as many as 70 or 80 percent of the total reported votes. Olusegun Obasanjo, of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), won the presidency, which carries a four-year term, with 63 percent of the vote compared with 37 percent for Samuel Oluyemi Falae of the Alliance for Democracy (AD). International observers confirmed the results and stated that, despite widespread fraud, Obasanjo's victory reflected the will of most voters.

Members of the bicameral national assembly are elected for four-year terms to 109 seats in the senate and 360 in the house of representatives. Obasanjo's PDP won 59 senate seats and 206 house seats. The All People's Party won 24 seats in the senate and 74 in the house, while the AD won 20 senate seats and 68 house seats. The Independent National Electoral Commission is working with several international organizations to help improve the upcoming voting process in 2003.

The judiciary is subject to political influence and is hampered by corruption and inefficiency. Lengthy pretrial detention remains a problem. The country's prisons are overcrowded, unhealthful, and life threatening. The government has allowed international nongovernmental organizations to visit detention facilities, and some improvements have been made.

Respect for human rights has improved considerably under Obasanjo. The Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission, which is modeled on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, began hearing about 150 cases in 2000, those deemed the most serious, of some 11,000 complaints of alleged abuses spanning from the start of the Biafran war in 1966 through the regime of General Sani Abacha in the 1990s. Former military ruler Ibrahim Babangida and other previous military leaders ignored requests to appear before the rights panel in 2001.

Despite efforts to address past abuses, there are continuing reports of violations. Members of the security forces, including the police, anticrime units, vigilante groups, and the armed forces, committed serious violations. These included extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, torture, and beatings. There were a growing number of vigilante groups across the country in 2001, filling the gap of the poorly funded police force and answering a need to address skyrocketing crime. Thirty-six suspected criminals were publicly executed by vigilantes in the southeastern city of Onitsha in May by a group known as the Bakassi Boys. Many vigilante groups have the support of local officials, raising fears that vigilantes might be used in the next elections to carry out intimidation campaigns against political opponents, as has happened in the past.

Freedom of speech and expression is guaranteed, and the Obasanjo government respects these rights far more than the previous military administrations. Several private radio and television stations broadcast, and numerous print publications operate largely unhindered. However, criminal defamation laws are still used against journalists.

The editor of a weekly Lagos-based magazine, *Glamour Trends*, was arrested on charges of criminal defamation in June 2001. Armed police entered the offices of the magazine's publisher, Millennium Communications, and fired their guns to disperse employees before detaining Nnamdi Onyenua. He reportedly was arrested because of an article alleging that President Obasanjo received huge monetary allowances for each overseas trip he made.

The freedom of assembly and association is guaranteed and is usually respected in practice. The constitution prohibits ethnic discrimination and requires government offices to reflect the country's ethnic diversity. Obasanjo's government is both ethnically and religiously diverse, but societal discrimination is widely practiced and clashes frequently erupt among the country's 250 ethnic groups. A number of armed youth groups have emerged to defend their ethnic and economic interests. A land dispute reportedly triggered deadly clashes between the Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups in central Nigeria in June 2001 that left at least 200 dead and forced 50,000 others to flee their homes. Nineteen soldiers were abducted and killed when they were deployed to the area. The military returned in September and killed some 200 unarmed civilians.

Ethnic minorities in the Delta region feel particularly discriminated against, mainly in terms of receiving a share of the country's oil wealth. There were several oil spills and acts of sabotage in 2001 that disrupted petroleum production. The taking of foreign oil workers as hostages continued, as well as clashes between ethnic groups and communities competing for resources.

Religious freedom is guaranteed by the constitution, but many sectors of society, including government officials, often discriminate against those of a religion different from their own. Religious violence has become increasingly common and often corresponds with regional and ethnic differences and the competition for resources. Harsh

Penalties, including caning and amputation, have been carried out for violations such as adultery and theft.

Nigerian women face societal discrimination, although increased educational opportunities have eroded a number of barriers over the years. Women play a vital role in the country's informal economy. Marital rape is not considered a crime, and women of some ethnic groups are denied equal rights to inherit property. About 60 percent of Nigerian women are subjected to female genital mutilation. Women's rights have suffered serious setbacks in many northern states governed by Sharia. Child labor and the trafficking of women for prostitution remain common. A 2001 draft bill establishes a national agency to deal with that problem as well as child labor. The government in 2001 ratified several International Labor Organization (ILO) conventions on child labor.

The transitional government of General Abdulsalami Abubakar lifted decrees promulgated under Abacha that repressed labor rights, including the right to strike, and the country regained its position in the ILO. Nevertheless, there are several statutory restrictions on the right of association and on trade unions. Workers, except members of the armed forces and those considered essential employees, may join trade unions. About ten percent of the workforce is unionized.

## Norway

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 4,500,000  
 PPP: \$28,433  
 Life Expectancy: 78  
 Ethnic Groups: Norwegian, Finnish, Lapp (Saami) minority  
 Capital: Oslo



### Overview:

Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg and the Labor Party formally resigned in October after the party suffered its worst election defeat since 1924. Even though Norway is the world's second largest oil exporter, many Norwegians complained of high taxes and inadequate public services under the Labor Party and showed their discontent in the national elections in September. The Conservatives, the Christian Democrats, and the Liberal parties formed a new center-right coalition under Kjell Magne Bondevik, who returned as prime minister after resigning from the post in March 2000. The coalition, which holds 62 of the 165 seats, garnered support from the far-right Progress Party to give it the majority needed to pass legislation.

The Eisvold Convention, Norway's current constitution, was adopted during a

period of de facto independence immediately prior to the acceptance of the Swedish monarch as king of Norway in 1814. After the peaceful dissolution of its relationship with the Swedish crown in 1905, Norway chose a sovereign from a Danish royal house and began to function as a constitutional monarchy with a multiparty parliamentary structure.

The Labor government negotiated European Union (EU) membership in both 1972 and 1994; however the Norwegian electorate rejected it each time by a slim margin. A survey conducted in January found that 33 percent of Norwegians favored EU membership while 45 percent were against it. Although Norway is not a member of the EU, it does enjoy nearly full access to the EU's single market through membership in the European Economic Area.

In 2001 Norwegians debated the abolition of the monarchy in favor of a republic, following the engagement and marriage of Crown Prince Haakon to a commoner with a four-year-old son from a previous relationship.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Norwegians can change their government democratically. The *Storting* (Parliament) is directly elected for a four-year term by universal suffrage and proportional representation. It then selects one quarter of its members to serve as the upper chamber (*Lagting*), while the remaining members make up the lower chamber (*Odelsting*). Neither body is subject to dissolution. A vote of no-confidence in the *Storting* results in the resignation of the cabinet, and the leader of the party that holds the most seats is then asked to form a new government. In the October 2001 general elections, the Labor Party won 43 seats in parliament; the Conservatives, 38; the Progress Party, 26; the Socialist Left, 23; the Christian People's Party, 22; the Center Party, 10; the Liberal Party, 2; and the Coastal Party, 1.

Since 1989 the approximately 20,000-strong Lappic (Saamic) minority has elected an autonomous, 39-member assembly that functions as an advisory body on issues such as regional control of natural resources and the preservation of Saami culture. In 2000, the government granted the Saami assembly its own parliament building in Karasjok. In 1999, the Center for Combating Ethnic Discrimination was established by the government to provide legal aid to persons exposed to discrimination on grounds of religion, race, or national or ethnic origin.

In recent years there have been some instances of xenophobic and nationalist sentiments. The leader of the far-rightist Progress Party, Carl Hagen, demanded that the number of immigrants granted asylum in Norway be reduced. Although 5.5 percent of Norway's population is of foreign origin, most foreigners come from northern Europe. Only about 10,000 asylum seekers enter the country each year. In January, some 40,000 Norwegians took to the streets in Oslo to protest the first racially motivated killing of a black teenager by neo-Nazis.

Freedom of the press is constitutionally guaranteed, and many newspapers are subsidized by the state in order to promote political pluralism. The majority of newspapers are privately owned and openly partisan. Norway has one of the highest rates of Internet users per capita in the world.

The state finances the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in which 93 percent of the population holds nominal membership. The law requires that the monarch and at least half of the cabinet be Lutheran, and those professing the Lutheran Church are bound

by law to bring up their children in that faith. Roman Catholics and other Protestants make up 4 percent of the population, and the other 3 percent have no religious affiliation. Other denominations do not have to register with the state unless they seek state support. Muslims, who constitute less than 1 percent, were granted the right to broadcast calls to prayer in Oslo in 2000.

The constitution guarantees freedoms of peaceful assembly and association and the right to strike. Sixty percent of the workforce belong to unions, which are free from government control. The Norwegian Federation of Trade Unions, established 100 years ago, has about 850,000 members and is closely linked to the Labor Party. According to the International Labor Organization, Norwegian employees put in, on average, fewer hours at work than other Europeans.

The independent judiciary system is headed by a supreme court and operates at the local and national levels. The king, under advisement from the ministry of justice, appoints judges.

Women's rights are legally protected. In the Storting, women hold 35.8 percent of the seats. Nevertheless, only 1 percent of the executives of Norway's 500 largest enterprises are women; in the public sector the figure is approximately 11 percent.

## Oman

Polity: Traditional  
monarchy

Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Population: 2,400,000

PPP: \$13,356

Life Expectancy: 71

Ethnic Groups: Arab, Baluchi, South Asian, African

Capital: Muscat

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 5

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Flush with cash resulting from high crude oil prices, Oman continued to make slow progress toward economic reforms aimed at privatization, diversification, and attraction of foreign investment. Economists continued to express concern over Oman's overwhelming dependence on oil revenue and the slow pace of reform, but the incentive to reform tended to wane as oil prices increased.

Great Britain played a protective role in Oman between 1798 and 1951, when it formally recognized the sultanate's independence. Sultan Qabus took power in 1970 by overthrowing his father in a palace coup. A five-year rebellion by left-wing guerrillas opposed to the sultan's regime was crushed in 1975 with military assistance from Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iran, and Pakistan. Since a formal ceasefire in 1976, the sultan, who rules by decree on the advice of a council of ministers, has faced little opposition.

In 1991, Sultan Qabus established a 59-seat *Majlis al-Shura*, or consultative coun-

cil, selecting members from lists of nominees proposed by the country's 59 provinces. Membership was expanded to 80 seats in 1994 and to 82 in 1997. The council may comment or make recommendations on proposed government legislation, particularly economic policy, but it has no legislative power. In December 1997, the sultan appointed 41 members, including four women, to the new *Majlis al-Dawla*, or council of state. This council's functions and responsibilities are unclear. Together, the two bodies constitute the Majlis Oman, or council of Oman.

The government revised election procedures for the *Majlis al-Shura* prior to the July 2000 elections in order to overcome unspecified "irregularities" in prior elections. Changes included direct registration of candidates with provincial governors rather than with tribal leaders and an increase in the number of Omanis allowed to vote, from 50,000 to 175,000. In addition, those elected would automatically take their seats; in the past, the electorate voted for twice the number of candidates as council seats and the government chose the council from among those candidates. Voter registration was low, however, with only 115,000 eligible voters registered, and the number of candidates dropped to around 600, about 17 percent fewer than in the 1997 polls. Electoral apathy was attributed to concerns over job security—nominees must leave their jobs if elected—tribal loyalty, and the council's lack of authority.

Held in high esteem by his citizens, the sultan has transformed Oman from an impoverished country to one with a modern physical and financial infrastructure, social services, public utilities, health care, and education on a par with Western countries. Annual income per Omani is over \$10,000.

However, given the volatility of oil prices, particularly in the past decade, economists stress the need for economic liberalization, including regulatory reform designed to attract foreign investment and develop non-oil sectors of the economy. Oman has already removed many restrictions on foreign ownership and reduced the tax burden on foreign investors. In July 2001, the government announced a 30-year tax break for investors in a new free zone in a southern port city. In August, it announced that foreign investors would be invited into the mining sector by the end of the year. In 2000, Oman formalized its full membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a developing nation. This classification extends the transition time for compliance with WTO rules. Natural gas, manufacturing, ports, and telecommunication have emerged as fledgling industries, and the government has proposed privatizing water and sanitation services, cement companies, hotels, and airport services and maintenance. Still, oil continues to account for 80 percent of export earnings and 40 percent of gross domestic product. Analysts worry about the social consequences of population growth, which so far is unmatched by similar growth in the job market, and about the reluctance of private firms to hire Omani nationals, who would require better pay than foreigners.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Omanis cannot change their government democratically. The sultan has absolute power and rules by decree. The Majlis election in 2000 was somewhat fairer than past elections, although the government still chooses which Omanis may vote. There are no political parties or other formal democratic institutions. Citizens may petition the government indirectly through their local governors to redress grievances, or may appeal directly to the sultan during his annual three-week tour of the country. Succession may be a prob-

lematic issue for Oman, the only Persian Gulf state without an heir apparent. Qabus has no offspring and has not groomed an heir.

The Basic Law, Oman's first de facto written constitution, was promulgated by Sultan Qabus in 1996. In theory, it provides for an independent judiciary, due process, freedom of the press and of assembly, and prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of sex, ethnicity, race, religion, or social class. In reality, many of the laws and regulations required to implement these provisions have not been enacted.

The judiciary is subordinate to the sultan, who appoints all judges and has the final say on all rulings. Magistrate courts handle misdemeanors and criminal cases, and *Sharia* (Islamic law) courts handle personal status cases involving divorce and inheritance. A state security court handles matters of national security, and criminal cases as deemed necessary by the government. Security court defendants may not have counsel present and proceedings are not made public. The criminal code does not outline due process rights, though defendants are presumed innocent and do in fact enjoy some procedural safeguards. There are no jury trials; a single judge tries misdemeanors; a panel of three judges tries felonies and security offenses. Defendants in national security or serious felony trials may not appeal. Oman introduced the death Penalty for drug smuggling and production in 1999.

Police are not required to obtain warrants prior to making arrests and do not always respect legal procedures for pretrial detention. Security forces reportedly abuse detainees, but the practice is not widespread.

Criticism of the sultan is prohibited, although authorities do tolerate criticism of government officials and policies. The 1984 Press and Publication Law provides for censorship of all domestic and imported publications. However, journalists generally censor themselves to avoid harassment. Radio and television are government controlled and offer only official views. Satellite dishes are widely available, giving citizens access to foreign broadcasts including Al-Jazeera, a popular Qatar-based television channel that provides lively political debate and uncensored interviews with regional opposition activists. Uncensored Internet access is available to citizens and foreigners; there were reportedly 50,000 Omanis on-line in 2000.

All public gatherings must be government approved, though this rule is not always strictly enforced. Omanis rarely stage protests, but students and others have demonstrated peacefully in solidarity with Palestinians during clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. All associations must be registered with the government, and independent political groups and human rights organizations do not exist.

Islam is the state religion. Most Omanis are Ibadhi or Sunni Muslim, but there is a Shiite minority as well as small communities of Hindu and Christian citizens. Mosque sermons are monitored by the government for political content. Omani children must attend schools that provide instruction in Islam. Noncitizens, who are mainly immigrant workers from South Asia, are free to worship at churches and temples, some of which are built on land donated by the sultan. Non-Muslims may not proselytize Muslims, and non-Muslim groups may not publish religious material in the country. According to the U.S. State Department, relations between religious communities are amicable and religious discrimination is not a problem.

Women enjoy political rights and important positions in commerce, industry, and the professions. According to the ministry of education, nearly 90 percent of girls eli-

gible for elementary school enroll and roughly half the students at Sultan Qabus University are women. Women make up some 20 percent of civil servants and hold senior management posts in more than half of the top ten trading families in Oman. Women were allowed to vote and to stand in Shura council elections in 1994. However, traditional social pressures keep many women from taking part in public life, and discrimination is pervasive. Sharia favors men in matters of family-related law such as inheritance, and a woman must have the permission of a male relative to travel abroad. Female genital mutilation is practiced in some rural areas.

There are no trade unions and no provisions for them under law. Employers of more than 50 workers must form a body of labor and management representatives to discuss working conditions. These committees may not negotiate wages. Strikes are illegal and do not occur. Foreign workers constitute at least 50 percent of the workforce and some 80 percent of the modem-sector workforce. Oman has begun a campaign to replace foreign workers with nationals. In April 2001, authorities arrested more than 100 illegal immigrants and announced an amnesty for expatriates who have overstayed their visas. The amnesty allows illegal residents to leave Oman after paying a \$65 fine at the labor ministry, rather than the traditional Penalty of about \$26 per day. The government has set 2003 as the target date by which all government positions should be held by Omanis. Child labor is not widespread.

## Pakistan

Polity: Military                      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist      Civil Liberties: 5  
 Population: 145,000,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$1,834  
 Life Expectancy: 60  
 Ethnic Groups: Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch  
 Capital: Islamabad



### Overview:

Two years after deposing a corrupt and autocratic elected government, General Pervez Musharraf's military regime continued to rule Pakistan. Though Musharraf pledged to return Pakistan to civilian rule by the end of 2002 after cleaning up the country's finances and politics, he declared himself president in June and also dismissed the hitherto suspended national and provincial assemblies. Authorities cracked down on activism by several political parties, but did hold several rounds of nonparty elections to newly restructured local councils throughout the year. After the attacks of September 11, Musharraf's pledge to support the United States-led war on terrorism unleashed opposition from a number of Islamist parties and terrorist organizations based in Pakistan, some of whom had ties with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban regime. However, in early October, Musharraf consolidated his own political position by engineering a major reshuffle of top military positions that greatly reduced the influence of pro-Taliban supporters inside the army.



Pakistan came into existence in 1947 as a Muslim homeland with the partition of British India. Following a nine-month civil war, East Pakistan achieved independence in 1971 as the new state of Bangladesh. Deposing civilian governments at will, the army has ruled Pakistan for 27 of its 54 years of independence. As part of his efforts to consolidate power, the military dictator General Zia ul-Haq amended the constitution in 1985 to allow the president to dismiss elected governments. After Zia's death in 1988, successive presidents cited corruption and abuse of power in sacking elected governments headed by Benazir Bhutto of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in 1990 and 1996, and Nawaz Sharif of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) in 1993.

With Bhutto having been discredited by corruption scandals during her second term, the PML and its allies won more than 160 seats in the February 1997 elections, although only 35 percent of eligible voters voted. Over the next 30 months Sharif largely ignored Pakistan's pressing economic and social problems while undermining every institution capable of challenging him. This included repeating the president's constitutional power to dismiss governments, forcing the resignations of the chief justice of the supreme court and of an army chief, and cracking down on the press and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Sharif's downfall began in June 1999, when Indian troops bested Pakistani forces in skirmishes in Kashmir after Pakistani-backed Islamic militants seized strategic heights on the Indian side of the Line of Control. The fighting raised international concern because both countries had carried out underground nuclear tests in May 1998. Sharif ended the Kashmir crisis in July by ordering the militants to withdraw, but was blamed by the army for the debacle. On October 12, 1999, the army deposed Sharif in a bloodless coup after the prime minister had tried to dismiss Musharraf, then army chief. Musharraf appointed himself "chief executive," declared a state of emergency, and issued a Provisional Constitution Order suspending parliament, the provincial assemblies, and the constitution.

In December 2000, eighteen of Pakistan's political parties, including archrivals PML and PPP, joined to form the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD), an umbrella group calling for an end to military rule. However, Musharraf neutralized his primary political opponents when he exiled Nawaz Sharif to Saudi Arabia for ten years; Sharif had earlier been convicted of corruption, terrorism, and hijacking charges and faced an extended prison sentence. In June 2001, Benazir Bhutto was sentenced in absentia to three years in prison for failing to attend a trial on corruption charges and was warned that she faced arrest if she returned to Pakistan from self-exile in London and Dubai. Several times during the year, ARD leaders were placed under house arrest and their demonstrations were broken up by the authorities, who placed hundreds of political activists under preventative arrest.

Having justified his coup in part as a response to Pakistan's dire economic situation, Musharraf tried to increase government revenues. Authorities began documenting the black market economy and imposed a 15 percent retail tax in a country where fewer than one percent of the population pays taxes. Islamabad successfully concluded a three-year loan agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in September 2001, and in December the IMF approved a new \$1.3 billion loan for Pakistan. In November, the United States promised Pakistan more than a billion dollars in aid as a reward for its support for the war on terrorism, including funds for border security, refugee relief and antiterrorism measures, debt forgiveness, and trade and investment

incentives. In addition, economic sanctions, which had been imposed in the wake of the 1998 nuclear tests, were lifted. In an added boost for the economy, Pakistan's official creditors agreed in December to restructure \$12.5 billion of the country's external debt.

While making some progress on the economy, Musharraf has been less successful in reining in the activities and influence of Islamic fundamentalist groups. Last year, he was forced to backtrack on pledges to curb abuses of the blasphemy laws and to bring under state control the *madrassahs* (religious schools) run by Islamists. However, in February 2001 the government banned public fund-raising and the display of weapons by militant groups. After several high-profile incidents of sectarian violence in Karachi, Musharraf on August 14 banned two militant groups, the Sunni Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Shia Sipah-e-Mohammed, and temporarily arrested hundreds of activists in Lahore and Karachi in the week that followed. Following the September 11 attacks and Musharraf's subsequent decision to support the United States, Pakistan faced an intensification of activity by Islamist groups, who organized numerous anti-U.S. protests at which several protesters were killed and dozens injured. As a result, authorities arrested hundreds of alleged fundamentalists and imposed travel bans on several prominent religious leaders. Pakistan's two main religious parties, the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Jamiat Ulema Islam, had earlier allied themselves with a number of smaller parties to form the Afghan Defence Committee, which supported the Taliban regime. By the end of the year, a suicide attack on the Indian parliament building by members of an organization based in Pakistan had increased international pressure on Musharraf to intensify his crackdown against militant Islamic groups.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Pakistan continued to be ruled by a military government, headed by General Pervez Musharraf, which operated with limited transparency and accountability. While civilians still ran many agencies, the army set up "monitoring teams" to supervise civilian bureaucrats. According to records cited by *The Friday Times*, about 175 serving and retired military officers held high-level civilian posts at the beginning of 2001.

The 1973 constitution provides for a lower national assembly, which is directly elected for a five-year term, and an 87-seat senate, whose members are appointed by the four provincial assemblies for six-year terms. The constitution also vests executive power in a prime minister, who must be Muslim, and authorizes an electoral college to choose the largely ceremonial president, who also must be Muslim, for a five-year term. The provincial and national assemblies were suspended shortly after the military coup and were finally dismissed by Musharraf in June 2001. At the same time, he declared himself president, dismissing elected incumbent Rafiq Tarar, in a move calculated to strengthen his position ahead of bilateral talks with India in July.

In an August 14 speech, Musharraf pledged that provincial and federal elections would be held starting on October 1, 2002, thus standing by a May 2000 supreme court ruling (the ruling also validated the 1999 coup and empowered the government to amend the constitution unilaterally). In what the government had called the first step toward returning the country to democracy, local elections were held in 18 out of Pakistan's 106 administrative districts in December 2000. Further rounds of local elections were concluded in March and July of this year. Although the candidates were made to run as independents, most were informally affiliated with political parties, local clans, or pow-

erful families. In August, more than 100,000 recently elected local councilors voted for candidates to hold the positions of head and deputy head of district councils. These councils, intended to be part of Musharraf's initiative to democratize the political process, have replaced the British colonial system whereby deputy commissioners ran each district's administration and judiciary with little accountability. Although the exact role of the district council heads has not been spelled out, they are expected to have some tax-raising powers and control over the local police. In preparation for some form of democratic process at a national level, Musharraf promised to reform the election commission, prepare accurate election rolls, and introduce constitutional changes that would create checks and balances in the election system. He also plans to set up a powerful National Security Council, to be dominated by the military, whose purpose would be to "ensure continuity of the democratic process and reforms."

Pakistan has not formally annexed its Northern Areas—Hunza, Gilgit, and Baltistan—which form part of the disputed territory of Kashmir. Consequently, the roughly one million residents of the Northern Areas are not covered under the constitution and had no representation in the now-suspended federal parliament, although elections for local government posts were held in July 2000. In Pakistani-administered Kashmir, also called *Azad* (free) *Kashmir*, almost two million voters participated in elections held in July 2001 for the regional legislative assembly. However, Pakistani authorities barred 25 candidates from the pro-independence Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) from contesting elections after they refused to sign a declaration supporting the accession of all of Kashmir to Pakistan. Several dozen JKLF supporters, including its chief, Amanullah Khan, were arrested while protesting against the decision.

Voting laws have prevented several million bonded laborers throughout the country from voting because they lacked a fixed address, and have forced Christians and other minorities to vote on separate electoral rolls for a limited number of candidates from their communities. Many voters belonging to religious minorities boycotted the local elections after authorities disregarded their call for a joint electoral process. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), tribal leaders prevented many women from voting in the 1997 elections. Despite the reservation of 33 percent of all seats for women by election planners, conservative religious parties backed by militant groups successfully initiated a move to prevent women from contesting the July municipal elections in several districts of the NWFP.

The government continued to place pressure on political parties throughout the year. According to an October 2000 report by the New York-based Human Rights Watch, laws governing sedition, public order, and terrorism were used to raid party offices and detain scores of party activists and leaders in Punjab and Sindh for criticizing the army in party meetings or attempting to hold demonstrations. Moreover, the regime amended the Political Parties Act in August 2000 to bar anyone with a court conviction from holding party office, while the National Accountability Ordinance, introduced in 1999, automatically prohibits persons convicted of corruption under the law from holding public office for 21 years. If applied, these laws could end the political careers of Bhutto and Sharif, as well as other high-ranking political figures.

The Musharraf regime undermined the supreme court's reputation for indepen-

dence in January 2000, when it ordered all supreme court and high court judges to swear under oath to uphold the state of emergency and the Provisional Constitutional Order issued by Musharraf. Authorities removed the chief justice of the supreme court and 14 other judges for refusing to take the oath. Like Musharraf, Sharif and Bhutto had also tried while in office to manipulate the judiciary, which consists of civil and criminal courts and a special *Sharia* (Islamic law) court for certain offenses. Lower courts remained plagued by corruption; intimidation by local officials, powerful individuals, and Islamic extremists; and heavy backlogs that led to lengthy pretrial detentions.

The criminal courts include antiterrorism courts that operate with limited due process rights and that must conclude trials within seven days. The November 1999 National Accountability Ordinance vested broad powers of arrest, investigation, and prosecution in a new National Accountability Bureau and established special courts to try corruption cases that operate with limited procedural safeguards. From January 2000 to June 2001, the bureau investigated 871 cases (350 of which had been brought before the courts), which involved, among others, 270 politicians, 440 bureaucrats, and 18 former military officials. While the first phase targeted individuals, authorities are now also investigating governmental departments as well as financial institutions in an attempt to recover a larger share of an estimated \$2.75 billion in bad bank loans. In April, the supreme court ordered the government to amend the ordinance to restore the right to bail and reduce pretrial detention to a maximum of fifteen days.

The Sharia court enforces the 1979 Hudood Ordinances, which criminalized nonmarital rape, extramarital sex, and several alcohol, gambling, and property offenses. The ordinances provided for both Koranic punishments, including death by stoning for adultery, as well as jail terms and fines. In part because of strict evidentiary standards, authorities have never carried out the Koranic punishments. The FATA are under a separate legal system, the Frontier Crimes Regulation, which authorizes tribal elders and leaders to administer justice according to Sharia and tribal custom in proceedings that lack due process rights. Feudal landlords and tribal elders in rural Sindh province continued to adjudicate some disputes and impose punishment in unsanctioned courts called *jirgas*.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that police continued to routinely engage in crime; used excessive force in ordinary situations; arbitrarily arrested and detained citizens; extorted money from prisoners and their families; accepted money to register cases on false charges; raped female detainees and prisoners; committed extrajudicial killings; and tortured detainees, often to extract confessions. Prison conditions continued to be extremely poor. Some landlords in rural Sindh province and factions of the Karachi-based Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) continued to operate private jails.

Violence among rival factions of the MQM, which represents Urdu-speaking migrants from India, and between the police and the MQM, killed several thousand people in Karachi in the 1990s, but has abated in recent years, although harassment of their activists continues. Sunni- and Shia-based fundamentalist groups continued to engage in tit-for-tat killings, mainly in Punjab and Karachi. In a series of high-profile killings in late July, four prominent Shias were gunned down in Karachi. Shias constitute roughly 20 percent of Pakistan's population. Media reports estimated that incidents of sectarian violence had risen by 140 percent during the first half of the year, with 108 deaths being reported. Shelling between Indian and Pakistani forces around the Line of Control in Kashmir continued to kill and displace numerous civilians.

The constitution and a series of colonial and postcolonial laws authorize the government to curb freedom of speech on subjects including the constitution, the armed forces, the judiciary, and religion. Governments have rarely used these provisions against the mainly private print media. However, under Sharif and Bhutto, authorities frequently detained, threatened, and assaulted journalists; attacked newspaper offices; and interfered with newspaper distribution. While official intimidation of the press has subsided under Musharraf, there were several instances this year when blasphemy laws (under which the accused is subject to immediate arrest and if convicted is given a mandatory death sentence) were used to suppress the media. On January 29, the NWFP police shut down the offices of *The Frontier Post*, as well as charging seven staff members with blasphemy, after the newspaper published a letter which included derogatory references to the prophet Muhammad. In June, editors at the Urdu-language *Mohasib* faced similar charges. Islamic fundamentalists and thugs hired by feudal landlords continued to harass journalists and attack newspaper offices; in the cases described above, religious groups pressured authorities to pursue blasphemy charges as well as committing arson. While journalists practice some self-censorship, Pakistan continues to have some of the most outspoken newspapers in South Asia. Nearly all broadcast media are state owned, and coverage favors the government, although plans were announced in March to privatize the electronic media.

After initially permitting some demonstrations, the military government banned all public political meetings, strikes, and rallies in March 2000. Following the ban, authorities forcibly dispersed some protests and arrested activists to prevent other demonstrations. In March and April, hundreds of Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy supporters were rounded up ahead of pro-democracy rallies, while several political leaders were placed under house arrest. The military regime generally tolerated the work of NGOs. However, in recent years Islamic fundamentalists have issued death threats against prominent human rights defenders.

Pakistan is an Islamic republic, and there are numerous restrictions on religious freedom. Section 295-C of the Penal code mandates the death sentence for defiling the name of the prophet Muhammad. Human rights groups say that instances of Muslims bribing low-ranking police officials to file false blasphemy charges against Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, and occasionally other Muslims, have been sharply increasing over the past year. To date, appeals courts have overturned all blasphemy convictions, although suspects are forced to spend lengthy periods in prison and continue to be targeted by religious extremists even after they are released. In July, the appeal of Ayub Masih, a Christian accused of blasphemy, was rejected by the high court, and in August, Dr. Younus Sheikh, a Muslim doctor and lecturer, was charged with blasphemy for answers he gave to a class about whether the prophet Muhammad followed Muslim practices before becoming a Muslim. According to the U.S. State Department, authorities have charged nearly 200 Ahmadis under the law since its inception. Ahmadis consider themselves to be Muslims, but the constitution classifies them as a non-Muslim minority and the Penal code prohibits Ahmadi religious practice. Ahmadis, Christians, and Hindus also face unofficial economic and societal discrimination and are occasionally subjected to violence and harassment. In August, an Ahmadi place of worship was burned down in Punjab, and in late October, 16 Christians attending a church service were killed by masked gunmen.

A combination of traditional norms and weak law enforcement continued to con-

tribute to rape, domestic violence, and other forms of abuse against women. Women face difficulty in obtaining justice in rape cases because police and judges are reluctant to charge and punish offenders. Although less frequently than in the past, women are still charged under the Hudood Ordinances with adultery or other sexual misconduct arising from rape cases or alleged extramarital affairs. The threat of being charged with adultery may prevent some women from reporting rape. The nongovernmental Human Rights Commission of Pakistan said in a March report that more than 1,000 women died in Pakistan in 2000 as victims in honor killings. Generally committed by the husband or brother of the victim, honor killings punish women who supposedly bring dishonor to the family. Authorities generally do not severely punish these killings either because they simply fail to enforce the law, or because they can excuse offenders or impose minor sentences under laws reducing punishment for actions supposedly caused by "grave and sudden provocation." However, activists hailed a landmark decision in late January which ruled that a married woman was not bound by law to live with her husband or in-laws. Pakistani women face unofficial discrimination in educational and employment opportunities.

In recent years, criminal gangs have reportedly trafficked tens of thousands of Bangladeshi women to Pakistan for purposes of forced prostitution in Karachi or for domestic labor, often with the complicity of corrupt local officials. As a result of continued civil and political conflict in neighboring Afghanistan, which worsened in October after the onset of military action against the Taliban, Pakistan hosts more than two million Afghans in camps and cities throughout the country. Mistreatment of male refugees, including arbitrary arrest, intimidation, and deportation, continues to be a problem.

Pakistan's underfunded and corruption-plagued primary school system continued to offer limited educational opportunities for children, particularly girls. Filling the gap is an extensive network of madrassahs, some funded by Islamic groups from Saudi Arabia and Iran, which provide free education and living arrangements for some 700,000 boys. Despite some initiatives, enforcement of child labor laws continued to be inadequate. Both male and female children also continue to be subjected to prostitution, custodial and sexual abuse, and trafficking.

Despite 1992 legislation outlawing bonded labor and canceling enslaving debts, illegal bonded labor continued to be widespread. Trade unions are independent. The law restricts the right to strike, and workers in certain "essential" industries face restrictions on bargaining collectively and generally cannot hold strikes. Enforcement of labor laws continued to be limited. However, in August the government ratified International Labor Organization conventions on the prohibition of child labor and on equal remuneration for men and women.

## Palau

Polity: Presidential  
 democracy and  
 traditional chiefs  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 20,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Polynesian, Malayan, Melanesian  
 Capital: Koror

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

Vice President Tommy Esang Remengesau was elected president in a narrow victory over Senator Peter Sugiyama in November 2000 and took office on January 19, 2001. He listed unity and cooperation as his immediate objectives and pledged to continue expanding the domestic economy. In June, Palau took steps to combat its reputation as a money laundering haven, with the passage of several pieces of legislation designed to address the problem.

The Republic of Palau is an archipelago of more than 300 islands and islets at the western end of the Caroline Islands in the Pacific Ocean. Purchased by Germany from Spain in 1889, Palau was seized in 1914 by Japan, which administered the islands under a League of Nations mandate from 1920. In 1944, the United States occupied the islands, which became part of the U.S.-administered United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific in 1947.

In 1979, Palau adopted a constitution requiring 75 percent approval at a referendum before nuclear-related activities could occur in its territory. In 1981, Palau became self-governing, though still under U.S. control as part of the Trust Territory. Haruo Remelik became the country's first president and was reelected in November 1984 to a second four-year term. He was assassinated in 1985, and Alfonso Oiterong took over as acting president. In a special presidential election in August 1985, Oiterong was defeated by Lazarus Salii. In August 1988, President Salii was found dead in his office, an apparent suicide. Ngiratkel Etpison was elected his successor in November that year. Kuniwo Nakamura was elected president in 1992 and won his second four-year term in 1996. In October 1994, Palau gained full independence.

Between 1983 and 1990, Palau had seven plebiscites on the Compact of Free Association with the United States. None managed to cross the three-fourths majority required for approval. Several factors prevented the Compact's early adoption, including disagreements over the amount of U.S. aid commitment, concerns about the requisition of land for U.S. military purposes, and incompatibilities between provisions providing facilities for U.S. nuclear forces and Palau's nuclear-free constitution. In the presidential election in 1992, voters amended the constitution to require a simple majority for the passage of the Compact, which voters approved in 1993 with a 64 percent majority. Under the terms of the Compact, Palau has full sovereignty, but the United States takes responsibility for defense and obtains the right to maintain military facilities. In exchange, Palau is granted U.S. financial assistance over a 15-year period un-

der an economic aid package. Negotiations with the United States on the future of financial assistance under the Compact began in 2001. Palauans are concerned about the outcome of the negotiations because the country needs financial aid and wants continued access to some U.S. federal services.

Palau was accused of involvement in money laundering activities by the United States and various European countries in 1999. After four U.S. banks put a ban on the U.S. dollar trade with Palau, along with Vanuatu and Nauru, the Palau government established a banking commission and sought assistance to develop anti-money-laundering legislation. Following a favorable report from the U.S. State Department in March, several pieces of legislation designed to ensure closer supervision of financial transactions were introduced in June.

Following an exchange of formal recognition in December 1999, the first Taiwanese ambassador arrived in Palau in April 2000. In August, Palau agreed to propose a resolution in support of Taiwan's bid to participate in the UN.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Palau can change their government democratically. The constitution vests executive power in the president, who is directly elected for a four-year term. The vice president is elected on a separate ticket. The bicameral parliament consists of a senate, whose 14 members are elected on a geographical basis, and a 16-seat house of representatives with 1 member elected from each of the 16 states. Elections are competitive and tend to revolve around personalities and issues rather than party affiliation. The 16-member Council of Chiefs advises the government on issues involving tribal laws and customs. The chiefs wield considerable traditional authority, and there are often tensions between the chiefs and political leaders. In July, President Tommy Esang Remengesau revived proposals to shift to a unicameral legislature, citing the economic and administrative benefits of a streamlined bureaucratic process.

The judiciary is independent. There is also an independent special prosecutor and an independent public defender system. Local police are under direct civilian control, but foreign residents have reported that law enforcement officials are less thorough in their investigation of crimes against non-Palauan citizens.

The government respects freedom of speech and of the press. There are government and private newspapers, but the state-run radio and television broadcast services are the primary sources of news and information. Two religious groups maintain independent radio stations. There is also a private cable television system with widespread coverage. Freedom of religion exists in this predominantly Roman Catholic country.

Freedom of association is respected. There are currently no active employee organizations, and laws regarding the right to strike or to bargain collectively do not exist. The wage-earning sector is very small.

Foreign nationals constitute a third of the population and nearly half the labor force, and they face discrimination in employment and education as well as random violence. Employers occasionally coerce foreign workers, particularly domestic or unskilled laborers, into remaining at their jobs by withholding their passports. In August, Palau imposed an official ban on the entry of Indian and Sri Lankan nationals to the country. A government minister cited an increase in the number of disputes between workers and their local employers, as well as social tension arising from religious differences—the majority of Palauans are Roman Catholic while the migrants are predominantly Muslim.



Inheritance of property and traditional rank is matrilineal, which gives women a high status in society. Nevertheless, domestic violence, often linked to alcohol or drug abuse, remains a problem, and many women are reluctant to report their spouses to law enforcement authorities. Limited opportunities and gender bias also pushed many women from Palau to seek opportunities for education and a career by enlisting in the U.S. military. Women have been underrepresented in politics and government; however, in the most recent elections, a woman was elected vice president and also holds the post of minister of administration.

## Panama

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 2,900,000  
 PPP: \$5,875  
 Life Expectancy: 74  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (70 percent), West Indian (14 percent), European (10 percent), Indian (6 percent)  
 Capital: Panama City



### Overview:

In 2001, Panama was removed from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) blacklist of noncooperative jurisdictions in the fight against money laundering. However, following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Panama's international banking center was singled out in press reports both in the United States and Europe as a likely haven for some of Osama bin Laden's financial resources. Within weeks of the attacks, Panama's banking superintendent appeared to put to rest at least some of the allegations, following an investigation. Armed violence has increased significantly in Panama in the past several years, with weekend police checkpoints now commonplace both in Panama City and in crime-ridden Colon, although the country remains relatively safe when compared to many of its regional neighbors.

Panama was part of Colombia until 1903, when a U.S.-supported revolt resulted in the proclamation of an independent Republic of Panama. A period of weak civilian rule ended with a 1968 military coup that brought General Omar Torrijos to power.

After the signing of the 1977 canal treaties with the United States, Torrijos promised democratization. The 1972 constitution had been revised to provide for the direct election of a president and a legislative assembly for five years. After Torrijos's death in 1981, General Manuel Noriega emerged as Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) chief; he subsequently rigged the 1984 election that brought to power the Revolutionary Democratic Party (PRD), then the political arm of the PDF.

The Democratic Alliance of Civic Opposition (ADOC) won the 1989 election, but Noriega annulled the vote and declared himself head of state. He was removed during a U.S. military invasion, and ADOC's Guillermo Endara became president.

In 1994, the PRD capitalized on the Endara government's record of ineptness, and Ernesto Pérez Balladares, a 47-year-old millionaire and former banker, won the presidency with 33.3 percent of the vote. The PRD won 32 of 71 seats in the legislative assembly and, with the support of allied parties that won 6 seats, achieved an effective majority.

Pérez Balladares kept a campaign promise by choosing for his cabinet technocrats and politicians from across the ideological spectrum. However, his orthodox free market economic policies led to widespread protests in 1995 by labor unions and students. The president's popularity declined when the government met protests with harsh crack-downs.

During the 1994 campaign, Pérez Balladares pledged to rid the country of drug influence. However, the PRD was accused of involvement in drug trafficking in the aftermath of the collapse of the Agro-Industrial and Commercial Bank of Panama (BANAICO) in January 1996. An investigation by the Banking Commission found accounts empty and \$50 million unaccounted for, as well as evidence that the bank was a central money laundering facility. BANAICO was named in several U.S. drug investigations, including one involving José Castrillon Henao, a Colombian who was arrested in April 1996 as the reputed organizer of the Cali cartel's seagoing cocaine shipments to the United States. Alfredo Alemán, a board member of BANAICO, was a friend and top advisor to Pérez Balladares and a major contributor to the party's 1994 campaign. Pérez Balladares himself was forced to admit that his campaign unknowingly accepted a contribution from Castrillon Henao, who was in May 1998 extradited to Florida to stand trial for money laundering. The Pérez Balladares administration further damaged its popularity when it restored government jobs and awarded a reported \$35 million in back pay to former members of the Dignity Battalions, who had been Noriega's paramilitary enforcers.

In 1997, the son of a prominent PRD politician and two other Panamanians were found innocent of killing an unarmed U.S. soldier in 1992 in a trial plagued by political pressure and other irregularities. In August 1998, voters rejected by an almost two to one margin a referendum on a proposed constitutional amendment that would have enabled Pérez Balladares, whose government was mired in censorship, corruption, and an increasingly tenuous claim to fidelity to the rule of law, to stand for reelection.

In May 1999, Mireya Moscoso, the widow of three-time president Arnulfo Arias and herself an unsuccessful presidential candidate in 1994, won 44.8 percent of the vote, more than 7 percent above the amount garnered by her rival and son of the late strongman, Martín Torrijos, as the head of a PRD-led coalition. Moscoso's coalition, the Union for Panama, won just 24 congressional seats as compared to the PRD's 38. However, she was able to forge a deal with a group of small parties to give her coalition a working majority. The Moscoso government moved quickly to overturn an attempt by Pérez Balladares to pack the judiciary before he left office. It also sought to increase joint antinarcotics efforts with the United States, a partnership that had faltered under Pérez Balladares.

Moscoso's government lost its razor-thin majority in congress at the end of her first year in office, after long-time opposition foes—the (PRD) and the Christian Democratic Party—signed a pact they said was designed to provide Panama with a strong congressional opposition. The newly invigorated opposition said that it was willing to cooperate with the government on economic reactivation, but that the government's lackluster performance proved the need for the opposition to head off the emergence

of leaders such as former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori or Venezuela's Hugo Chavez by offering a viable alternative. In October 2000, the legislature strengthened laws against money laundering. In the year following the U.S. handover in 1999, the Panama Canal continued to operate smoothly, although the departure of the remaining U.S. troops and the closure of military bases meant the loss to Panama of some \$250 million in revenues.

Repeated incursions into Panamanian territory by Colombian guerrillas continued to spark concerns in the region about the spillover effects of Colombia's civil war. Since being invaded by the United States in 1989, Panama has had no military. It relies on the police to provide both internal security and defense of its borders. Dozens of confrontations between armed Colombian groups and the Panamanian police, who suffered several injuries as a result of the fighting, raised questions about whether the latter are up to the challenge provided by the seasoned Colombians. Three months after Panama was placed on a Group of 7 blacklist of "noncooperative" banking havens, the congress approved a 21-point legislative amendment designed to combat hot-money transactions.

Following the discovery of four sets of human remains in exhumations at a former military base, in 2001 Moscoso created a truth commission to investigate the whereabouts of dozens of political dissidents who disappeared during the more than two decades of military rule. In March, the seven-member panel said that some 132 people had either disappeared or been murdered during that period. In August the port city of Colon was rocked by two days of rioting by a coalition of unemployed workers organizations, which accused the government of failing to live up to a promise to finance 46 public works projects there.

### Political Rights

#### and Civil Liberties:

Panama's citizens can change their government democratically. The 1999 national elections were considered free and fair by international observers. The constitution guarantees freedom of political and civic organization. In early 1999, Panama's largest political parties agreed to ban anonymous campaign contributions in an effort to stem the infiltration of drug money into the political process. Following the May 1999 elections, 5 of the 12 political parties that had taken part were dissolved after they failed to win the five percent minimum required by electoral law.

The judicial system, headed by a supreme court, was revamped in 1990. It remains overworked, however, and its administration is inefficient, politicized, and prone to the corruption that appears to be endemic in broad sectors of public life. An unwieldy criminal code and a surge in cases, many against former soldiers and officials of the military period, complicate the judicial process. In February 1998 the supreme court declared unconstitutional the provisions that authorize the ombudsman's office to investigate the administration of justice, claiming that the watchdog agency's role violates the principle of judicial independence. In the final days of Ernesto Pérez Balladares's presidency, a new three-person section of the supreme court was created. Pérez Balladares said the new branch was needed to speed up the judicial process; opponents accused him of trying to pack the court so as to shield himself from corruption investigations.

The Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) was dismantled after 1989, and the military was formally abolished in 1994. However, the civilian-run Public Force (national

police) that replaced the PDF, although accountable to civilian authorities through a publicly disclosed budget, is poorly disciplined and corrupt. Like the country's prison guards, officers frequently use "excessive force." In addition, the police have been ineffectual against the drug trade, as Panama remains a major transshipment point for both cocaine and illicit arms—drug seizures rose 70 percent in 2000—as well as a money laundering hub.

Panama's banking sector is composed of 87 banks with a total of \$37 billion in assets. The legislation approved in October 2000 extended money laundering laws already on the books to cover revenues gained from arms trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, corruption, and auto theft. Prison sentences for money laundering were increased to a maximum of 12 years. The legislation also tightened know-your-client requirements and placed stricter reporting requirements on deposits of more than \$10,000 in banking and financial institutions.

The Penal system is marked by violent disturbances in decrepit facilities packed with up to eight times their intended capacity. About two-thirds of prisoners face delays of about 18 months in having their cases heard. Panama also continues to be a major transshipment point for illegal aliens seeking to enter the United States, including large numbers from Ecuador.

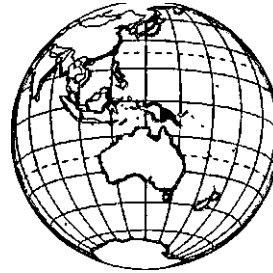
Panama's media are a raucous assortment of radio and television stations, daily newspapers, and weekly publications. Restrictive media laws dating back to the regime of General Manuel Noriega remain on the books, however. The law permits officials to jail without trial anyone who defames the government. Legal codes establish government control of work permits for journalists, strict defamation and libel rules, and a clause that permits reporters to be punished for "damaging the nation's economy" or national security. Public officials have recourse to a law that specifically allows them to file criminal charges against journalists who have published exposes or unflattering commentaries, and in 2001 some 70 such criminal cases were pending. The Organization of American States says it receives more complaints about the criminal prosecution of journalists from Panama than from any other government in the hemisphere.

Labor unions are well organized. However, labor rights were diluted in 1995 when Perez Balladares pushed labor code revisions through congress. When 49 unions initiated peaceful protests, the government cracked down in a series of violent clashes that resulted in four deaths and hundreds of arrests.

Since 1993, indigenous groups have protested the encroachment of illegal settlers on Indian lands and delays by the government in formally demarcating the boundaries of those lands. Indian communities do enjoy, however, a large degree of autonomy and self-government.

## Papua New Guinea

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 5,000,000  
 PPP: \$2,367  
 Life Expectancy: 56  
 Ethnic Groups: Papuan, Melanesian, Negrito, Micronesian, Polynesian  
 Capital: Port Moresby



### Overview:

Prime Minister Sir Mekere Morauta's plan to revive Papua New Guinea's flagging economy by selling state assets and trimming the size of the army ran into widespread resistance in 2001. Dozens of soldiers mutinied for 12 days in March, and students mounted a week-long anti-government rally in June that ended with police killing four protesters. The June protests highlighted fear of job losses if state firms are sold and concern that the resource-rich but impoverished country's assets will be sold to foreigners. Although he faces parliamentary elections in 2002, Morauta pledged to push ahead with privatization. He said the sales would help pay off public debt, boost economic growth, and create jobs in a country beset by rising crime, soaring population growth, and staggeringly high unemployment.

Meanwhile, the government and rebels on Bougainville Island reached an agreement in August that formally ended a twelve-year secessionist conflict and granted autonomy to the island. Tough negotiations lie ahead on disarming guerrillas and fleshing out details of the autonomy plan.

This South Pacific country, consisting of the eastern part of New Guinea and some 600 smaller islands, achieved independence from Australia in 1975. Heavily dependent on natural resources, the young nation was plunged into crisis in late 1988 after miners and landowners on Bougainville Island began guerrilla attacks against the Australian-owned Panguna copper mine. The mine had provided 40 percent of the country's export revenues. The rebels demanded compensation and profit sharing. Located 560 miles northeast of the capital, Port Moresby, Bougainville is the largest island of the Solomons group. The islanders have cultural and linguistic ties to residents of the neighboring Solomon Islands. By 1990, the rebels were waging a low-grade secessionist struggle under the newly formed Bougainville Revolutionary Army.

A short-lived ceasefire on the island broke down in 1996, when gunmen assassinated Theodore Miriung, the head of a government-installed transitional administration on Bougainville. Renewed fighting brought down the government of Sir Julius Chan, who resigned in 1997 following a public outcry over a \$27 million government contract with London-based Sandline International to provide mercenaries to aid the army on Bougainville. An anti-incumbent mood dominated the June 1997 elections, as voters swept Chan and 54 other members of parliament out of office. During the campaign, many citizens complained that official corruption and rising crime were keeping Papua New Guinea impoverished despite its abundance of minerals, forests, fisheries, and other

natural resources. Bill Skate, a former opposition leader, formed a coalition government that July.

Like its predecessors, Skate's government faced widespread allegations of corruption, cronyism, and mismanagement. Skate resigned in July 1999 rather than face a vote of confidence he was certain to lose. He was replaced by Morauta, the head of the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) party and a former central bank chief.

In a major breakthrough, Morauta's government and rebel leaders on Bougainville reached an accord in March 2000 calling for autonomy and possible independence for the island. Prime Minister Morauta and Bougainville leader Joseph Kabui followed up by signing a formal peace agreement in August 2001 calling for autonomy to be phased in gradually and a referendum on independence in 10 to 15 years. The accords were made possible by an easing of tensions on Bougainville following a 1998 ceasefire there brokered by Australia and New Zealand.

The March 2001 army mutiny ended with the rebel soldiers surrendering their weapons after Morauta, 55, agreed to shelve a plan to cut the armed forces by half, to 1,900 soldiers, to save money. Angered by the proposal, the rebels had sought Morauta's resignation, the expulsion of foreign military advisors, and the scrapping of reforms demanded by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Just three months later, police on June 26 shot dead four protesters while dispersing some 3,000 peaceful demonstrators in Port Moresby. The student-led rally was against Morauta's plan to sell stakes in Air Niugini, the national airline, PNG Banking Corp, the country's largest commercial bank, and other state-owned firms. Despite the unrest, the World Bank released a \$20 million aid package linked to the reforms.

In a setback to the government's efforts to boost revenues, plans are behind schedule for a \$3.5 billion pipeline to transport gas from Papua New Guinea's southern highlands to the Australian state of Queensland. Some 40 percent of Papua New Guinea's working-age population is unemployed, and the country's annual population growth rate of 2.3 percent on average in recent years is one of the world's highest.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Papua New Guinea can change their government through elections and enjoy most basic rights. The 1975 constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and the cabinet. Parliament has 89 at-large members and 20 who represent the 19 provinces and Port Moresby. All are elected for five-year terms. A governor-general serves as head of state and represents the British monarchy.

Elections are free but are usually marred by some fraud and sporadic violence. Since independence, most governments have been made up of unstable coalitions and no prime minister has served a full term. Although most seats are chosen in single-member, simple-plurality districts, Papua New Guinea has bucked the trend toward a two-party system that such electoral districts tend to produce in other countries. Thirteen parties won seats in the 1997 elections.

Amid a severe urban crime problem, Papua New Guinea's ill-equipped and poorly trained police force has committed grave rights abuses. "Criminal suspects, including those not carrying guns and only suspected of non-violent crimes, are frequently shot dead by police, sometimes in disputed circumstances," the London-based Amnesty International said in July. Moreover, some officers have been charged with raping female detainees. In addition, police often carry out searches and raids without obtaining

warrants, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Papua New Guinea's human rights record in 2000. The government has prosecuted some officers for abuse, the report added. A 1998 Australian National University survey ranked Papua New Guinea's urban crime problem among the most severe in the world.

In the rugged highlands, police have in recent years burned homes to punish communities suspected of harboring criminals or of taking part in tribal warfare. Fighting between rival clans near the southern highlands town of Mendi in December killed at least 11 people, Radio New Zealand reported.

Papua New Guinea's judiciary is independent, and defendants receive fair trials. However, because the judiciary has few resources and the crime rate is high, suspects often spend long periods in detention, in some cases up to two years. Prisons are overcrowded, have crumbling facilities, and provide inmates with poor basic services, the U.S. State Department report said.

The army, army-backed paramilitary groups, and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army have been accused of extrajudicial killings and the torture of civilians and fighters during the Bougainville conflict. By some estimates, during the war at least 20,000 civilians and fighters died, mostly as the result of malnutrition and disease.

The private press reports vigorously on alleged official corruption and police abuse and other sensitive matters. Radio is a key source of information given Papua New Guinea's low literacy rate and remote reaches. The state-run National Broadcasting Corporation's two radio networks suffer from inadequate funding and deteriorating equipment. The private NAU-FM network serves Port Moresby and is expanding into other areas. The sole television service, EM-TV, is privately owned and reaches mostly the capital and provincial centers.

Citing concerns of spectator violence, police rarely give approval for demonstrations. Despite limited resources, nongovernmental groups are active and outspoken. Among the most prominent is the International and Community Rights Advocacy Forum, which works on human rights and environmental issues.

While some women are in leadership roles in business, the professions, and the civil service, women continue to be underrepresented in government and politics. They also face significant, unofficial discrimination in education and employment, according to the U.S. State Department report. The report also said that rape and domestic violence continue to be serious problems. Authorities, however, prosecute few such cases. This is in part because most tribal communities view domestic violence as a private matter, while some settle rape cases by having the accused give money or goods to the victim's family.

Papua New Guinea's trade unions are independent, and workers routinely bargain collectively. The government poorly enforces laws on minimum wages, working hours, and benefits, the U.S. State Department report said. The International Labor Organization has criticized a law allowing the government to strike down arbitration agreements or wage awards not considered to be in the national interest. Roughly half of the 250,000 wage earners in the formal economy are unionized.

Papua New Guinea's leaders face the challenge of nation-building in a society where roughly 1,000 tribes speak more than 800 distinct languages, and where extreme social and economic disparities exist between the cities and isolated highlands. Some 85 percent of the population live in remote villages and engage in subsistence and small-scale agriculture.

## Paraguay

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist-statist  
Population: 5,700,000  
PPP: \$4,384  
Life Expectancy: 73  
Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (95 percent), Indian and white (5 percent)  
Capital: Asuncion

Political Rights: 4  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

International concern about individuals and organizations with ties to Middle Eastern extremist groups operating in Ciudad del Este and along the tri-border area between Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina grew following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and on the Pentagon. Throughout 2001, the political instability that appears endemic to Paraguay continued unabated, as congressional efforts to impeach President Luis González Macchi—fraught with the intrigue and backbiting that characterizes Paraguayan political life—came to naught, and the country's legal economy continued its downward trend.

In March 2001, the president announced a cabinet reshuffle that resulted in three of the four appointments going to technocrats rather than politicians, something unique in Paraguayan politics. The reshuffle occurred in the wake of an unsuccessful impeachment effort against González Macchi's public works minister, who was accused of having been involved in the torture of detainees while holding an earlier post as law enforcement minister.

Charges about official corruption made by the political opposition have proved to be the most serious challenge faced by the government. In 2001, trade unionists and Paraguay's association of industrialists made common cause, demanding that González Macchi act against "smuggling, tax evasion, corruption and impunity." A public opinion survey suggested that 22.6 percent of Paraguayans believed that the country was run by the "mafia"; 20.8 percent by the political parties; and only 16.8 percent by the government. Another poll suggested that most citizens would prefer to return to the dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner than to continue to live in the situation of near chaos characteristic of Paraguay throughout the year.

In 1989 a coup ended the 35-year dictatorship of General Alfredo Stroessner. Another general, Lino Oviedo, stormed into the bunker of Latin America's oldest surviving dictator with a pistol in one hand and a grenade in the other and demanded that Stroessner surrender. General Andrés Rodríguez took over Stroessner's Colorado Party and engineered his own election to finish Stroessner's last presidential term. The Colorado Party won the majority in a vote for a constituent assembly, which produced the 1992 constitution. It provides for a president, a vice president, and a bicameral congress consisting of a 45-member senate and an 80-member chamber of deputies elected for five years. The president is elected by a simple majority, and reelection is prohibited. The constitution bans the active military from engaging in politics.



In the 1992 Colorado Party primary election, Luis María Argaña, an old-style machine politician, apparently defeated the construction tycoon Juan Carlos Wasmosy; Rodriguez and Oviedo engineered a highly dubious recount that made Wasmosy the winner.

The 1993 candidates were Wasmosy, Domingo Laino of the center-left Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA), and Guillermo Caballero Vargas, a wealthy businessman who founded the National Encounter Alliance. Wasmosy promised to modernize the economy. Laino played on his decades of resistance to Stroessner. Caballero Vargas campaigned as a centrist, free of the politics of the past.

Every poll showed Wasmosy trailing, until three weeks before the election, when Oviedo personally took over the direction of the campaign—in spite of the fact that he was an active military officer—and threatened a coup if the Colorado Party lost. Fear of a coup proved decisive, as Wasmosy won with 40.3 percent of the vote. Laino took 32 percent, and Caballero Vargas, 23.5.

Oviedo was then appointed army commander, and Wasmosy allowed him to eliminate rivals in the military through forced retirement. The partnership came to a bitter end when Wasmosy moved to reduce the influence of the drug-tainted military in government and it became increasingly obvious that Oviedo and a hardline Colorado Party faction planned to use Wasmosy as a stepping stone for the general's own accession to the presidency. Wasmosy ordered Oviedo's resignation on April 22, 1996. The general in turn threatened a coup and mobilized the troops. Wasmosy took refuge in the U.S. embassy and prepared his resignation. International pressure and mass protests in Paraguay allowed Wasmosy to outmaneuver his rival, who then vowed to return as a presidential candidate in 1998.

Wasmosy's government was shaken by a number of corruption scandals. These included money laundering in the banking system by financial racketeers from neighboring countries and by drug traffickers, as well as two bank collapses provoked by the theft of assets by bank managers. In 1997, Oviedo won the Colorado Party presidential nomination by besting Argana by 10,000 votes. Argana's supporters claimed fraud, despite the fact that they controlled the party electoral tribunal, and demanded that 50,000 of the votes cast be reviewed.

Raul Cubas, a civil engineer and originally Oviedo's vice presidential choice, was elected in May 1998, after Oviedo was jailed in March by a military tribunal for his 1996 attempted putsch and banned from standing for election. Despite the deep divisions within the Colorado Party, Cubas not only bested Laino 54 to 42 percent, but also led the party to majority status in both chambers of congress for the first time since 1989. One of Cubas's first acts was to free Oviedo, in a maneuver widely described as a "constitutional coup."

In early March 1999, an armed forces spokesman warned that the military would be obliged to defend Cubas if congress tried to remove him for failing to carry out a judicial order to send Oviedo back to jail. The March 23, 1999, hit-squad-style murder of Argana, a bitter Oviedo foe, and the killing of eight student protestors by rooftop snipers, ended the fiction of a truce in the long-ruling Colorado Party. After Cubas's impeachment by congress, Senate President González Macchi assumed the presidency on March 28, 1999, and appointed a "national unity" government including members of the two main opposition parties—the PLRA and the National Encounter Party. More than 100 army officers, including several generals, believed to be Oviedo supporters,

were forced into retirement. Oviedo—who had received asylum from his long-time friend, Argentine President Carlos Menem, and sought to surgically alter his appearance—fled to Brazil following the December 1999 change of government in Buenos Aires. In June he was jailed and awaiting possible extradition to Paraguay.

Oviedo, who was detained in Brazil in 2000, was accused of masterminding the killing of his long-time rival, Argaña. In May 2000, several dozen military and police officers were arrested following an unsuccessful effort by pro-Oviedo factions to oust Gonzalez Macchi. Liberal party leader Julio Cesar Franco won the Paraguayan vice presidency in August 2000 in a special election designed to fill a post left vacant by Argaña's murder. The dead man's son, Felix Argaña, was the losing candidate in the race to replace his father in the 2000 election, a victim of González Macchi's inability to create a government of national unity and the first member of the Colorado Party to lose a presidential election in 60 years of uninterrupted party rule. From his jail cell, Oviedo had ordered his supporters to vote for Franco for vice president. At the same time, two Brazilian congressmen sought to have him put on trial for drug and money laundering offenses. In Paraguay, in October 2000, a general who once headed the national antidrug effort was sentenced to seven years in prison for defrauding the government of several million dollars.

In 2001, the Paraguayan police had to provide a prosecutor and a bishop with special security after they received death threats in the wake of corruption charges filed against a provincial governor. In December 2000, the bishop had issued a strong denunciation of corruption and warned that Paraguayans were being "manipulated and dominated by mafias." Oviedo remained in prison in Brazil, pending a request from Paraguay for his extradition to face trial in the murder of Argaña. The political opposition claimed Gonzalez Macchi was linked to a group of "speculators and swindlers" who transferred \$16 million from the Central Bank to accounts in Miami. In a positive development, in March 2001, the U.S. State Department "certified" Paraguay as cooperating in the fight against drug trafficking, after six years of its not being certified or of its receiving a conditional waiver. In 2001, Oviedo was released by Brazil from prison, the political party system appeared on the verge of total collapse, and two high-profile kidnappings suggested that ideologically motivated acts of persecution were on the upswing. The discredit of the entire political class—encompassing the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government—was evidenced by the low turnout in 2001 municipal elections, where the participation by young people, nearly three-fourths of the population, was nearly nonexistent.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

The 1992 constitution provides for regular elections. Municipal elections held in 2001 were generally free and fair, although electoral participation throughout the country was the lowest since 1989. In a positive development, Colorado Party reformer Enrique Riera won the Asuncion mayoralty, one of the country's most powerful political posts. The 2000 elections, although they were raucous, were considered free and fair by local standards. More than 80 percent of eligible voters participated in the 1998 elections. Although the presidential campaign was marred by the political proscriptions of General Lino Oviedo and threats against the national electoral tribunal, voter fraud was held to a minimum by the work of the tribunal, coverage by the media, and the willingness of the military to stand firm in favor of the process.

The constitution guarantees free political and civic organization and religious expression. However, political rights and civil liberties are undermined by the government's tolerance of threats of intimidation and use of force, including imprisonment, by its supporters against those Oviedo followers who remain in the country. In the tense days following the August 2000 vice presidential balloting, the press was the target of intimidation, including physical attacks, by supporters of both candidates, Julio Cesar Franco and Felix Argaña.

The judiciary, under the influence of the ruling party and the military, is susceptible to the corruption pervading all public and governmental institutions. Corruption cases languish for years in the courts, and most end up without resolution. The courts are generally unresponsive to human rights groups that present cases of rights violations committed either before or after the overthrow of General Alfredo Stroessner. Allegations include illegal detention by police and torture during incarceration, particularly in rural areas.

In 1997, the commander of the national police was dismissed following a newspaper exposé about his force's involvement in car theft, corruption, and bribery schemes. In November 1999, congress began impeachment proceedings against Paraguay's top anticorruption official, who is accused of bribery and extortion. The presence of law enforcement is scarce throughout Paraguay. Reportedly corrupt police officials remain in key posts and are in positions to give protection to, or compromise law enforcement actions against, narcotics traffickers.

Despite receiving U.S. government certification in 2001, Paraguay remains among the 24 countries most involved in narcotics trafficking. Colombian drug traffickers continue to expand operations in Paraguay, and accusations of high official involvement in drug trafficking date back to the 1980s. In October 2000, former counternarcotics secretariat chief José Tomas Centurion was sentenced to seven years in prison for corruption during his tenure at the helm of the antidrug agency. Little progress was made in curbing money laundering, fighting public corruption, monitoring Paraguay's porous borders, or increasing the legal authority that police needed to effectively enforce antidrug statutes.

The lack of security in border areas, particularly in the tri-border region, has allowed large organized crime groups to engage in piracy and in the smuggling of weapons, narcotics, and contraband. In the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, attention focused on the serious lack of government control over Paraguay's lengthy and undeveloped land borders, extensive river network, and numerous airstrips (both registered and unregistered). The Iguazú triangle, as it is called, given its proximity to Iguazú Falls, is the region extending from the cities of Ciudad del Este in Paraguay, Foz do Iguacu in Brazil, and Puerto Iguazú in Argentina. The region contains more than 100 runways, many clandestine, and the Paraguay-Brazil border has long been a scene of major commercial contraband, including the smuggling of stolen cars.

More than 12,000 Arab immigrants have come to the region since the 1970s, and many of these live in Ciudad del Este. Although many of the recent arrivals from Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine are legitimate business operators, law enforcement and intelligence sources say that a significant number are involved in smuggling operations. The Islamic extremist organization Hezbollah and other militant organizations are active in the region. In 1996 a Lebanese man was arrested after he was discovered to be in possession of weapons and explosives that he was allegedly going to use to blow up the

U.S. embassy in Asuncion or Buenos Aires. Argentine investigators also discovered that the van used in the deadly 1992 bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires had been purchased in a second hand car dealership in Ciudad del Este one week before the attack. Even before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay had established a joint intelligence center to monitor the region, and all three countries had begun to use their air forces for surveillance and interdiction efforts.

Overcrowding, unsanitary living conditions, and mistreatment are serious problems in Paraguayan prisons. More than 95 percent of the prisoners held are pending trial, many for months or years after arrest. The constitution permits detention without trial until the accused completes the minimum sentence for the alleged crime.

In Paraguay, there is only one state-owned medium, the Radio Nacional, which has a limited listenership. A number of private television and radio stations exist, as do a number of independent newspapers. However, journalists investigating corruption or covering strikes and protests are often the victims of intimidation and violent attack by security forces. Free expression is also threatened by vague, potentially restrictive laws that mandate "responsible" behavior by journalists and media owners.

The Paraguayan constitution provides indigenous people with the right to participate in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the country; however, the indigenous population, estimated at 75,000 to 100,000, is unassimilated and neglected. Low wage levels, long work hours, infrequent payment (or nonpayment) of wages, job insecurity, lack of access to social security benefits, and racial discrimination are common. Weak organization and lack of financial resources limit access by indigenous people to the political and economic system. Indigenous groups rely primarily upon parliamentary commissions to promote their particular interests. The constitution also protects the property interests of indigenous people, but these rights still are not fully codified. The constitution allows Public Ministry officials to represent indigenous people in matters involving the protection of life and property. Lack of access to sufficient land also hinders the ability of indigenous groups to progress economically and maintain their cultural identity. This is made worse by insufficient police and judicial protection from persons encroaching on their lands. Many indigenous people find it difficult to travel to the capital to solicit land titles or to process the required documentation for land ownership.

Peasant and Indian organizations demanding and illegally occupying land often meet with police crackdowns, death threats, detentions, and forced evictions by vigilante groups in the employ of landowners. Peasants have been killed in the ongoing disputes. Activist Roman Catholic priests who support land reform are frequent targets of intimidation. The government's promise of land reform remains largely unfilled, as nearly 90 percent of agricultural land remains in the hands of foreign companies and a few hundred Paraguayan families. A program financed by the European Union to restore traditional lands to Native Americans in the eastern Chaco region has been riddled with fraud. In June 2000, a former director of the government's National Indigenous Institute, which had authority to purchase land on behalf of indigenous communities and to expropriate private property under certain conditions to establish tribal homelands, was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for embezzlement. According to official statistics, 39 percent of Paraguayans speak only Guarani, 49 percent are bilingual, and 12 percent speak only Spanish.

There are numerous trade unions and two major union federations, although they are weak and riddled with corruption. The 1992 constitution gives public sector workers the rights to organize, bargain collectively, and strike, and nearly all these workers belong to the ruling Colorado Party. A new labor code designed to protect workers' rights was passed in October 1993.

Sexual and domestic abuse of women, which is both widespread and vastly underreported, continues to be a serious problem in Paraguay. Spousal abuse is common. Although the new Penal Code criminalizes spousal abuse, it stipulates that the abuse must be habitual before being recognized as criminal, and then it is punishable only by a fine. Thousands of women are treated annually for injuries sustained in violent domestic altercations.

## Peru

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1\*  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free

Population: 26,100,000

PPP: \$4,622

Life Expectancy: 69

Ethnic Groups: Indian (45 percent), mestizo (37 percent), white (15 percent), other (3 percent)

Capital: Lima

**Ratings Change:** Peru's political rights rating improved from 3 to 1, and its status changed from Partly Free to Free, due to the holding of free and fair presidential elections and a general, widespread improvement in the country's political and civil liberties outlook.



### Overview:

The year 2001 marked the first time in nearly a decade that Peruvians did not have to worry much about guerrilla insurgencies, or about elected officials stealing tens of millions from the state, or that the elections that put their leaders in office were fraudulent. The victory of populist Alejandro Toledo in June in free and fair presidential elections—the first Native American ever to win a country's presidency through real elections in the Americas—came after a tightly fought contest in which a once disgraced former president, Alan Garcia, appeared poised for a comeback. Toledo, a peasant's son turned World Bank economist, embraced his indigenous heritage on the campaign trail, calling himself the "Rebel Indian." Former strongman President Alberto Fujimori, who fled to Japan in November 2000 at the height of a corruption scandal, faced homicide charges in Lima for his responsibility in two massacres by paramilitary squads in the early 1990s. His shadowy intelligence chief, Vladimiro Montesinos, who is accused of hiding an ill-gained \$270 million, was arrested in Venezuela in June. It was the public release in September 2000 of a secretly recorded videotape of Montesinos bribing an opposition politician that brought down his long-ruling boss. In August, Toledo sacked Peru's top military chiefs and promised to thoroughly restructure the armed forces.

Since independence in 1821, Peru has seen alternating periods of civilian and military rule, with elected civilians holding office since a 12-year-old dictatorship ended in 1980. However, that same year, the Maoist *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) terrorist group launched a guerrilla war that killed 30,000 people over the next two decades.

Fujimori, a university rector and engineer, defeated the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa in the 1990 election. In 1992 Fujimori, backed by the military, suspended the constitution and dissolved congress. The move was popular because of people's disdain for Peru's corrupt, elitist political establishment and fear of the Shining Path.

Fujimori held a state-controlled election for an 80-member constituent assembly to replace the congress. The assembly drafted a constitution that established a unicameral congress more closely under presidential control. The constitution was approved in a state-controlled referendum following the capture of the Shining Path leader, Abimael Guzmán.

Fujimori's principal opponent in the April 9, 1995, election was former United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, who vowed to end Fujimori's "dictatorship." Fujimori crushed his opponent with a vote of about three to one, with a massive public-spending and propaganda campaign that used state resources. The National Intelligence Service, under de facto head Vladimiro Montesinos, a one-time legal counsel to drug kingpins, was employed to spy on and discredit Perez de Cuellar and other opposition candidates.

In August 1996 congress passed a law allowing Fujimori to run for a third term, despite a constitutional provision limiting the president to two terms. The law evaded this restriction by defining Fujimori's current term as his first under the 1993 constitution.

On April 22, 1997, the seizure of the Japanese ambassador's residence came to a violent end when a commando raid liberated all but one of the 72 hostages and killed all 14 of the insurgents. In March 1998 the National Magistrates Council resigned en masse four months after Fujimori's congress altered the National Elections Commission so as to give the president increased influence. In late 1999, the U.S. Congress passed a resolution criticizing Fujimori for interfering with the judiciary, harassing the press, and manipulating Peruvian institutions in order to stay in power.

In the April 9, 2000, presidential elections, Fujimori beat Alejandro Toledo, a U.S.-educated economist who grew up in an Indian shantytown, by 49.9 percent to 40.2 percent. Fujimori, however, came in 20,000 votes short of an outright win, and a runoff election was slated for May 28. Toledo refused to participate in the second round, pointing out that in addition to election-day voting irregularities, he had been routinely assaulted by Fujimori supporters in the earlier campaign, had suffered constant death threats and phone taps, was virtually blacked out from media coverage, and was the target of smear attacks in the press. In late July 2000, Fujimori sought to refurbish his democratic credentials by naming a former opposition presidential candidate as prime minister. U.S. efforts to take a strong line with Fujimori in support of reforms, however, were sandbagged in the Organization of American States, which had earlier refused to certify the elections as free and fair. However, U.S. pressure also flagged when the Clinton administration decided isolating Fujimori internationally could cripple the regional war on drugs.

In early September 2000 a videotape was released that showed Montesinos bribing an opposition congressman, at the same time that the spy chief was also being linked to the illegal shipment of arms to Colombian guerrillas. Coming after one of the most widely

questioned elections the region had seen in decades, the ensuing scandal raised suspicions that Fujimori had secured a parliamentary majority—after having failed to win one outright in the April 9 general elections—by bribing opposition congressmen to change sides. On September 16 a weakened Fujimori agreed to call new elections for 2001 in which he would not run. During October, Montesinos and Fujimori engaged in a running battle to see who would control the military; when Montesinos lost, he hurriedly went into exile, only to return several weeks later and go into hiding, pursued unsuccessfully by a military manhunt led personally by his former boss. In late November 2000, President Alberto Fujimori was removed from office; opposition forces assumed control of congress; and a highly respected opposition leader, Valentin Paniagua, was chosen as interim president of Peru. In early December 2000, Fujimori claimed that Montesinos—a one-time U.S. Central Intelligence Agency asset—was still wielding power from behind the scenes by blackmailing congressmen to force them to do his bidding after having videotaped them taking bribes.

Following Fujimori's overthrow, the new opposition-controlled congress began a process of renewal of the constitutional tribunal and reform of the constitution, so as to eliminate consecutive reelection and to forestall the rise of another Fujimori. The notorious National Intelligence Service, the key to Montesinos's sinister reach, was abolished. The attorney general, a Fujimori loyalist who had blocked investigations into corruption and abuses of power by high government officials, was fired and replaced by a respected independent. An agreement was also reached to restart a judicial reform program aborted by Fujimori in 1999. At the end of 2000, Fujimori announced he was availing himself of his dual citizenship to remain in Japan. In July 2001, Paniagua announced the appointment of a truth-and-reconciliation commission to investigate two decades of rebel and state-sponsored violence.

Running on the slogan "Toledo Trabajo" (Toledo means jobs), the ebullient Toledo bested Garcia, a gifted orator whose 1985-1990 administration was wracked by mismanagement, hyperinflation, and guerrilla violence, in runoff elections held June 3, 2001, that were internationally heralded as free and fair. During the campaign, Toledo, a one-time shoe-shine boy who won a scholarship to Stanford University, was accused of using cocaine in a 1998 orgy with five prostitutes, and of repeatedly lying about his past. (Toledo claimed he was forced to take the drug after being kidnapped.)

Throughout 2001, a veritable who's who of Peru's business elite—including the heads of six of seven television stations, the head of one of the region's fastest-growing airlines, and leaders from banking and industrial sectors—had come under suspicion or had been formally accused of collusion in corrupt practices with Montesinos. In August, the new attorney general accused Fujimori of paying Montesinos \$15 million to flee the country; in October she accused Fujimori of embezzling more than \$372 million. Montesinos's arrest in Venezuela proved something of an embarrassment for the government of President Hugo Chavez, which repeatedly said that the Peruvian fugitive was not in the country. The appearance of scores of hand grenades throughout Lima, some of which have caused casualties, is believed to be part of a campaign by police and military officers loyal to Fujimori who have sold the artifacts to gang members in hopes that rising violence would undermine the new administration. Although the threat of a possible guerrilla resurgence is viewed as unlikely by most observers, on August 7 some 100 members of a Shining Path splinter group ambushed an elite police unit in a remote jungle area, killing four policemen.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Peruvians can change their government through free and fair elections. Both the April 8 presidential contest and the June 3 runoff elections were hailed by international election observation teams as being relatively free and fair, although many voters were reportedly turned off by the campaigns' negative tone. In preparation for the 2001 vote congress reformed the constitution, replacing a single nationwide district for congressional elections with a system of multiple districts based on the departments (provinces) into which the country is divided for administrative purposes. The move provided fair representation for the almost 50 percent of the population who live outside of the four largest cities, and guaranteed them some attention from the state and from political parties, which traditionally have ignored them.

On the eve of President Alberto Fujimori's removal from office, reforms designed to guarantee judicial independence were undertaken by the former opposition. Since Alejandro Toledo assumed office in July 28, 2001, his justice ministry has worked hard to put into place a broad anticorruption effort. Senior Peruvian officials promised to strip the veil of immunity from corrupt politicians, by using independent courts, respect for human rights, and exemplary punishment for those who merit it. Popular perceptions of the justice system—that it is a swamped bureaucracy riddled by political influence and greed—will be hard to change, however. Scant resources have meant that most of Peru's more than 3,000 judges are overworked and underpaid.

Peru's financial woes are the most notable factor contributing to spiraling national crime. The National Statistics Institute estimates that rapid increases in poverty have now placed fully half the population in need, with one-third of the indigent population of 12 million living in extreme poverty. Public safety, particularly in Lima, is threatened by vicious warfare among opposing gangs—some of which use body armor and high-powered weapons—and violent crime. Police estimate that there are more than 1,000 criminal gangs in the capital alone. Kidnappings are a serious problem in Lima. Conditions remain deplorable in prisons for common criminals.

The press is largely privately owned. Radio and television are both privately and publicly owned. Under Fujimori, Peru had one of the worst records on press freedom in the world. Government tactics ran from abductions, death threats, libel suits and the withholding of advertising, to police harassment, arbitrary detention, physical mistreatment, and imprisonment on charges of "apology for terrorism." Ironically, it was the media and journalists whose exposes of widespread corruption and abuse of power ended up toppling his "infotatorship." In October 2001, Ernesto Schutz, president of Peru's leading television station, Panamericana, was arrested in Argentina on corruption charges linked to ex-spy-chief Montesinos. A video obtained by prosecutors in Lima allegedly showed Schutz receiving \$350,000 in cash from the one-time "Rasputin of the Andes."

Racism against Peru's large Indian population has been prevalent among the middle and upper classes, although the Fujimori government made some effort to combat it and Toledo's election is considered a watershed. However, the provisions of the 1993 constitution and subsequent implementing legislation regarding the treatment of native lands are less explicit about the inalienability and unmarketability of these lands than were earlier constitutional and statutory protections.

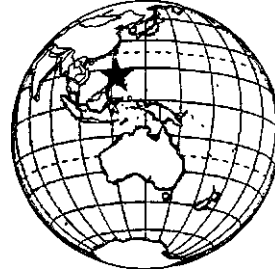
In 1996 the International Labor Organization criticized the labor code for failing to protect workers from anti-union discrimination and for restricting collective bargaining rights. Forced labor, including child labor, is prevalent in the gold-mining region of



the Amazon. Violence is perhaps the greatest problem facing women in Peru today, although recently the government has taken some steps to deal with it.

## Philippines

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies) Political Rights: 2 Civil Liberties: 3 Status: Free  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 77,200,000  
 PPP: \$3,805  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Christian Malay (91.5 percent), Muslim Malay (4 percent), Chinese (1.5 percent), other (3 percent)  
 Capital: Manila



### Overview:

After succeeding ousted President Joseph Estrada in January 2001, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo worked to restore investor confidence in the Philippines, bring peace to its war-torn southern Mindanao region, and shore up her own support base. She cut public spending to trim the budget deficit, negotiated a ceasefire with the country's main Muslim rebel group, and led her coalition to victory in senate elections in May. Arroyo continued, however, to face nagging doubts about the legitimacy of her presidency, which began in January after massive street protests and military pressure forced Estrada from office over corruption allegations.

The Philippines won independence in 1946 after being ruled by the United States for 43 years and occupied by the Japanese during World War II. Once one of Southeast Asia's wealthiest countries, the Philippines has been plagued since the 1960s by economic mismanagement, widespread corruption, insurgencies, and 14 years of dictatorship under Ferdinand Marcos. Twice elected president in relatively free elections, Marcos began ruling under martial law in 1972 to skirt a constitutional two-term limit. Following a blatantly rigged election, Marcos was forced out of office in February 1986 by massive "People Power" street protests and the defections of key military leaders and units. His opponent in the election, Corazon Aquino, took office.

Though she came to symbolize the Philippines's return to elected rule, Aquino managed few deep political or economic reforms while facing seven coup attempts. Her successor, former army chief of staff Fidel Ramos, ended chronic power shortages, privatized many state companies, and trimmed bureaucratic red tape.

With the popular Ramos constitutionally barred from running for reelection, Vice President Joseph Estrada took 46.4 percent of the vote and defeated seven other candidates to win the May 1998 presidential election. Estrada, a former movie actor, campaigned as a champion of poor Filipinos.

Almost from the outset, the Estrada administration was dogged by allegations of both corruption and that it gave favorable treatment to the business interests of well-connected tycoons. Estrada's downfall began in November 2000, when the house of

representatives impeached him on bribery, graft, and other charges, leading to a trial in the senate. After his supporters there blocked prosecutors from unsealing key evidence, civilian and military pressure forced Estrada to flee the Malacanang presidential palace on January 20, 2001. His exit followed massive street protests, a supreme court ruling declaring the presidency vacant, and, perhaps most importantly, a declaration by military leaders that they no longer supported Estrada.

As vice president, Arroyo, 54, became president under the constitutional line of succession. She faced the challenges of gaining legitimacy for her unelected administration, meeting long-standing demands of her middle-class and business supporters for more open and accountable governance, and cutting the budget deficit while launching programs to ease poverty among lower-class Filipinos. The poor continued to support the ousted Estrada in large numbers, according to opinion polls. In the first real test of her administration's popularity, Arroyo's coalition won 8 of 13 contested senate seats and a majority in the house of representatives in May 14 elections.

The elections came nearly two weeks after security forces on May 1 repelled tens of thousands of Estrada backers who tried to storm the presidential palace. Estrada, 64, went on trial in October on charges of plundering more than \$80 million and for other offenses during his 31 months in office.

Reversing Estrada's hardline approach, the Arroyo administration signed a ceasefire in August with the 15,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which has been fighting since 1978 for an independent Islamic state on southern Mindanao island. Although Manila agreed to rehabilitate Mindanao and begin negotiations on some MILF land claims, the rebels' separatist demands stand in the way of a durable peace accord.

Arroyo, an economist by training and the daughter of a former president, also revived stalled talks with the National Democratic Front (NDF), a coalition of Communist rebel groups that have been fighting Manila since 1969. In a setback, 28 people were killed in November in the bloodiest fighting in a decade between soldiers and the rebel New People's Army, the NDF's military wing, on Mindanao. Arroyo also ordered a crackdown against the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group after it seized some two dozen hostages on May 27 from a tourist resort. Most of the hostages were released, but some still remained in captivity at year's end. As part of its global campaign against terrorism, Washington in November pledged \$100 million in security assistance and a further \$1 billion in trade benefits.

Propped up by robust domestic demand, the Philippines' export-oriented economy weathered tough international conditions to grow by an estimated 2.8 percent in 2001, down from 3.9 percent in 2000. Unlike many Asian economies, the Philippines avoided recession despite government spending cuts and slack global demand for electronics parts, which make up around 60 percent of total exports. Overall, exports make up around half of the Philippines' gross domestic product.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Filipinos enjoy most basic rights and can change their government through elections. Many foreign and domestic observers, however, said that the street protests and military pressure that ousted President Joseph Estrada in January 2001 amounted to a "soft coup" that violated constitutional norms on removal of presidents.

The 1987 constitution vests executive power in a directly elected president who is

limited to a single six-year term. Because she is serving out the remainder of Estrada's term, however, President Arroyo will be able to run in the 2004 presidential election. Congress consists of a directly elected, 24-member senate and a house of representatives with 201 directly elected members and up to 50 others appointed by the president.

Despite recent economic reforms, a few dozen powerful families continue to be highly influential in politics and hold an overarching share of corporate wealth and land. "Corporate ownership and control in the Philippines is highly concentrated within 40-50 family groups," according to a March World Bank report. In the countryside, the wealthiest five percent of Filipinos control nearly 90 percent of the land, the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in March.

Corruption, cronyism, and influence peddling are widely considered to be rife in business and government. The Berlin-based Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index ranked the Philippines in a tie with three other countries for 65th place out of 91 countries surveyed. The first-place country, Finland, is the least corrupt.

The official Commission on Human Rights (CHR) regularly labels the Philippine National Police (PNP) as the country's worst human rights abuser. PNP officers have in recent years summarily killed dozens of criminal suspects, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on human rights in the Philippines in 2000. They are also widely suspected of being involved in some of the dozens of kidnappings-for-ransom of ethnic Chinese each year, the report added. The roughly one million ethnic Chinese make up slightly more than one percent of all Filipinos but tend to be targeted because they hold a lopsided share of national wealth.

Both police and soldiers at times also torture and otherwise abuse criminal suspects and detainees, the U.S. State Department report said. In an effort to curb abuses, the PNP has in recent years prosecuted and dismissed for human rights violations dozens of officers and the CHR conducts human rights training for police.

The August ceasefire between the government and the 12,000-strong MILF brought quiet to many parts of Mindanao and allowed many civilians who had fled fighting to return to their homes. In other areas of Mindanao, however, the army continued to pursue the smaller Abu Sayyaf group. The 1,100-member Abu Sayyaf claims to seek an independent Islamic state, although the government and many others say it is little more than a kidnapping and extortion outfit. Fighting between soldiers and Islamic militants in southern Mindanao has in recent years caused severe hardship for many of the region's 15 million people. Clashes have at times forced hundreds of thousands of villagers to flee their homes. Hundreds have died either because of indiscriminate bombing, after being caught in cross-fire, while fleeing their homes, or from poor health conditions created by the conflict, according to the U.S. State Department and other sources.

Security forces have in recent years summarily executed dozens of suspected Islamic militants and alleged supporters, the U.S. State Department report said. The MILF and Abu Sayyaf routinely extrajudicially execute, arbitrarily detain, and torture soldiers and suspected civilian collaborators, the report added.

The Moros, or Muslims who live in Mindanao, say they face economic and social discrimination by the country's Roman Catholic majority. Muslim-majority provinces lag behind Christian-majority ones in Mindanao on most development indicators, a 1998 Asian Development Bank survey found. Critics allege that a semiautonomous government made up of former Islamic rebels that nominally rules four Mindanao provinces has little real power and has not done much to boost local economic development.

Amid this disillusionment, the mainly Christian population in 11 provinces and 14 cities in Mindanao not in the autonomous region, voted in an August plebiscite to remain outside the region. Meanwhile, Farouk Hussein, the candidate favored by President Arroyo, won a special election in December to become the governor of the autonomous region. The Muslim-led government was created under a 1996 peace accord that ended a 24-year insurgency by a separatist group called the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Hussein replaced Nur Misuari, who led a November attack by a breakaway MNLF faction on an army outpost on Jolo Island after he was ousted as MNLF leader. The attack killed upwards of 100 people, although Misuari was later arrested while trying to enter Malaysia and his breakaway faction appears to be a spent force.

In the countryside, the 9,000-strong New People's Army (NPA) continues to fight small battles against soldiers, although the 32-year-old Communist insurgency is far less potent than at its peak in the 1970s. The NPA has in recent years extrajudicially killed dozens of local politicians, suspected informants, and others, according to the U.S. State Department report.

In rural areas, businesses and powerful landowning families hire private security teams that operate with near impunity. Dozens of peasants and pro-farmer activists seeking agricultural reforms and better working conditions disappear each year, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* said in March. A 1998 program to redistribute to landless farmers 4.3 million hectares of land owned by the state and large landowners has so far handed over little more than half of the targeted land, most of it publicly owned, the *Review* added.

The judiciary is independent, but courts are understaffed, heavily backlogged, and rife with corruption. In practice, poor people often have little recourse under the law, while wealthy and powerful Filipinos accused of crimes frequently use connections and bribe judges to evade punishment, according to the U.S. State Department report. The CHR said in 2000 that conditions in many of the country's jails and prisons were inhumane and that the Manila city jail in particular was unfit for human habitation.

The private press is outspoken, although newspapers often resort to innuendo rather than investigative reporting. In the countryside, illegal logging outfits, drug traffickers, and guerrillas occasionally harass and intimidate journalists. In the most serious incidents, gunmen have in recent years killed several journalists.

Although the government has introduced programs to curb violence against women, rape, domestic violence, trafficking of Filipino women and girls for forced prostitution and forced labor, and sexual harassment in the workplace continued to be major problems. The number of reported rape cases has increased by about 16 percent annually since 1992, according to the U.S. State Department report. Women who are raped or sexually abused in custody by police or prison guards often fear reprisals if they press charges, and those who do make complaints are often pressured into withdrawing them, Amnesty International said in a March report.

Filipino females enter high schools and universities in greater numbers than do males. In the job market, though, women face discrimination in the private sector, have a higher unemployment rate than men, and earn less than their male counterparts, the U.S. State Department report said. Women are also underrepresented in government and politics.

Studies in recent years by the government and international agencies suggest that

the Philippines has at least 44,000 street children, some 60,000 child prostitutes, and at least 3.7 million working children. The government, UNICEF, the U.S. State Department, and others accuse the NPA of using child-soldiers.

Indigenous Filipinos, who make up around 18 percent of the population, face discrimination in mainstream society and are sometimes displaced by commercial projects from ancestral lands, according to the U.S. State Department report. Facing strong opposition from mining and agricultural interests, the government has been slow to carry out a 1997 act designed to award land titles to indigenous communities.

The International Labor Organization has criticized provisions in the labor law that make it hard for government workers to strike, require a union to represent at least 20 percent of workers in a bargaining unit before it can be registered, and penalize workers for strikes deemed illegal. Authorities have not in recent years penalized workers for illegal strikes. The law also places some procedural restrictions on the rights of private sector workers to strike. Private sector employers often violate minimum wage standards and try to intimidate union members, the U.S. State Department report said. Around 12 percent of workers are unionized, although only about 14.5 percent of this number are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

## Poland

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 38,600,000  
 PPP: \$8,450  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Polish (98 percent), German (1 percent), Ukrainian and Belarusian (1 percent)  
 Capital: Warsaw

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

In 2001, Polish voters ousted the government of Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek and handed a parliamentary election victory to a coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Labor Union (UP). However, having failed to receive an outright majority, the SLD-UP alliance formed a government with the Polish Peasants Party (PSL). A series of corruption scandals and continued efforts to fulfill European Union membership requirements also marked the year. In addition, in recognition of the twentieth anniversary of martial law, President Aleksander Kwasniewski made a speech in which he called martial law "evil because it was directed against the rebirth of freedom." Former Communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski also went on trial for his role in the 1970 shootings of shipyard workers who were protesting in Gdansk and other port cities.

From the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries, Poland and Lithuania maintained a powerful empire that Prussia, Austria, and Russia destroyed in three successive partitions. Poland enjoyed a window of independence from 1918 to 1939 but was forced

into the Communist sphere at the end of World War II. Polish citizens endured a Soviet-style people's republic from 1952 to 1989, the year Lech Walesa and the Solidarity trade union movement forced the government to accept democratic reforms.

Voters elected Walesa president in 1990, and he presided over five years of economic and political transformation. Former Communist Aleksander Kwasniewski defeated Walesa in 1995 and remains in power today. Kwasniewski's SLD controlled the government from 1993 to 1997, when the opposition Solidarity Election Action (AWS) proved victorious in parliamentary elections. The smaller Freedom Union (UW) party joined the AWS in forming a majority government led by Buzek.

In 2000, Poland celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Solidarity. The same year, the UW withdrew its support from the Solidarity-led government, which it blamed for failing to rally support for important budget cuts and privatization programs. Five cabinet members resigned, and Buzek was left presiding over an unpopular minority government. Voters delivered a solid reelection victory in October 2000 to President Kwasniewski, who pledged to make membership in the European Union (EU) his top priority.

In September 2001, voters handed the Buzek government a crushing defeat in parliamentary elections. Approximately 7,800 candidates, representing 15 parties and coalitions, vied for 460 seats in the *Sejm*, parliament's lower house. About 430 candidates competed for 100 seats in the senate.

In the *Sejm* election, a coalition of the SLD and the UP proved victorious with 41.04 percent of the vote and 216 seats but failed to win an outright majority. The two parties formed a government with the PSL, which had won 42 seats. Civic Platform (PO), a new centrist party, finished second in the election with 12.68 percent of the vote and 65 seats. The following parties divided the remaining seats: Self-Defense Party (*Samooborona*), 53 seats; Law and Justice (PIS), 44; League of Polish Families (LPR), 38; and the German minority, 2. The AWS and the UW failed to secure a single seat.

In the senate election, the SLD-UP won 75 seats; the Blok Senate 2001, 15; the PSL, 4; the LPR, 2; and *Samooborona*, 2. Candidates Henryk Stoklosa and Anna Kurska each received a mandate. Voter turnout was 46 percent. Some observers suggested that a series of corruption scandals involving high-level officials sealed the Buzek government's fate. In one high-profile case, for example, the prime minister fired Deputy Defense Minister Bronislaw Komorowski after police arrested an aide who had solicited bribes from defense firms on Komorowski's behalf.

During the election campaign, the leaders of the AWS, the UW, the PO, and the SLD signed a pledge in support of Polish membership in the EU. The SLD-UP platform also pledged support for EU membership but called for a national referendum on the issue. According to the OBOP polling agency, public support for joining the EU dropped from 61.6 percent in 2000 to 49.6 percent in 2001.

In its 2001 report on Polish accession, the European Commission (EC) noted a number of positive developments. Among these were measures aimed at improving transparency in party financing and ensuring that the method of allocating seats in parliament was a better reflection of voter preferences. The EC also noted continued improvements in judicial performance and the adoption of a law on public information, which it called "an important... development in the fight against corruption." According to a September 2001 survey conducted by the OBOP polling agency, 49.6 percent of Poles favor EU membership; 30.4 percent do not.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Polish citizens who are age 18 or older can change their government democratically under a system of universal and equal suffrage by secret ballot. Voters elect the president and members of parliament. The president's appointment of the prime minister is subject to confirmation by the Sejm.

Elections in Poland are free and fair. The 1997 parliamentary election resulted in a change of government when the opposition AWS defeated the SLD. The AWS and the UW formed a coalition government led by Jerzy Buzek. In May 2000, in anticipation of the October election, parliament amended the Presidential Elections Act to comply with the 1997 constitution. In September 2001, a coalition of the SLD and the UP achieved a solid victory in parliamentary elections. However, having failed to receive 50 percent of the vote, the two parties formed a government with the PSL. SLD leader Leszek Miller became Poland's new prime minister.

Incumbent President Aleksander Kwasniewski began his reelection campaign in 2000 with a strong lead in the polls. He easily defeated eleven opponents in the first round of voting with 53.9 percent of the vote. His closest challenger, independent candidate Andrzej Olechowski, received only 17.3 percent. The remaining candidates performed as follows: Marian Krzaklewski, AWS, 15.57 percent; Jaroslaw Kalinowski, PSL, 5.95 percent; Andrzej Lepper, Self-Defense Party (*Samoobrona*), 3.05 percent. Seven candidates, including Lech Walesa, received fewer than 2 percent each. After his poor showing, Walesa retired from active political life.

The 1997 constitution guarantees freedom of expression and forbids censorship. However, the country's libel law treats slander as a criminal offense. Journalists, in particular, oppose the growing number of related lawsuits. In 2001, a court found Andrzej Lepper, the head of *Samoobrona*, guilty of slandering President Kwasniewski and two former government ministers back in 1999. Parliament later fired Lepper from his post as deputy speaker for insulting other senior officials. Poland enjoys a diverse, and growing, supply of print and electronic media. In 2001, the ITI media group launched TVN 24, the country's first 24-hour television news channel.

The state respects freedom of religion and does not require religious groups to register. All religious groups enjoy a reduced tax burden. Public schools offer classes in religion and ethics. More than 90 percent of Poles are Roman Catholic, and more than 60 percent worship regularly. In 2001, the Institute of National Remembrance ordered the exhumation of a mass grave in Jedwabne, where 1,600 Jews lost their lives in 1941. After a book published in 2000 claimed that Poles, and not the Nazis, were responsible for the murders, the Institute called for the exhumation to search for evidence.

During the 2001 parliamentary election campaign, the Catholic Church urged Poles not to support parties that might try to weaken the country's abortion law, which sets strict limits on the procedure's use. Although the Church did not name a specific party, its comments were directed at the SLD. Also in 2001, the Interior Ministry created an internal department to monitor "new religious groups" and "cults."

Polish citizens can petition the government, assemble freely, organize professional and other associations, and engage in collective bargaining. Public demonstrations require permits from local authorities. In 2001, more than 2,500 steelworkers rallied in Katowice to protest the possible closure of the Huta Baildon steelworks. Twelve workers began a hunger strike. Similarly, workers in Gdansk protested the announcement of 500 layoffs at the city's historic shipyard.

Poland has an independent judiciary, but courts are notorious for delays in processing cases. A January 2000 law sought to relieve the burden by simplifying procedures and increasing the number of court chambers for civil and criminal cases. Other recent reforms include strengthening the public prosecutor's office, adding more judges, and improving judicial training. In its 2001 accession report, the European Commission praised Poland for remaining vigilant in its efforts to improve judicial efficiency but noted that "[a]t this early stage in their implementation such measures have helped to stem the tide but have not yet managed to reverse its flow." The report also noted that "lack of transparency" and "concerns about corruption" in the judicial system persist.

The constitution outlines a range of other personal rights and freedoms, including the right to privacy, the inviolability of the home, freedom of movement, and choice of residence. The constitution also specifies entitlements such as free education and health care.

At nearly 17 percent, unemployment in Poland is a serious problem. Likewise, economic growth has slowed significantly since the middle of 2000, and consumer confidence has reached a four-year low. Even so, the country boasts a competitive market economy in which the private sector makes up 70 percent of gross domestic product and 72 percent of total employment. In 2001, new legislation reduced the number of business activities for which licenses are required. To date, Poland has not promulgated a law on the restitution of private property that was seized during the Communist period.

## Portugal

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Mixed capitalist  
Population: 10,000,000  
PPP: \$16,064  
Life Expectancy: 76  
Ethnic Groups: Portuguese, African minority  
Capital: Lisbon

Political Rights: 1
Civil Liberties: 1
Status: Free



### Overview:

Prime Minister Antonio Guterres resigned at the end of 2001 after his ruling Socialist Party suffered significant losses in municipal elections. An economic slowdown also reduced popular support of Guterres. The death of 70 people in a bridge collapse revealed serious shortcoming in Portugal's public works system, further imperiling Gueterres's political legitimacy. While Portugal prepared to adopt the Euro as its new currency, economic forecasts show Portugal lagging far behind European Union (EU) averages.

Formerly a great maritime and colonial empire, Portugal ended its monarchy in a bloodless revolution in 1910. The republic, plagued by chronic instability and violence, ended in a military revolt in 1926. A fascist dictatorship under Antonio Salazar lasted from 1932 to 1968. In 1968, the dying Salazar was replaced by his lieutenant, Marcello



Caetano. During what is now termed the "Marcello spring," repression and censorship were relaxed somewhat and a liberal wing developed inside the one-party national assembly. In 1974, Caetano was overthrown in a bloodless coup by the Armed Forces Movement, which opposed the ongoing colonial wars in Mozambique and Angola. A transition to democracy then began with the election of a constitutional assembly that adopted a democratic constitution in 1976. The constitution was revised in 1982 to bring the military under civilian control, curb the president's powers, and abolish an unelected "Revolutionary Council." In 1989, a second revision of the constitution provided for further privatization of nationalized industries and state-owned media.

The election of the Socialist Party's Jorge Sampaio as president in 1996 marked the end of a conservative era in which Portugal benefited economically, but failed to satisfy its voters' eagerness for social change. While both President Sampaio and Prime Minister Guterres have vowed to continue economic reforms, issues such as education, health, housing, and the environment have assumed greater importance in the minds of constituents. In January 2001 President Sampaio was reelected to a second five-year term.

Prime Minister Guterres has faced intense criticism over his perceived lack of movement on social security, educational, judicial, and public administration reforms. In July, polls showed his ruling Socialist Party trailing the opposition Social Democrats. Economists predict it will take Portugal 20 years to close the gap between its economic performance level and that of the EU's average. Wages, pensions, and literacy levels remain among the lowest in the EU. Fifteen percent of GDP is spent for 700,000 civil servants, the highest rate in the EU. Portugal's bloated bureaucracy is said to breed inefficiencies in the judicial, health, and educational systems. Improved economic performance over the last five years has resulted in higher labor costs, which in turn has produced lower productivity. Exports have slowed as a result.

In March, seventy people were killed when a bus plunged into the Douro River after a bridge collapsed. Local authorities had previously issued a warning that the bridge was structurally unsound and in need of replacement. The government accepted responsibility for the disaster, forcing the resignation of Public Works Minister Jorge Coelho. The incident sharply underscored the serious shortcomings of Portugal's domestic infrastructure and served only to punctuate the loss of public confidence in the government.

In municipal elections in December, the opposition Social Democrats won sweeping victories in most of Portugal's biggest cities, including the capital, Lisbon. Prime Minister Guterres resigned within days of the elections. Analysts saw the defeat of Guterres's Socialist Party as a direct result of Portugal's worsening economy. General elections are scheduled for 2003.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Portuguese can change their government democratically. In direct, competitive elections, voters, including a large number of Portuguese living abroad, select both the president and members of parliament. The president, who also commands the country's armed forces, is elected to a five-year term. The president receives advice from the Council of State, which includes six senior civilian officials, former presidents, five members chosen by the legislature, and five chosen by the president. While the president holds no executive powers, he can delay legislation with a veto or insist on a two-thirds majority to

approve some laws. The country's unicameral legislature includes up to 235 deputies. With the exception of fascist organizations, political association is unrestricted. Members of small, extreme-right groups, however, have run candidates for public office without interference. In 1997, the constitution was amended to allow immigrants to vote in presidential elections.

Portugal introduced what was considered the most liberal immigration legislation in the EU in August 2001. Workers who entered the country illegally or on tourist visas are now able to legalize their status. A shortage of 22,000 laborers contributed to the legislation. Workers can stay in Portugal indefinitely by legalizing their status and obtaining either permanent residency or citizenship. They can then move freely to other EU countries. There are an estimated 200,000 foreigners in the country, representing 1.8 percent of the population. Anti-immigrant violence appears rare.

Portuguese courts are autonomous and operate only under the restraints of established law and the constitution. They include a constitutional court, a supreme court of justice, and judicial courts of the first and second instance. Separate administrative courts address administrative and tax disputes. They are generally noted for their adherence to traditional principles of independent jurisprudence, but inefficient bureaucratic organization has created an enormous backlog of cases in the system.

Freedoms of speech and assembly are respected with few exceptions. Although the law forbids insults directed at the government or the armed forces and statements intended to undermine the rule of law, the state has never prosecuted cases under this provision. Human rights organizations have repeatedly criticized Portugal for the occasional beating of prisoners and other detainees. In general, prison conditions are poor.

The print media, which are owned by political parties and private publishers, are free and competitive. Until 1990, all television and radio media, with the exception of the Roman Catholic radio station, were state owned. Although television broadcasting is dominated by the state-owned Radiotelevisao Portuguesa, two independent stations have operated in recent years.

Workers have the right to strike and are represented by competing Communist and non-Communist organizations. In recent years, the two principal labor federations, the General Union of Workers and the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers Intersindical, have charged "clandestine" companies with exploiting child labor in the impoverished north.

The status of women has improved with economic modernization. Women account for two-thirds of university graduates. More than 60 percent of women are employed, accounting for 40 percent of Portugal's doctors, judges, and lawyers. Despite these gains, the average pay for women remains 22 percent lower than for men, according to the labor ministry. Women also remain underrepresented in politics and the executive ranks of business. A 1997 constitutional amendment promoting equality in politics has yet to be translated into legislation that would establish minimum quotas. Portugal's constitution provides for freedom of religion, and the government respects this right in practice.

## Qatar

Polity: Traditional monarchy  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 600,000  
 PPP: \$18,789  
 Life Expectancy: 72  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab (40 percent), Pakistani (18 percent), Indian (18 percent), Iranian (10 percent), other (14 percent)  
 Capital: Doha

Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 6  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Qatar continued work on important economic reform during 2001, buoyed by increased oil and gas prices. It also enjoyed a higher international profile, as host of the World Trade Organization's ministerial meeting in November and as home of Al Jazeera television, which gained millions of viewers for its exclusive on-site coverage of the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan.

Qatar became a British protectorate in 1919 and gained independence when Great Britain withdrew from the Persian Gulf in 1971. Under the 1970 Basic Law, an emir is chosen from among the adult males of the al-Thani family. The Basic Law also provides for a council of ministers and a partially elected *Majlis al-Shura*, or advisory council. In practice, the 35-member Majlis is fully appointed.

In 1995, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, then crown prince and long-recognized as the real power in the country, deposed his father in a palace coup while the emir vacationed in Switzerland. He has since taken steps toward gradual democratization. Press censorship was formally lifted with the dissolution of the information ministry in 1995, and in 1998 the emirate held direct elections to the board of the powerful chamber of commerce and industry. In July 1999, Hamad appointed a committee to draw up a permanent constitution over three years with a provision for a directly elected parliament with legislative power. In foreign policy, he has taken a broadly pro-U.S., moderate-Arab position.

Qatar's first election was held on March 8, 1999, for a 29-member advisory council on municipal affairs. Although the council is limited to issuing opinions on a narrow scope of issues, the election was regarded as a watershed in a region where rulers traditionally resist sharing power with their constituents. By allowing women to vote and to stand as candidates, Qatar became the first Persian Gulf state to hold a direct election on the basis of universal suffrage. Six women were among the 248 candidates, but none of them won seats.

With only about 20 years left as a major oil exporter, Qatar has made a priority of diversifying and attracting foreign investment. It boasts the third-largest gas reserves in the world, which help insulate it from oil price fluctuations. The government has adopted a strategy to lure foreign investment in gas in order to finance economic infrastructure, such as facilities for export-intensive industry, as well as physical infrastructure such as roads, airports, bridges, and power plants. Special focus has been placed on promoting the tourism industry, with the hopes of keeping Qataris and resident ex-

patriates in the country during holidays as well as attracting foreign visitors. In January 2001, the government offered five tourist attractions, including hotel spas and amusement parks, for privatization. Qatari Telecoms has been privatized, and power and water utilities have been partially privatized. New laws allow 100 percent foreign ownership of certain companies in the educational, health, tourism, and agricultural sectors.

Still, economic reform is likely to continue slowly, facing resistance from Qataris, who prefer the higher-paying jobs in the public sector. For their part, private firms avoid hiring Qatari nationals, who they say lack the work ethic of the foreign expatriates who make up 80 percent of the population. Religious leaders oppose the "Western influence" that comes with foreign investment. Moreover, austerity measures requiring Qataris to pay for their electricity and water are so politically sensitive that journalists are punished for writing about them.

In March 2001, the International Court of Justice resolved a long-standing territorial dispute between Qatar and Bahrain over the Hawar Islands and several other territories off the Qatari peninsula. The court awarded the Hawar Islands to Bahrain, and Zubarah, a disputed town on the Qatari mainland, to Qatar. Two minor islands also went to Qatar. Both sides readily accepted the decision, which is binding and may not be appealed, and hailed a "new era of cooperation," which began with a revival of calls to build a causeway between the two states. The improvement in relations will undoubtedly create economic opportunities for both states.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Qataris cannot change their government democratically. Political parties are illegal, and there are no organized opposition groups. The emir holds absolute power, though he consults with leading members of society on policy issues and works to achieve consensus with the appointed Majlis. Citizens have the right to appeal government decisions by petitioning the emir. March 1999 elections to the municipal advisory council were considered by international observers to be free and fair. Participation was surprisingly low: of 40,000 eligible voters, only 22,000 registered. *The Economist* attributed the lack of enthusiasm to the strong conservative nature of Qatari society. Indeed, women candidates admitted to facing criticism of their decision to stand. Also, surprisingly, Qatar's leading families did not field candidates. But the vibrant campaign included televised debates, posters, and informal gatherings to discuss matters of municipal policy. The elected council reports to the minister of municipal affairs, who is not required to heed its advice and may dissolve it at will.

In July 1999, the emir initiated work on a new constitution that is expected to provide for a directly elected parliament. However, most observers are skeptical about the degree of power the new legislature will actually have. Officials maintain that significant executive power will remain concentrated in the hands of the emir, according to Gulf Arab tradition.

The civilian security force under the interior ministry includes the general police force; the investigatory police (*mubahathat*), which handles sedition and espionage cases; the special state security investigative unit (*mubahith*), which handles internal security and intelligence gathering; and the independent civilian intelligence service (*mukhabarat*). Suspects in security cases may be detained indefinitely while under investigation and are generally denied access to counsel, though long-term detention occurs infrequently. Torture is reportedly not common.

The judiciary is not independent. Most judges are foreign nationals whose residence may be revoked at any time. However, courts have been known to summon senior officials and members of the ruling family as witnesses. Civil courts have jurisdiction in civil and commercial disputes, while *Sharia* (Islamic law) courts handle family, civil, and criminal cases. *Sharia* court trials are closed to the public, and lawyers are not permitted in the courtroom. While corporal punishment is practiced in accord with *Sharia*, amputation is prohibited. An appeals court sentenced 19 people, including the emir's cousin, to death in May for their participation in a failed 1996 coup. Eighteen other defendants received life sentences, and 29 were freed. A lower court had sentenced 33 people to life imprisonment and acquitted 85 in February 2000.

The media in Qatar have been virtually free of government interference since the lifting of censorship in 1995, but self-censorship is still pervasive because of real or imagined social and political pressures. State-run television, radio, and newspapers generally avoid taboo subjects such as Islam and the royal family, but recently have criticized state funding of the royal family. The editor in chief of the daily *Al-Watan* in Doha was brutally assaulted in June after criticizing the energy minister's proposal to charge consumers for water and electricity.

The satellite television all-news channel Al Jazeera, which is owned and operated by a member of the ruling family, gained international attention following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. With exclusive footage of American air strikes in Afghanistan and of terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, the channel gained millions of viewers and added the United States to its list of critics. U.S. officials accused Al Jazeera of bias against the U.S.-led war on terrorism in its coverage. The station has for years been renowned for its interviews with dissidents and exiles throughout the region, debates that include opposition views, commentary on human rights issues, and discussions of religion in Arab culture. The controversial coverage captivates Middle Eastern viewers while drawing furious protests from regional leaders. However, it rarely criticizes Qatar itself, and does not have a correspondent covering the emirate.

The government has been working to make public services available to the public via the Internet. Qatar has some 45,000 Internet users. In March 2001, an Arab-American employee of Qatar's foreign affairs ministry was sentenced to two years in prison and deportation for "harming" Qatar in articles published on the Internet.

Freedom of association is limited to private social, sports, trade, professional, and cultural societies registered with the government. Political parties do not exist, and political demonstrations are prohibited. Human rights groups criticized the decision by the World Trade Organization to hold a ministerial meeting in Qatar, on the grounds that the emirate prohibits public protest. The meeting was held in November 2001, as police vehicles and barricades provided a security zone around the site.

Women have made important gains in recent years. Although the number of women in the workforce is still very small, women have begun to find jobs in education, medicine, and the news media. According to one study, the number of Qatari women in government jobs increased by 61 percent between 1991 and 1997. Women participated as candidates and voters in municipal elections, making up 44 percent of registered voters. The government increasingly awards scholarships to women wishing to study abroad. Still, in this socially conservative country, society restricts women even where the law does not. Women may legally travel abroad alone, but most travel with

male relatives. Legal discrimination still exists in family matters such as divorce and inheritance.

The Wahhabi order of Sunni Islam is the state religion. While public worship by non-Muslims is officially prohibited, services conducted privately with prior notification to authorities are tolerated, and a large foreign population practices discreetly. There are a small number of Shiite mosques. Public schools provide compulsory instruction in Islam. Since Sharia courts handle most civil claims, non-Muslims, who cannot bring suit in Sharia courts, are disadvantaged. The U.S. State Department notes an upward trend in religious freedom for Christians, including the promised provision of land on which to build churches. In February 2000, the government identified a piece of land on which it will allow the construction of three churches: one Catholic, one Anglican, and one Orthodox.

Workers may not form unions or bargain collectively. They may belong to joint consultative committees of worker and management representatives that discuss such issues as working conditions and schedules, but not wages. The government's Labor Conciliation Board mediates disputes. Workers, except those in governmental or domestic employment, may strike if mediation fails. Employers sometimes exercise leverage over foreign workers by refusing to grant mandatory exit permits. Foreign nationals employed as domestic workers face sexual harassment and physical abuse. Although the authorities have investigated and punished several employers, most apparently do not report abuse for fear of losing their residence permits. Some 25,000 Egyptian nationals live in Qatar, but the hiring of Egyptians was banned in 1996 when Qatari officials accused Egypt of involvement in the failed 1996 coup.

## Romania

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist (transitional)  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 22,400,000  
 PPP: \$6,041  
 Life Expectancy: 71  
 Ethnic Groups: Romanian (90 percent), Hungarian (7 percent), other, including German and Roma (3 percent)  
 Capital: Bucharest



### Overview:

In 2001, Romania continued to lag behind the 12 other countries negotiating for membership in the European Union (EU). An EU report in November noted that corruption within the judiciary "remains a serious problem." Two-thirds of the economy is still government controlled, even after the privatization of Banca Agricola and Sidex, the largest steel manufacturer in Eastern Europe, this year. The report highlighted Romania's progress towards establishing a functioning market economy and stated that Romania would not be able to "withstand market forces and competition within the EU but has taken

steps to allow it to develop that ability." Despite these problems, the European Council of Justice and Interior Ministers lifted visa restrictions in December for Romanian citizens traveling to EU-member countries, effective January 1, 2002. Several opinion polls conducted at the end of the year showed that up to 80 percent of Romanians would vote in favor of EU integration if a referendum were held.

Following the September 11 attacks on the United States, Romania announced that it was prepared to take part in the fight against terrorism despite not being a member of NATO. The Romanian parliament adopted a condemnatory motion on the attacks: "The terrorist violence represents an attack not only on U.S. institutions and citizens, but also on democracy, freedom, and international stability." It also voted overwhelmingly to allow NATO to use its airspace, land, and waters to combat terrorism. In October, Romania signed an agreement with the United States that permitted temporary stationing of U.S. troops on Romanian territory.

In late December, Hungary and Romania reached a compromise regarding the application of the Hungarian Status Law, which had been the focus of much controversy in 2001. Hungary had passed the Hungarian Status Law in June, granting special rights to ethnic Hungarians residing in neighboring countries, including employment and health benefits. A poll conducted in July showed that 76 percent of Romanians felt the government should reject the implementation of the Hungarian Status Law. The compromise reached between the two countries extended to Romanians the right to work in Hungary, but did not include the other special rights that were granted to the ethnic Hungarians.

Romania became independent following the 1878 Berlin Congress. It gained territory after World War I, but lost some to the Soviet Union and Bulgaria in 1940. When Soviet troops entered the country in 1944, King Michael dismissed the pro-German regime and backed the Allies. In 1945, he was forced to accept a Communist-led coalition government. The autarkic economics and repressive governance of Communist strongman Nicolae Ceausescu devastated Romania during his rule from 1965 to 1989.

On December 25, 1989, Ceausescu was tried and executed following a popular uprising and palace coup by disgruntled Communists. A provisional government was formed under Ion Iliescu, a high-ranking Communist and the leader of the National Salvation Front (NSF). The 1992 parliamentary elections saw the NSF split between neo-Communist and more reformist members. In November 1996, the reformer Emil Constantinescu of the Democratic Convention of Romania (CDR) defeated Iliescu in the presidential elections. Political bickering and lack of unification within the coalition resulted in the dismissal of Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea in 1998 and Prime Minister Radu Vasile in 1999.

Romania took over the rotating presidency of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in January. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell commended Romania for its OSCE chairmanship in December, declaring, "Romania clearly is making maximum efforts to become part of the Euro-Atlantic community."

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Romanians can change their government democratically under a multiparty system enshrined in a 1991 post-Communist constitution. In the November 2000 parliamentary elections, the Party of Social Democracy (PDSR) won 65 of the 140 seats in the senate and 155 of the 327 seats in the chamber of deputies. The Greater Romania Party (PRM) gained

37 seats in the senate and 84 in the lower house; the National Liberal Party (PNL), 13 and 30; the Democratic Party (PD), 13 and 31; and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), 12 and 27. Adrian Nastase was appointed prime minister. The OSCE found that the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections were "further evidence that democratic elections are firmly entrenched in Romania." Voter turnout in 2000 was at 57.5 percent, 20 percent lower than in the 1996 elections.

The 1991 constitution enshrines freedom of expression and the press, but it limits the boundaries of free expression by prohibiting "defamation of the country." Under Law No. 40 of the 1996 Romanian Penal code, journalists face imprisonment for up to two years for libel and up to five years for disseminating false information that affects Romania's international relations and national security. Legislation on the protection of state secrets, approved by parliament in March, provides that anyone who is found guilty of publishing state secrets could receive a prison sentence of up to ten years, and up to seven years for those trying to acquire state secrets. Critics argued that the law infringes upon the rights of freedom of information and expression.

Religious freedom is generally respected although newer religious organizations continue to be impeded from registering with the state secretary of religions. Lack of registration in turn denies adherents their right to freely exercise their religious beliefs and prevents them from building places of worship, cemeteries, and so on.

The constitution provides for freedom of assembly, and the government respects this right. Workers have the right to form unions and strike.

The Romanian justice system is divided into four courts: the courts of first instance, the tribunals, the courts of appeals, and the supreme court of justice. All are independent of other government branches but subject to influence by the executive branch. Under the law, judges are appointed, promoted, and transferred by the 15-member Higher Council of the Judiciary, which is elected for four-year terms by the two chambers of parliament. To diminish the politicization of the process, a 1997 revision of the law called for the members of the Higher Council to be appointed by the justice minister, not by parliament.

The adoption of the Local Public Administration Act in January 2001 granted minorities the right to use their native tongue in communicating with authorities in areas where they represent at least 20 percent of the population. The act also required signs to be written in minority languages and local government decisions to be announced in those languages.

In July the Romanian government adopted nullified a law that allowed jail terms of up to five years for homosexual relations in public or that provoked a public scandal. Following the chamber of deputies' vote in June 2000 to decriminalize homosexuality, the senate finally voted this year to approve the ordinance that abolished Article 200 of the Penal code. The senate also approved a law in November that banned sexual harassment and any form of gender discrimination.

Corruption is endemic in the government bureaucracy, civil service, and business. Property rights are secure, though the ability of citizens to start businesses continues to be encumbered by red tape, corruption, and organized crime. In May the Romanian Association for Transparency released a survey which found that, according to Bucharest residents, the police, the health service, and local public administration were the most corrupt.

There are no restrictions on travel within the country, and citizens who want to



change their place of residence do not face any official barriers. Women have equal rights with men, though violence against women, including rape, continues to be a serious problem. Romania failed to take significant steps to combat international trafficking in women, according to the U.S. State Department's annual report on trafficking.

The government suspended international adoptions in June following a draft report by the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee rapporteur, Emma Nicholson, which detailed the "persistent abandonment of children, child abuse and neglect, international adoption and child trafficking." However, the ban imposed in October was partially lifted in December for adoption requests that had been submitted before the current ban.

## Russia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 5  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist - statist (transitional)  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 144,400,000  
 PPP: \$7,473  
 Life Expectancy: 66  
 Ethnic Groups: Russian (82 percent), Tatar (4 percent), Ukrainian (3 percent), other (11 percent)  
 Capital: Moscow



### Overview:

Moscow's support of the U.S. antiterrorist campaign following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was heralded by many as the start of a new era in U.S.-Russia relations. The unprecedented level of cooperation led to speculation about what concessions, such as abandoning plans for further NATO expansion or lessening its criticism of the war in Chechnya, the West might be expected to make in return for Russian assistance. However, a chill in relations between Moscow and Washington developed late in the year when the United States announced its intention to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and the Kremlin's hopes for a greater voice in NATO went unrealized. On the domestic front, various long-awaited and often controversial legal and economic reforms were adopted, including laws governing labor, taxation, land ownership, pensions, and the judicial system. Meanwhile, efforts to consolidate central government authority over independent media outlets and the country's far-flung regions continued throughout the year, as did the seemingly intractable war in Chechnya.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the Russian Federation reemerged as a separate, independent state under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin, who had been elected president in June of that year. Yeltsin was challenged by a hostile anti-reform legislature in 1992, as parliament replaced acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar, a principal architect of reforms, with Viktor Chernomyrdin, a Soviet-era manager of the natural gas monopoly, Gazprom. The following year, Yeltsin put down an

attempted coup by hardliners in parliament, and a new constitution was approved creating a bicameral national legislature, the Federal Assembly. The December 1995 parliamentary elections, in which 43 parties competed, saw the victory of Communists and nationalist forces.

In the 1996 presidential elections, Yeltsin, who was openly supported by the country's most influential media and business elites, easily defeated Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov. The signing of a peace agreement in August with authorities in the republic of Chechnya put an end to a nearly two-year war with the breakaway territory, in which Russia suffered a humiliating defeat and Chechnya's formal economy and infrastructure were largely destroyed. However, a final decision on the region's status was officially deferred until 2001.

In March 1998, Yeltsin dismissed Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and his entire government, citing the failure of economic reforms, and replaced him with the little-known Energy Minister Sergei Kiriyenko. As the country's economic situation continued to worsen, the *ruble* collapsed in August, forcing a devaluation of the currency and precipitating the collapse of Russia's financial markets. In response, Yeltsin fired Kiriyenko, who was replaced by Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov in September. The new government, which did not include any well-known reformers, signaled a return to greater spending and state control.

An impending political crisis was averted in mid-1999, when Yeltsin survived an impeachment vote in parliament on May 15 over five charges, including starting the 1994-1996 war in Chechnya. Four days later, the legislature approved a long-time Yeltsin ally, Interior Minister Sergei Stepashin, as the new prime minister to replace Primakov, who had been dismissed by Yeltsin on May 12. However, Yeltsin abruptly removed Stepashin on August 9 and replaced him with Federal Security Service head Vladimir Putin. Yeltsin, whose term would expire in 2000 and who was ineligible to run for a third term, indicated that Putin was his preferred successor in the presidential elections scheduled for the following year.

The previous conflict with Chechnya was reignited in 1999 after an invasion by Chechen rebels into the neighboring republic of Dagestan in early August, and a subsequent string of deadly apartment house bombings in several Russian cities, including Moscow, that the Kremlin blamed on Chechen militants. The Russian government responded by initiating an invasion of the breakaway republic that drove tens of thousands of civilians from their homes and led to accusations of human rights violations committed by both the Russian military and Chechen fighters. However, both the campaign and Putin enjoyed broad popular support in Russia that was fueled by the media's largely pro-government reporting.

In the December 19 election for the 450-seat lower house of parliament (*Duma*), the Communist Party captured 114 seats, and the Unity bloc, a diverse grouping of political figures created by the Kremlin in September and endorsed by Putin, gained 73 seats. The seemingly powerful Fatherland-All Russia coalition, that united Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov's Fatherland group and former Prime Minister Primakov's All Russia bloc of regional governors, suffered a surprisingly poor showing with only 66 seats. The remaining seats were won by independent candidates or members of smaller parties. While the Communists formed the single largest bloc, the results were widely regarded as a victory for pro-government forces. The Unity bloc had appealed to voters on the basis of its image as a champion of the restoration of order and tough lead-

ership, while Primakov saw his support decline in the face of relentless media attacks by the pro-Kremlin ORT television network.

In a surprise end of the year move, President Yeltsin announced his resignation on December 31, turning over the reins of power to Putin. Many observers maintained that his sudden departure was linked to the signing of a guarantee of immunity from prosecution for Yeltsin, who recently had been at the center of several corruption scandals, as well as to his worsening health problems. His resignation served to move up the presidential poll by three months, from June to March 2000. With Putin's victory becoming an increasingly foregone conclusion during the brief campaign period, most political figures, including opponents of the Kremlin administration, began to pledge their support to his candidacy.

In a widely anticipated victory, Putin secured 53 percent of the vote over his closest rival, Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov, who received 29 percent. International election observers cited serious irregularities, including the use of government staff to campaign for Putin, while a highly critical report compiled by *The Moscow Times* following a six-month investigation found that Putin would have faced a second-round runoff with Zyuganov if not for widespread fraud; the report did concede that Putin would most likely have won in the second round. Among the reasons cited for Putin's victory were the shortened campaign period, which benefited the already popular Putin over his opponents; Putin's refusal to provide potentially controversial details of his political program; the earlier elimination from the race of former leading presidential hopefuls Primakov and Luzhkov; and positive portrayals of Putin by large media outlets controlled by the state and Kremlin supporters. Two months after the election, parliament overwhelmingly approved Finance Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, who had served as Russia's chief foreign debt negotiator, as the new prime minister.

Shortly after taking office in March, Putin began challenging the long-standing political clout of the so-called oligarchs, members of the wealthy and powerful business elite—including media magnates Vladimir Gusinsky and Boris Berezovsky—through a series of investigations and raids by tax officials. While Putin argued that his actions were part of a new anticorruption campaign, his efforts were widely interpreted as an attempt to increase his own political power by limiting the influence of major business leaders over state policy. In a bid to increase the central government's authority over the country's far-flung regions, Putin moved to rein in the often independent-minded 89 governors by pushing through legislation removing them from their positions in the upper house of parliament, allowing the president to suspend them for breaking federal laws, and adopting tax reforms that could reduce their economic power. He also created seven new "super regions" headed by Kremlin appointees, most of who had backgrounds in the military or security services.

Throughout 2001, Putin pushed through a series of wide-ranging economic and legal reforms with the stated aims of reducing corruption, increasing transparency and efficiency, and boosting foreign investment. Among the various changes were the passage of an updated labor code to replace Soviet-era legislation; the adoption of a judicial reform package; the establishment of a flat 13 percent individual income tax rate to help deter tax evasion; approval of a gradual restructuring of the banking sector to attract foreign capital; the revamping of the nationwide pension system; passage of a landmark land code allowing the private ownership of nonagricultural land by both Russian citizens and foreign nationals; and adoption of a law to crack down on money

laundering. Some critics maintained that the reforms were not extensive enough, as in the case of the land code, which affects as little as two percent of the country's total land, or that reform would face serious obstacles to implementation by the country's entrenched bureaucracy.

Putin continued his previous year's efforts to increase central government control over political rivals, regional leaders, and the country's media. Although a fair amount of power has been returned from the regions to the center since 2000, including the bringing of some regional laws into conformity with federal legislation, many local leaders have actively resisted the dilution of their authority. In apparent compensation to the regional elite, Putin endorsed a bill, passed by the Duma in January, that allows sitting governors to seek more than two terms in office. After a Communist-backed no-confidence vote in his government in March failed by a wide margin, Putin orchestrated his first major cabinet reshuffle later that month by placing Kremlin loyalists, including a number of former KGB colleagues, in key defense and interior ministry positions. On December 1, the pro-Kremlin Unity party officially merged with its former rival, Fatherland-All Russia, to form a new party with Putin at the center. During the first half of the year, the state-run natural gas giant, Gazprom, continued its acquisition of the independent Media-MOST empire outlets, including the NTV television station.

At the start of the year, relations between Russia and the United States remained strained over various issues, including a series of expulsions of diplomats from Moscow and Washington in March for suspected espionage, disagreements over NATO expansion, and Russia's objection to U.S. plans to deploy a national missile defense system. However, the September 11 terrorist attacks appeared to mark a significant improvement in U.S.-Russia relations, at least for the short-term. In a televised speech two weeks after the attacks, President Putin announced that Moscow would support U.S. military actions in Afghanistan by opening its airspace for humanitarian aid missions, supplying the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance fighters with weapons and equipment, and sharing intelligence information with Washington. By early October, U.S. troops were reported to have been deployed in the former Soviet republics of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, countries that Moscow continues to regard as within its sphere of influence. President Putin pledged to close Russia's Cold War-era intelligence listening post in Cuba and a naval base in Vietnam. At the same time, the Kremlin continued to face opposition to these policies from some members of the political and military establishment and the general population, who remained wary of closer ties with the West.

Russia's cooperation with the U.S.-led antiterrorism campaign led to considerable speculation about what concessions Moscow might expect in return. Already by mid-November, the United States appeared to have reduced its criticism of the war in Chechnya, moved to accelerate Russia's entry into the WTO; pledged, along with Russia, to make deep cuts in nuclear weapons over the next decade; and endorsed a greater voice for Russia in NATO affairs.

However, the initial euphoria of warmer relations with the United States appeared to have cooled somewhat by the end of the year. In mid-December, President George Bush announced Washington's intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty in order to build a national missile defense system to defend against possible attacks from so-called rogue states, such as Iraq and North Korea. While President Putin offered muted criticism of the decision, some other politicians and military leaders voiced strong objec-

tions to what they regarded as a public humiliation after Russia's support in the U.S. war against terrorism. Despite agreements in December to deepen cooperation between Russia and NATO, Moscow's expectations for a larger role in the organization's decision making were largely unfulfilled.

Nearly 14 months after the nuclear submarine *Kursk* exploded and sank to the bottom of the Barents Sea, killing all 118 crewmen on board, Dutch salvage teams raised the vessel and hauled it to shore in mid-October. Fears of underwater radiation leaks and interest in determining the exact cause of the disaster prompted the delicate and unprecedented operation.

In the breakaway republic of Chechnya, Russian and Chechen representatives held face-to-face talks for the first time since the current conflict began more than two years. However, a peaceful settlement remained elusive, as rebel forces continued to engage in guerilla war tactics such as sniper attacks, car bombs, and suicide missions against Russian troops and pro-Moscow Chechens throughout the year. Human rights groups reported cases of torture, extrajudicial executions, and forced disappearance of civilians by Russian troops, which were often committed during so-called mopping-up operations to find separatist fighters.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** While Russians can change their government democratically, the 2000 presidential vote was marred by serious examples of electoral fraud. The 1993 constitution established a strong president, who has both the power to appoint, pending parliamentary confirmation, and dismiss the prime minister. The bicameral legislature consists of a 450-member lower chamber (Duma), in which half of the members are elected in single-mandate constituencies and the other half by party lists, and an upper chamber, Federation Council, composed of 178 regional leaders. Despite various irregularities, the 1995 and 1999 parliamentary and 1996 presidential elections were deemed generally free and fair by international observers.

Although the constitution provides for freedom of speech and the press, the government continued to put pressure on media outlets and journalists critical of the Kremlin. The partly state-owned natural gas firm, Gazprom, effectively took control of NTV television, part of the country's leading independent media empire, Media-MOST, at an April board meeting. That same month, Gazprom moved against two other Media-MOST outlets, shutting down the newspaper *Sevodnya* and firing the staff of the weekly *Itoги*. Press freedom groups characterized these developments as an attempt by the state to silence one of the few independent media groups critical of the Russian government. In October, Gazprom announced that it would sell off its Media-MOST acquisitions starting in 2002, a decision which it maintained was taken for purely economic reasons. Media-MOST head and vocal Kremlin critic, Vladimir Gusinsky, fled to Spain last year to evade embezzlement charges.

In September, a Moscow court ordered the liquidation of TV-6, the country's only remaining national private television network; an appeals court upheld the verdict in late November. The ruling followed a suit filed by petroleum company LUKoil, a minority shareholder in TV-6, against the station for alleged poor financial performance. The majority shareholder of TV-6, Boris Berezovsky, fled abroad in 1999 after the government filed corruption charges against him. Press freedom groups, various prominent Russian politicians, and the U.S. government criticized the order to dissolve TV-

6, where a number of NTV journalists had moved after their station was taken over by Gazprom. In late December, a federal panel of judges sent the case back to a lower court for further review.

Throughout Russia's regions, where many media outlets are dependent on the authorities for financial subsidies, powerful political leaders use libel suits and physical violence to harass and intimidate their critics. In the southwest region of Krasnodar, the body of journalist Dmitri Ermakov, who had uncovered information implicating local authorities in criminal activities, was found in July after he was thrown from the fourth floor of his home. In August, private police took over the local Lipetsk television station, TVK, which had produced reports critical of the region's governor. In Chechnya, the military continued to impose severe restrictions on journalists' access to the war zone, issuing accreditation primarily to those with proven loyalty to the government. In July, new rules were enacted requiring journalists covering the war to be accompanied at all times by an official from the interior ministry's press service.

The second trial of navy journalist Grigory Pasko on charges of espionage began in July 2001. Although he had been acquitted of treason in 1999 for his reports on the navy's nuclear waste-dumping practices, Pasko was found guilty on lighter charges of the abuse of office and released under an amnesty program. In November 2000, the supreme court ordered a new trial for him. On December 25, 2001, he was found guilty of treason, stripped of his military rank, and sentenced to four years in prison. Pasko's attorneys immediately filed an appeal.

The Federal Security Service (FSB) pursued other cases during the year that it termed examples of espionage. The trial of security and arms control researcher Igor Sutyagin, who was arrested in 1999 for allegedly passing state secrets to a British firm, was under way in 2001, while the closed trial of physicist Valentin Danilov, who was charged with passing classified satellite data to a Chinese company, began in October. Human rights groups contend that cases such as these involve information that has been declassified or is in the public domain, and that they are intended to discourage Russian researchers from maintaining contacts with foreigners.

Freedom of religion is unevenly respected in this primarily Russian Orthodox country, with a controversial 1997 law on religion requiring churches to prove that they have existed for at least 15 years before being permitted to register. As registration is necessary for a religious group to conduct many of its activities, new, independent congregations are consequently restricted in their functions. Regional authorities often harass nontraditional groups, with the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons among frequent targets. Following a two-year legal battle in which the Moscow prosecutor's office had been trying to ban the city's branch of the Jehovah's Witnesses for allegedly converting minors without their parents' permission and for fomenting national discord, a Moscow court threw out the case in February 2001. The decision was regarded as an important test of Russia's treatment of minority religious groups. However, another court in June ordered a new hearing of the case, and the retrial began in November.

The government generally respects freedom of assembly, and numerous demonstrations occurred throughout the year. Although roughly 200 political parties exist on paper, most are largely inactive or poorly organized, are centered around specific personalities rather than policy issues, and were formed by political and business elites rather than at the grassroots level. In July, Putin signed into law a bill that would significantly limit the number of political parties in Russia through stringent membership

and financial requirements. Among the law's provisions, parties must have at least 10,000 members to be registered, with at least 100 members in each of the country's 89 regions; private individual donations are limited to approximately \$100 per year; and contributions by foreigners and international groups are prohibited. While Putin insisted that the law would strengthen those remaining political parties, critics charged that it would reduce pluralism and help further centralize power in the hands of pro-Kremlin groups. The nongovernmental organization sector is composed of thousands of diverse groups, with many of them relying on funding from foreign sources.

Although trade union rights are legally protected, in practice workers risk dismissal if they strike. The Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FNPR), the successor to the Soviet-era organization, is the dominant trade union movement and is often closely affiliated with political structures. Most unions enjoy limited popular support and are struggling to address new and evolving labor market conditions. In December 2001, the Duma passed a new labor code that represented a compromise between the Kremlin and the country's main trade unions. The controversial law was stalled for more than a year by union objections that it could significantly curtail workers' and unions' rights. While the draft would not require union authorization for employee dismissals, workers would have to agree in writing to work paid overtime.

The judiciary is not fully independent and is subject to political interference, corruption, inadequate funding, and a lack of qualified personnel. A long-awaited judicial reform package was finally adopted in late 2001 that includes provisions for increasing judges' salaries and introducing legal experts into the bodies that rule on the dismissal of judges; establishing jury trials in criminal cases throughout the country; and providing for the eventual transfer of the right to issue arrest and search warrants from the prosecutors to the courts. Critics of the reforms maintain that they are not comprehensive enough in addressing ongoing problems, such as the use of torture and ill-treatment by police to extract confessions. Russia's prison system—which has one of the world's highest incarceration rates with nearly one million inmates—suffers from severe overcrowding, inadequate food and medical care, and widespread disease among inmates. Pretrial detention centers house more than 300,000 suspects, many charged with relatively minor crimes and held for several years in squalid conditions. In December 2001, some 13,000 women and children were amnestied as part of an ongoing Penal reform program. The same month, President Putin announced he was abolishing the presidential pardons commission, which had resulted in the release of about 60,000 inmates since its inception in 1991, and handing its powers over to local authorities.

Corruption throughout the government and business world is pervasive, with members of the old Soviet Communist elite having used insider information and extrajudicial means to obtain control of key industrial and business sectors. Consequently, widespread corruption remains a serious obstacle to the creation of an effective market economy and an impediment to genuine equality of opportunity. New legislation to combat money laundering was enacted in August 2001 and will enter into force in February 2002. The law will require banks to report large transactions—of more than \$20,500—by individuals or companies, and to identify people wanting to buy stock or foreign currency for cash. A historic land code, which establishes the legal framework for buying and selling land, was adopted by parliament in October; the new law excludes ownership of agricultural land, which is due to be addressed in a future bill. Although the absence of such legislation has been blamed for inhibiting the growth of

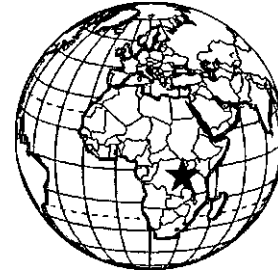
Russia's economy, the bill was opposed by many Communist and agrarian party members who maintained that its passage would allow wealthy Russians and foreigners to buy most of the country's land.

According to a report issued in November by the Council of Europe, ethnic minorities in Russia continue to face discrimination by the media and officials at all levels of government. Human Rights Watch reports that police routinely extort bribes from ethnic minorities, especially Chechens, if they lack the required residence permits. Women are underrepresented in government and in management positions in the business world. Domestic violence remains a serious problem, and economic hardships throughout the country have led to a rise in the trafficking of women abroad for prostitution.

## Rwanda

Polity: Dominant party (military-dominated)  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Population: 7,300,000  
 PPP: \$885  
 Life Expectancy: 39  
 Ethnic Groups: Hutu (84 percent), Tutsi (15 percent), Twa [Pygmy] (1 percent)  
 Capital: Kigali

Political Rights: 7  
 Civil Liberties: 6  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

In 2001, the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) maintained its predominant role in the country's governing structures. Nonpartisan municipal elections, a controversial step in the country's political transition, took place. The use of the traditional justice method of *gacacca* helped to reduce the backlog of court cases against alleged perpetrators of genocide. With the exception of some scattered violence, Rwanda remained peaceful, despite continued instability in neighboring Burundi and Democratic of Congo and tensions with Uganda.

Rwanda's ethnic divide is deeply rooted. National boundaries demarcated by Belgian colonists led to often violent competition for power within the fixed borders of a modern state. Traditional and Belgian-abetted Tutsi dominance ended with a Hutu rebellion in 1959 and independence in 1962. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsi were killed or fled the country in recurring violence during the next decades. In 1990, the RPF launched a guerrilla war to force the Hutu regime, led by General Juvenal Habyarimana, to accept power sharing and the return of Tutsi refugees. The Hutus' chauvinist solution to claims to land and power by Rwanda's Tutsi minority, who constituted approximately 15 percent of the pregenocide population, was to pursue the complete elimination of the Tutsi people.

The 1994 genocide was launched after the suspicious deaths of President Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira in a plane crash in Kigali. The ensuing massacres had been well plotted. Piles of imported machetes were distrib-



uted, and death lists were broadcast by radio. A small United Nations force in Rwanda fled as the killings spread and Tutsi rebels advanced. French troops intervened in late 1994, not to halt the genocide, but in a futile effort to preserve a territorial enclave for the crumbling genocidal regime that was so closely linked to the French government.

International relief efforts that eased the suffering among the more than two million Hutu refugees along Rwanda's frontiers also allowed retraining and rearming of large numbers of former government troops. The UN, which had earlier ignored specific warnings of an impending genocide in 1994, failed to prevent such activities, and the Rwandan army took direct action, overrunning refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Nearly three million refugees subsequently returned to Rwanda between 1996 and 1998. Security has improved considerably since 1997, although isolated incidents of killings and disappearances continue.

The government, led by the Tutsi-dominated RPF, closely directs the country's political life. In 1999 it extended the transition period after which multiparty national elections could be held for an additional four years, arguing that the move was necessary because the poor security situation in the country did not permit elections to be held. Carefully controlled nonparty local elections were held in 1999. The region continued to be highly unstable as Rwandans and Ugandans remained deeply implicated in the civil strife of the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo. This climate of unrest greddy complicated efforts to improve the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In 2000, there were a number of important changes in the nation's senior leadership. President Pasteur Bizimungu resigned in March and was replaced by Vice President Paul Kagame, who had already been the de facto leader of the country. A new prime minister, Bernard Makuza, was appointed. The president of the national assembly fled into exile in the United States and was replaced. The security situation remained generally peaceful, with refugee reintegration continuing to take place.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Rwandans have never enjoyed their right to democratically choose their government. The government announced in 1999 that national multiparty elections would not take place until 2003 at the earliest. The current, self-appointed government is dominated by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), but also includes several other political parties. The legislature is unicameral. Comprising 70 members, it was appointed in 1994 for a five-year term by the RPF-dominated government. Its mandate was extended by the government in June 1999 for a further four years. To date, parliament has not passed legislation regarding the national electoral process or the future status of political parties.

Municipal elections that had been scheduled for October 2000 took place in March 2001, due to legal and administrative delays. Candidates were elected to councils, which in turn chose 106 district town mayors who previously had been appointed by the central government. Political parties were forbidden to campaign; candidates could only present themselves as individuals. About three million voters cast ballots in generally peaceful balloting. Independent observers, including Human Rights Watch and the International Crisis Group (ICG), were critical of the lack of pluralism permitted. Only one candidate for each of almost half the seats appeared on the ballot. The ICG concluded that "by constricting political freedom under the motto of national unity and reconciliation, the RPF risks eroding the very foundations of its own policies and dampening hopes for Rwanda's recovery."

Rwanda's basic governance charter is the Fundamental Law, an amalgam of the 1991 constitution, two agreements among various parties and groups, and the RPF's own 1994 declaration of governance. Rwanda has appointed a legal reform commission to examine all existing laws in the country as part of ongoing preparation for the end of the transition period in 2003. The country's constitution is also under review.

Political parties closely identified with the 1994 massacres are banned, as are parties based on ethnicity or religion. Several parties participate in government, although they are constrained from campaigning or otherwise engaging in partisan activities. There is some Hutu representation in the government, including Prime Minister Makuza, who is from the mainly Hutu Republican Democratic Movement (MDR) party.

In recent years, a number of leading government critics have fled the country. They include two former prime ministers, Faustin Twagiramungu and Pierre Celestin Rwigema; Alphonse Nkubito, a former minister of justice; and Jean Baptiste Nkuliyingoma, a former minister of information. Others include Sebarenzi Kabuye, a former speaker in parliament, and Seth Sendashonga, a former minister of the interior who was assassinated in Nairobi in 1998. Former president Bizimungu was placed under house arrest for announcing that he intended to set up an independent political party.

Constitutional and legal safeguards regarding arrest procedures and detention are unevenly applied. The near destruction of Rwanda's legal system and the death or exile of most of the judiciary has dramatically impeded the government's ability to administer postgenocide justice. About 120,000 suspects are incarcerated in jails built for 10,000. It is estimated that to deal with them using current standard legal bodies would take 200 years.

To help address this problem, the government has moved ahead with preparations to revive a traditional court system, the *gacaca*, wherein elders will preside over community trials dealing with the less serious genocide offenses. Some observers expressed concern about the potential for partiality or the application of uneven or arbitrary standards. In October Rwandans went to the polls to choose 260,000 judges for the *gacaca* process.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania, continues its work. The tribunal, similar to that in The Hague dealing with those accused of crimes against humanity and genocide in the former Yugoslavia, is composed of international jurists. As the ICTR cannot impose the death Penalty, as many in Rwanda oppose it, and for that reason some of those accused of serious crimes have attempted to have their cases heard there.

Rwandan media are officially censored and constrained by fear of reprisals. Journalists accused of abetting or participating in genocide have been arrested. The state controls the broadcast media. The role of the media in Rwanda has become a contentious test case for media freedom and responsibility. During the genocide, 50 journalists were murdered, while others broadcast incitements to the slaughter. A September report by the Reporters sans Frontieres press watchdog group concluded that press freedom is not assured in Rwanda. Journalists continue to suffer threats and pressure. Journalists interviewed admitted that they censor their own writing and that the authorities have made it clear that certain topics cannot be discussed. As a result, Rwandan newspaper coverage is heavily pro-governmental.

In 2001, Rwanda's parliament was debating the Media Bill, which would impose a minimum jail term of 20 years, or even death, for any local journalist found guilty of

using the mass media to incite genocide. Among its other provisions, the draft bill proposes that journalists be compelled to reveal their sources.

Local nongovernmental organizations such as the Collective Rwandan Leagues and Associations for the Defense of Human Rights operate openly. International human rights groups and relief organizations are also active. Numerous clerics were among both the victims and perpetrators of the genocide. Religious freedom is generally respected.

There is serious de facto discrimination against women despite legal protection for equal rights. Economic and social dislocation has forced women to take on many new roles, especially in the countryside. Constitutional provisions for labor rights include the right to form trade unions, engage in collective bargaining, and strike. The Central Union of Rwandan Workers, which was closely controlled by the previous regime, now has relatively greater independence.

## St. Kitts and Nevis

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 1
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 2
Population: 40,000	Status: Free
PPP:\$10,400	
Life Expectancy: 69	
Ethnic Groups: Mostly black, some white	
Capital: Basseterre	



### Overview:

In 2001, the government of Prime Minister Denzil Douglas failed to win approval of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in order to be removed from its revised list of jurisdictions that were uncooperative in the fight against money laundering and other financial crimes. Financial analysts said that if the country remained on the FATF blacklist, which was first issued in 2000, it would be harder for the island-nation to attract foreign investors and business partners, as the Group of 7 watchdog agency issues advisories to companies and governments in developed countries warning them that involvement in blacklisted countries could be risky.

The St. Kitts and Nevis national government is composed of the prime minister, the cabinet, and the bicameral legislative assembly. Elected assembly members, eight from St. Kitts and three from Nevis, serve five-year terms. Senators, not to exceed two-thirds of the elected members, are appointed, one by the leader of the parliamentary opposition for every two by the prime minister. The British monarch is represented by a governor-general, who appoints as prime minister the leader of the party or coalition with a plurality of seats in the legislature. Nevis has a local assembly composed of five elected and three appointed members, and pays for all of its own services except for those of police and foreign relations. St. Kitts has no similar body. Nevis is accorded the constitutional right to secede if two-thirds of the elected legislators approve and two-thirds of voters endorse succession through a referendum.

The center-right People's Action Movement (PAM) gained power in 1980 with the support of the Nevis Restoration Party (NRP). In 1983 the country achieved independence. The PAM-NRP coalition won majorities in the 1984 and 1989 elections.

In the 1993 elections, the St. Kitts Labor Party (SKLP) and the PAM each won four seats, though the former won the popular vote. The Concerned Citizens Movement (CCM) took two Nevis seats, and the NRP, one. The CCM opted not to join the coalition, leaving the PAM-NRP to rule with a five-seat plurality.

Douglas, the SKLP leader, protested the new government. Violence erupted, which led to a two-week state of emergency. The SKLP boycotted parliament in 1994. The PAM government was shaken by a drugs-and-murder scandal that same year, and the weakened government agreed to hold early elections.

In the July 1995 elections, the SKLP won seven of eight St. Kitts seats and 60 percent of the popular vote. The PAM took the eighth St. Kitts seat and 40 percent of the popular vote. On Nevis, the CCM retained its two seats and the NRP held on to the third. Following the vote, the PAM alleged that the SKLP dismissed or demoted PAM supporters and filled their positions with SKLP supporters.

In July 1996, Nevis Premier Vance Armory, reacting to St. Kitts's unwelcome move to open a government office in Nevis, announced his intention to break the 100-year-old political link between the two islands. On October 13, 1997, Nevis's five-person parliament unanimously voted for secession. However, in a referendum on August 10, 1999, secessionists won only a simple majority of the vote, falling short of the two-thirds margin required by the constitution.

The amount of cocaine passing through the Caribbean en route to the United States has reportedly doubled in recent years. St. Kitts is one of more than ten Caribbean islands to sign drug-enforcement pacts with the United States. Nevis has more than 10,000 offshore businesses, operating under strict secrecy laws, and CCM secessionists argued that these were the bedrock of island strength in a global economy. However, a principal argument used against secession was that Nevis alone could not withstand the wiles of drug traffickers and money launderers. Nevis has resisted central government efforts to impose stiffer regulations (companies set up on Nevis territory need submit "no annual return or accounts") on the crime-prone financial industry.

Going into the March 6, 2000, elections, Douglas was able to tout his government's efforts at promoting resort construction in St. Kitts, combating crime, and raising public employees' salaries. The SKLP's critics claimed that the country had accumulated \$192 million in debt and had failed to reinvigorate the islands' sugar economy.

Douglas led the SKLP to a stronger parliamentary majority in elections, winning all 8 seats on St. Kitts, out of 11 up for grabs for the 11-member national assembly. Opposition leader Kennedy Simmonds's PAM, which hoped to oust the SKLP by winning 3 seats in St. Kitts and forming a coalition with the winners of seats in Nevis, instead lost its only seat on the island to the SKLP, which had previously held 7 seats. In February 2000, gang leader Charles "Little Nut" Miller, a vicious representative of the Colombian drug cartel, who allegedly smuggled a ton of cocaine into the United States in 1994, was extradited to Miami after having fought for four years to stay in St. Kitts, where he had terrorized the population.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens are able to change their government democratically. The March 6 elections were free and fair. In the run-up to the

secession referendum, Prime Minister Denzil Douglas promised to give Nevis a bigger role in federation affairs. Constitutional guarantees regarding free expression, the free exercise of religion, and the right to organize political parties, labor unions, and civic organizations are generally respected.

Drugs and money laundering have corrupted the political system. Apart from the 1995 drug-and-murder scandal, whose three hung juries suggest jury tampering and intimidation, there are also questions regarding business relations between SKLP leaders and the known drug trafficker Noel "Zambo" Heath.

The judiciary is generally independent. However, in March 1996 when the drug-and-murder scandal came to trial, the public prosecutors office failed to send a representative to present the case. The charges were dropped, which raised suspicions of a government conspiracy. The highest court is the West Indies Supreme Court in St. Lucia, which includes a court of appeals and a high court. Under certain circumstances there is a right of appeal to the Privy Council in London.

The traditionally strong rule of law has been tested by the increase in drug-related crime and corruption. In 1995, it appeared that the police had become divided along political lines between the two main political parties. In June 1997, despite concerns of its cost to a country of some 40,000 people, parliament passed a bill designed to create a 50-member Special Services Unit, which would receive some light infantry training, to wage war on heavily armed drug traffickers. The intimidation of witnesses and jurors is a problem. The national prison is overcrowded, and conditions are abysmal. In July 1998, the government hanged a convicted murderer, ending a 13-year hiatus in executions and defying pressure from Britain and human rights groups to end the death Penalty.

A number of felons deported from the United States under the U.S. Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 have helped to make local law enforcement agencies in the region feel overwhelmed, as was the case in St. Kitts with Charles "Little Nut" Miller. The drug lord had in 1998 threatened to kill U.S. students at St. Kitts's Ross University if he was extradited. A magistrate had twice blocked Miller's extradition, but it was approved by the high court after police stopped and searched his car, finding two firearms, ammunition, and a small amount of marijuana.

Television and radio on St. Kitts are government owned, although managed by a Trinidadian company, and there are some government restrictions on opposition access to them. Prime Minister Douglas has pledged to privatize the St. Kitts media. Each major political party publishes a weekly or fortnightly newspaper. Opposition publications freely criticize the government, and international media are available.

The main labor union, the St. Kitts Trades and Labour Union, is associated with the ruling SKLP. The right to strike, while not specified by law, is recognized and generally respected in practice. Violence against women is a problem, and there is no domestic legislation prohibiting it. Reliable reports suggest that the country's economic citizenship program, which allows for the purchase of passports through investments ranging from \$200,000 to \$285,000, has facilitated the illegal immigration of persons from China and other countries into the United States and Canada.

## St. Lucia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 200,000  
PPP: \$5,200  
Life Expectancy: 71  
Ethnic Groups: Black (90 percent), mulatto (6 percent), East Indian (3 percent), white (1 percent)  
Capital: Castries

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 2  
Status: Free



### Overview:

Prime Minister Kenny Anthony's St. Lucia Labour Party (SLP) swept to victory in the December 3 general elections, winning 14 of 17 seats in parliament, just short of the 16-1 majority it achieved in 1997. However, in an election called six months ahead of schedule, constituencies dominated by banana farmers registered their discontent with Anthony's party, reflecting a measure of popular discontent with his efforts to keep the island's ailing banana industry afloat. Anthony was the only party leader to survive the election. Although her United Workers Party (UWP) won the other 3 seats, Morella Joseph—the first woman to lead a party into a general election—lost her seat, and National Alliance leader George Odium and former UWP Prime Minister Vaughan Lewis failed in their efforts to be elected. After the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, Odium came under heavy criticism for his close ties to the Libyan regime of Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. The SLP and the UWP have dominated elections in St. Lucia since adult suffrage was introduced in the late 1950s.

St. Lucia, a member of the Commonwealth, achieved independence in 1979. The British monarchy is represented by a governor-general. Under the 1979 constitution, a bicameral parliament consists of a 17-member house of assembly, elected for five years, and an 11-member senate. Six members of the upper body are appointed by the prime minister, three by the leader of the parliamentary opposition, and two in consultation with civic and religious organizations. The island is divided into eight regions, each with its own elected council and administrative services.

The UWP government was long-headed by John Compton, whose decision to retire in March 1996 was apparently linked to a number of scandals that included an alleged affair with a teenager. He had also been accused of knowing about the misappropriation of United Nations funds. Soon after his retirement announcement, his deputy, both as prime minister and party leader, 72-year-old George Mallet, announced his decision to retire, clearing the way for Compton's handpicked successor, Vaughan Lewis, a former director-general of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. Lewis had won Mallet's vacated seat in the February 1996 by-elections. Now holding a seat, Lewis was qualified to assume the party leadership. In April, since his party won the most seats, he automatically became the prime minister.

In June 1996, upon the retirement of Governor-General Sir Stanislaus James, Mallet was sworn in as the country's fourth governor-general over protests that the post be reserved for those outside the sphere of party politics.

Opposition leader Julian Hunte also stepped down after taking third place in the February 1996 by-elections. Anthony, a former education minister, replaced him as leader of the SLP. By the end of 1996, the SLP had merged with smaller opposition parties, and Anthony led the coalition to victory in the May 23, 1997, elections. In the biggest electoral landslide in the country's history, the SLP, out of power since 1982, won 16 of 17 seats in parliament and unseated Prime Minister Lewis with a twenty-six-year-old political newcomer.

In 1998, Compton, prime minister for 29 years and a member of parliament for 40 years, returned to lead the UWP. Unemployment, estimated at 20 percent, remained a potential source of instability. Upon taking office, Anthony began to address concerns of an electorate weary of economic distress and reports of official corruption. In 1999, his government faced a series of issues concerning the hotel and airline industries, both vital for the tourism industry. In 2000, Anthony and the SLP gave their approval for regulated casino gambling, brushing aside objections from religious groups and the UWP, to seemingly focus even more of their energies on revitalizing the country's tourism trade. In June 2001, Anthony announced a two-month crackdown on crime, including increased police patrols and heavy penalties for gun crimes that he said were necessary to combat a wave of murders and armed robberies that he blamed, in part, on a U.S. policy of deporting hardened criminals to the island.

In the 2001 election, Anthony and the SLP ran on a record they claimed had seen the country through difficult times, creating thousands of short-term jobs, shoring up the credit-starved banana industry, building more schools, extending electrification and water services, and beefing up the fight against crime. The UWP charged that the ruling party had mismanaged the economy during a period of growing unemployment and rising crime.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens are able to change their government through democratic elections. The 2001 elections were considered to be free and fair, although fewer than 50 percent of those eligible actually voted, a drop from the 60 percent registered in the 1997 contest. Constitutional guarantees regarding the right to organize political parties, labor unions, and civic groups are generally respected, as is the free exercise of religion. A deadly December 2000 attack on parishioners at a Catholic church, believed to be an isolated act by deranged men, nonetheless raised concerns about religious tolerance.

The competition among political parties and allied civic organizations is heated, particularly during election campaigns when one side invariably accuses the other of violence or harassment.

The judicial system is independent and includes a high court under the West Indies Supreme Court (based in St. Lucia), with ultimate appeal under certain circumstances to the Privy Council in London. The constitution requires public trials before an independent and impartial court. Traditionally, citizens have enjoyed a high degree of personal security, although there are episodic reports of police misuse of force. In recent years, an escalating crime wave, much of it drug-related, violent clashes during banana farmers' strikes, and increased violence in schools sparked concern among citizens. The island's nineteenth-century prison, built to house a maximum of 101 inmates, houses more than 350. In 2000 the government sought to finish construction of a new \$17 million prison facility on the eastern part of the island.

The media carry a wide spectrum of views and are largely independent of the government. There are five privately owned newspapers, two privately held radio stations, and one partially government-funded radio station, as well as two privately owned television stations.

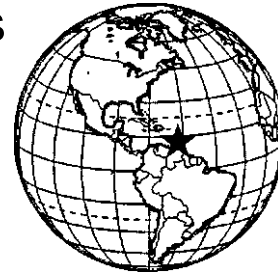
Civic groups are well organized and politically active, as are labor unions, which represent the majority of wage earners. Legislation passed in 1995 restricts the right to strike. The measure provides for a fine of about U.S.\$2,000 or two years in prison for inciting any person to cease performing any lawful activity on his property or on the property of another person. The government said the measure was aimed at curtailing strikes in the banana industry, which employs more than 30 percent of the workforce. Nonetheless, in October 1996, a 14-day strike took place in which banana industry workers demanded a greater role in management decisions. The strike resulted in violence, and the police used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse crowds, seriously injuring several people.

Though there are no official barriers to the participation of women in politics and the professions, they are underrepresented. A growing awareness of the seriousness of violence against women has led the government and advocacy groups to take steps to offer better protection for victims of domestic violence.

## St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 100,000  
 PPP: \$4,990  
 Life Expectancy: 72  
 Ethnic Groups: Black (66 percent), other, including mulatto, East Indian, and white (34 percent)  
 Capital: Kingstown

Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

In March 2001 elections, the social democratic Unity Labour Party (ULP) won a landslide upset, capturing 12 of the 15 contested parliamentary seats. The incumbent conservative New Democrat Party (NDP) won only 3 seats. Ralph Gonsalves, a lawyer, became the new prime minister. The election, which had been preceded by serious political unrest and mobilization, was monitored by international election observers for the first time in the country's history. An August 2001 trip to Libya by a mission headed by Gonsalves from the nine-member Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), while claiming to have secured \$20 million in financial aid for the region, was criticized, particularly after the September 11 terrorist attacks, as having strengthened strongman Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi's long-time interests in the region.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is a member of the Commonwealth, with the British monarchy represented by a governor-general. St. Vincent achieved independence in 1979, with jurisdiction over the northern Grenadine islets of Bequia, Canouan, Mayreau, Mustique, Prune Island, Petit St. Vincent, and Union Island.



The constitution provides for a 15-member unicameral house of assembly elected for five years. Six senators are appointed—four by the government and two by the opposition. The prime minister is the leader of the party or coalition commanding a majority in the house.

In 1994, Prime Minister Sir James F. Mitchell, the son of a seafarer who vanished in the Bermuda Triangle, won a third term as prime minister when his center-right NDP won 12 seats. The center-left alliance, comprising the St. Vincent Labour Party (SVLP), which had held power from 1979 to 1984, and the Movement for National Unity (MNU), won the remaining 3 seats. The opposition contested the results, charging that voter registration irregularities had occurred.

In 1995, Deputy Prime Minister Pamel Campbell faced charges of financial impropriety when, disregarding government regulations, he took out a loan from an offshore bank. With the opposition parties, now united into the ULP, pressing for a parliamentary vote of no-confidence, Campbell resigned. In 1998, Mitchell took advantage of internal divisions within the opposition to announce elections a year earlier than expected. Mitchell led the NDP to a narrow victory in the June 15, 1998, general elections, winning 8 seats, to 7 for the ULP. The vote was marked by opposition accusations of fraud, bribery, and intimidation, and the ULP claimed it would have won the contest if a proportional representation system—instead of the first-past-the-post framework copied from Britain—had been used. (The ULP won a minority of seats, but took 55 percent of the vote.) The ULP delayed its recognition of the NDP's unprecedented fourth successive win and staged street demonstrations demanding new elections. In response, the government began discussions with the opposition about constitutional reforms centering on electoral reform.

In April 2000, passage of legislation raising the pensions of retired members of parliament set off a new round of street protests. In September, an offshore bank stripped of its government license, demanded that Mitchell and six other officials return loans, gifts, and campaign contributions it alleged it gave them as payoffs, a charge Mitchell denied. A new political party, the People's Progressive Movement (PPM), was created by two former ULP members of parliament in preparation for the 2001 elections. Marijuana cultivation and narcotics smuggling remain major concerns.

In October 2000, the ailing Mitchell, who had led the Windward Islands nation since 1986, relinquished the reins of government and the leadership of the NDP to Arnhim Eustace, his finance minister and chosen successor. Sir Mitchell was the second-longest-serving head of government in the Caribbean—after Fidel Castro—and had won all but one election in the ten times he stood for election. Earlier in the year a group of opposition political parties and social organizations formed the Organization for the Defense of Democracy (ODD) in response to what it called Mitchell's abuse of power and cronyism.

The result was an agreement—the Grand Beach accord—brokered by a Caribbean regional group, Caricom, that called for new elections no later than March 2001, two years ahead of schedule, and which helped to avoid further street demonstrations that Mitchell worried would damage his legacy as well as the country's record of stability.

Gonsalves, a one-time radical opposition figure, in 2001 led an initiative to save the financially ailing OECS by strengthening the organization in order to relieve administrative requirements now carried out by its individual members. Upon his return from Libya, Gonsalves was criticized for not revealing publicly that the Arab nation had promised to buy all the bananas that the Caribbean could produce.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government through elections. The March 2001 election was considered free and fair by international observers. The judicial system is independent. The highest court is the West Indies Supreme Court (based in St. Lucia), which includes a court of appeals and a high court. A right of ultimate appeal reports, under certain circumstances, to the Privy Council in London. Murder convictions carry a mandatory death sentence.

Penetration by the hemispheric drug trade is increasingly causing concern. There have been allegations of drug-related corruption within the government and the police force, and of money laundering through St. Vincent banks. The drug trade has also caused an increase in street crime. In 1995 the U.S. government described St. Vincent as becoming a drug-trafficking center and alleged that high-level government officials are involved in narcotics-related corruption. Since then, St. Vincent has taken steps to cooperate with U.S. antidrug trade efforts, such as signing an extradition treaty in 1996 with the United States. In December 1999, a marijuana eradication effort in St. Vincent's northern mountains stirred up controversy after U.S.-trained troops from the Regional Security System (RSS) were accused of brutality and indiscriminate crop destruction in what the Barbados-based RSS claimed was a highly successful exercise. One person, who police said was fleeing from a search scene armed with a shotgun, was killed.

Human rights are generally respected. In 1999 a local human rights organization accused police of using excessive force and illegal search and seizure, and of improperly informing detainees of their rights in order to extract confessions. The regional human rights organization, Caribbean Rights, estimates that 90 percent of convictions in St. Vincent are based on confessions.

The independent St. Vincent Human Rights Association has criticized long judicial delays and the large backlog of cases caused by personnel shortages in the local judiciary. It has also charged that the executive at times exerts inordinate influence over the courts. Prison conditions remain poor—one prison designed for 75 inmates houses more than 400—and prisons are the target of allegations of mistreatment. Juvenile offenders are also housed in inadequate conditions.

The press is independent, with two privately owned independent weeklies—the *Vincentian* and the *News*—and several smaller, partisan papers. The opposition has charged the *Vincentian* with government favoritism. The only television station is privately owned and free from government interference. Satellite dishes and cable are available to those who can afford them. The radio station is government owned, and call-in programs are prohibited. Equal access to radio is mandated during electoral campaigns, but the ruling party takes inordinate advantage of state control over programming.

Constitutional guarantees regarding free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to organize political parties, labor unions, and civic organizations are generally respected. Violence against women, particularly domestic violence, is a major problem. Labor unions are active and permitted to strike.

## Samoa

Polity: Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 200,000  
 PPP: \$4,070  
 Life Expectancy: 68  
 Ethnic Groups: Polynesian (93 percent), Euronesian [mixed] (7 percent)  
 Capital: Apia



**Overview:** Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegoi and his ruling Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP) managed to retain political power after elections held in March 2001. However, allegations of corruption and mismanagement have somewhat eroded the party's support.

The country consists of two volcanic islands and several minor islets located west of American Samoa in the south central Pacific. In 1899, the United States annexed Eastern (American) Samoa, while the Western Samoan islands became a German protectorate. New Zealand occupied Western Samoa during World War II and acquired subsequent control of the territory under first a League of Nations and later a United Nations mandate. A new constitution was adopted in 1960, and on January 1, 1962, Western Samoa became the first Pacific Island state to gain independence.

The ruling HRPP has won a plurality in all five elections since 1982. At the first direct elections in 1991, Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana won a third term after the HRPP secured 30 of the 49 parliamentary seats. Under Tofilau's leadership, Samoa experienced an extended period of economic growth, and he expanded democracy by extending voting rights from only the *matai* (family chiefs) to other citizens. However, corruption was widespread. In 1994, the country's chief auditor found half of the cabinet guilty of corrupt practices, but Tofilau only issued a public rebuke. Tofilau, ill with cancer, resigned in November 1998 after 16 years as prime minister and was replaced by Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegoi, who had served as deputy prime minister and finance minister. In July 1998, Western Samoa formally changed its name to Samoa.

In July 1999, Luagalau Levaula Kamu, the public works minister, was assassinated in the first political killing since the islands gained independence. The murder was allegedly linked to Levaula's determination to stamp out corruption under the new administration of Prime Minister Tuilaepa. However, the government continued to combat corruption and in 2000 had to answer to allegations of money laundering activities. Attempts at economic diversification have led to an expanded offshore banking sector, as well as growth in light manufacturing and tourism.

Samoa held parliamentary elections on March 2, 2001. In a closely contested race, the HRPP failed to maintain its majority, although it emerged as the single biggest party with 23 out of 49 seats (the opposition Samoa National Development Party won 13 seats, with the remainder being won by independent candidates). When the parliament was reconvened in mid-March to choose a speaker of the house, the HRPP was able to

form a new government with the support of several independent lawmakers. In one village, a local businessman was exiled after he ran for parliament against the wishes of the ruling chiefs.

In August, three members of the government were charged with bribery after allegations surfaced that they had provided gifts and hospitality with the expectation of receiving political favors, a widespread custom that had been made illegal during election campaigns.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Samoans can change their government democratically. The 1960 constitution combines parliamentary democracy with traditional authority. The unicameral parliament has 49 seats, of which two are reserved for citizens of non-Samoan descent. In a 1990 referendum, voters narrowly approved universal suffrage and increased the parliament's term from three to five years. However, the right to stand for election remains confined to the 25,000 matai, 95 percent of whom are men. The head of state is traditionally drawn from the four paramount chiefs and has the duty to appoint the prime minister and approve legislation. Susuga Malietoa Tanumafili II is the head of state for life, but his successors will be elected by parliament for five-year terms. In rural areas, the government has limited influence, and the 360 village councils, *orfonos*, are the main authorities. Several political parties exist, but the political process is defined more by individual personalities and village loyalties than by strict party affiliation. A new law requires formally recognized parties to register at least 100 members.

The judiciary is independent, and defendants receive fair trials. However, many civil and criminal matters are handled by village fonos according to traditional law. The 1990 Village Fono Act provides some right of appeal in such cases to the Lands and Titles Courts and to the Supreme Court. Village fonos occasionally order houses burned, persons banned from villages, and other harsh punishments. However, in July 2000 the Supreme Court ruled that the Village Fono Act should not be used to infringe upon villagers' freedoms of religion, speech, assembly or association. The police force is under civilian control, but its impact is limited mostly to the capital city, while fonos generally enforce security measures in the rest of the country.

The state-owned broadcast media consist of the country's only television station and two radio stations. Both are heavily government controlled and restrict air time for opposition leaders. The government has also, on occasion, suppressed press freedom in the private media, which consist of two private radio stations, a satellite television company, several Samoan-language newspapers, and two English-language newspapers. In 1998, Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana introduced a measure giving government ministers the power to use public funds to finance defamation suits. In this context, *The Samoa Observer*, an independent newspaper, faced several lawsuits brought by government officials and business leaders for stories it had published about public corruption and abuses of power. The government also withdrew all advertisements from the paper and threatened to cancel the paper's business license.

The church is a powerful force in Samoan society. The matai often choose the religious denomination of their extended family in this predominantly Christian country, and there is strong societal pressure to support church leaders and projects financially. Councils sometimes banish or punish families who do not adhere to the prevailing religious beliefs of the villages.

The government generally respects the right of assembly. There are two independent trade unions, plus the Public Service Association, which represents government workers. Strikes are legal, but infrequent. Collective bargaining is practiced mainly in the public sector.

Domestic violence is a serious problem. Traditional norms discourage women from going to the police or the courts for protection, and pro-active government measures are insufficient. Women are discriminated against in employment and underrepresented in politics; nevertheless, in the most recent elections, three women were elected to the parliament.

## San Marino

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 30,000

PPP: na

Life Expectancy: 80

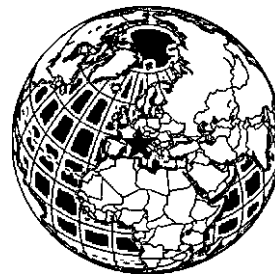
Ethnic Groups: Sanmarinese, Italian

Capital: San Marino

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 1

Status: Free



### Overview:

The ruling centrist Christian Democrats (PDCS) won 25 of the 60 seats in the Grand and General Council (parliament) in San Marino's June elections. The two other main political parties, the Socialist Party (PSS) and the Progressive Democratic Party (PPDS), won 15 and 12 seats respectively. San Marino has been governed by a long succession of coalition governments, which have dominated its modern multiparty democratic system.

Founded in A.D. 301, San Marino is the world's oldest and second-smallest republic. Although the Sanmarinese are ethnically and culturally Italian, they have succeeded in maintaining their independence since the fourth century. The papacy recognized San Marino's independence in 1631. An 1862 customs union with Italy began an enduring relationship of political, economic, and security cooperation.

Despite substantial reliance on Italian assistance ranging from budget subsidies to news media, San Marino maintains its own political institutions and became a member of the United Nations in 1992. It is also a member of other major international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Monetary Fund, and the International Labor Organization. Although San Marino has official relations with the European Union (EU) and participates in its security program, it is not a full member of the EU. In addition to agriculture, the country's vibrant, primarily private enterprise economy includes production of livestock, light manufacturing, and tourism, which constitutes 60 percent of government revenue.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

San Marino's citizens can change their government democratically. The country has a long tradition of multiparty politics, with six parties represented in the current council. All citizens having reached the age of 18 have the right to vote. Women were permitted to stand as candidates for seats in the parliament for the first time in 1974. San Marino's constitution, dating from the year 1600, vests legislative power in the Grand and General Council. Its 60 members are directly elected by proportional representation every five years. The secretary of state for foreign affairs has come to assume many of the prerogatives of a prime minister. Directly elected Auxiliary Councils serve as arbiters of local government in each of the country's nine municipalities. They are led by an elected captain and serve two-year terms. A ten-member Congress of State, or cabinet, is elected by the parliament for the duration of the term. Two members of the council are designated for six-month terms as executive captains-regent, one representing the city of San Marino and the other the countryside.

San Marino has no formal asylum policy. However, it has allowed a small number of refugees to reside and work in the country. Immigrants and refugees are eligible for citizenship only after 30 years' residence. Those born in San Marino remain citizens and are able to vote no matter where they live.

The law provides for an independent judiciary, which is based on the Italian legal system. The judicial system delegates some of the authority to Italian magistrates, in both criminal and civil cases. A local conciliation judge handles cases of minor importance. Appeals go, in the first instance, to an Italian judge residing in Italy. The final court of review is San Marino's Council of Twelve, a group of judges chosen for six-year terms (four are replaced every two years) from among the members of the Grand and General Council.

There were no press freedom violations reported in San Marino in 2000. Newspapers are published by the government, some political parties, and trade unions. Italian newspapers and radio and television broadcasts are freely available. *Radio Titano* is the country's only privately owned radio station.

The law provides for freedom of religion, and the government respects this right in practice. Most Sanmarinese belong to the Roman Catholic Church; however, Catholicism is not the state religion. The Catholic Church does receive direct benefits from the state through income tax revenues if a taxpayer requests that 0.3 percent be allocated to the Church.

Workers are free to form and join unions under a 1961 law. Collective bargaining agreements carry the force of law. Unions may freely form domestic federations or join international labor federations. Union members constitute approximately one-half of the country's workforce. Trade unions are independent of the government and political parties; however, they have close informal ties with the parties, which exercise a strong influence on them. Freedom of association is respected. The right to strike is guaranteed, but no strikes have occurred in the last decade.

Women enjoy equal rights in the workplace and elsewhere. There have been no reports of discrimination towards women in salary or working conditions. All careers are open to women, including careers in the military and police as well as the highest public offices. As a result of the 2001 elections, women now constitute 16.7 percent of parliament.

## São Tomé and Príncipe

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Mixed statist (transitional)  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 200,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 65  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestico (Portuguese-African), African minority  
 Capital: Sao Tome



### Overview:

Political tension was high in São Tomé and Príncipe following the election of incumbent party candidate Fradique de Menezes as president in July 2001, his subsequent dissolution of the cabinet, and a call for early legislative elections in 2002. De Menezes, of the Independent Democratic Alliance (ADI) party, replaced Miguel dos Anjos Trovoada, who had ruled São Tomé and Príncipe for ten years. In the first round of voting, De Menezes won with 56 percent compared with 38 percent for Manuel Pinto da Costa, of the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe Social Democratic Party (MLSTP-PSD). De Menezes dissolved the cabinet after he and Prime Minister Guilherme Posser da Costa failed to agree on its composition. De Menezes then formed a cabinet that excluded members of the parliamentary majority MLSTP. Then, to unblock the political stalemate, De Menezes called for early legislative elections, moving them up from October 2002 to early in the year, hoping the polls would produce an ADI majority.

São Tomé and Príncipe comprises two islands approximately 125 miles off the coast of Gabon in the Gulf of Guinea. Seized by Portugal in 1522 and 1523, they became a Portuguese Overseas Province in 1951. Portugal granted local autonomy in 1973 and independence in 1975. Upon independence, the MLSTP-PSD, formed in 1960 as the Committee for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe, took power, and functioned as the only legal party until a 1990 referendum established multiparty democracy. In 1991, Trovoada, an independent candidate backed by the opposition Democratic Convergence Party, became the first democratically elected president.

Parliamentary elections held in November 1998 gave the MLSTP-PSD an absolute majority. The balloting, which was conducted by an autonomous electoral commission, enabled the party to regain, democratically, the power that it had exercised for 16 years as the sole legal party before the country's democratic transition in 1992.

São Tomé and Príncipe has mostly relied on external assistance to develop its economy. The government is trying to reduce the country's dependence on cocoa and diversify its economy. Efforts are under way to pursue offshore petroleum.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

The people of São Tomé and Príncipe have the right to change their government freely and fairly. Presidential and legislative elections in 1991 gave the country's citizens their

first chance to elect their leaders in an open, free, and fair contest. Legislative elections in 1994 were generally free and fair. In the November 1998 contest, the MLSTP-PSD won 31 of the 55 seats in the unicameral national assembly. The ADI won 16 seats.

Trovoada had won a second five-year term in July 1996 after receiving 53 percent of the approximately 40,000 votes cast in a runoff election. Despite numerous allegations of vote buying and other irregularities, international observers declared the results free and fair. The July 2002 elections were considered free and fair despite some logistical problems.

An independent judiciary, including a supreme court with members designated by and responsible to the national assembly, was established by the August 1990 referendum on multiparty rule. It has ruled against both the government and the president. The court system is overburdened, understaffed, inadequately funded, and plagued by long delays in hearing cases. Prison conditions are harsh.

Constitutionally protected freedom of expression is respected in practice. One state-run and six independent newspapers are published. While the state controls a local press agency and the only radio and television stations, no law forbids independent broadcasting. Opposition parties receive free airtime, and newsletters and pamphlets criticizing the government circulate freely.

Freedom of assembly is respected. Citizens have the constitutional right to gather and demonstrate with advance notice of two days. Freedom of religion is respected within this predominantly Roman Catholic country. The constitution provides for equal rights for women, but they hold few leadership positions and encounter significant societal discrimination. Most occupy domestic roles and have less opportunity than men for education or formal sector employment. Domestic violence against women is reportedly common. Although legal recourse is available, many are reluctant to bring legal action against their spouses or are ignorant of their rights.

The rights to organize, strike, and bargain collectively are guaranteed and respected. Few unions exist, but independent cooperatives have taken advantage of the government land distribution program to attract workers. Because of its role as the main employer in the wage sector, the government remains the key interlocutor for labor on all matters, including wages. Working conditions on many of the state-owned cocoa plantations are harsh.



## Saudi Arabia

Polity: Traditional monarchy  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 21,100,000  
 PPP: \$10,815  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab (90 percent), Afro-Asian (10 percent)  
 Capital: Riyadh

Political Rights: 7  
 Civil Liberties: 7  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

The Saudi royal family was beset by internal and external tensions during 2001. The increasing unpopularity of its alliance with the United States exacerbated public frustration with declining living standards, increasing unemployment, official corruption, fiscal mismanagement, and the denial of basic civil and political rights. Saudi-U.S. relations were strained in light of the Palestinian uprising and Saudi reluctance to cooperate with U.S. investigations in high-profile terrorism cases, but tensions escalated in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

King Abd al-Aziz al-Saud consolidated the Nejd and Hejaz regions of the Arabian peninsula into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932. His son, Fahd bin Abd al-Aziz al-Saud, ascended the throne in 1982 after a series of successions within the family. The king rules by decree and serves as prime minister as well as supreme religious leader. The overwhelming majority of Saudis belong to the Wahhabi sect of Sunni Islam. In 1992, King Fahd appointed a 60-member consultative council, or *majlis al-shura*. The majlis plays only an advisory role and is not regarded as a significant political force. Majlis committees, set up to address financial, Islamic, social, and other affairs, debate and issue recommendations on topics selected by the king. The king expanded the majlis to 90 members in 1997, and to 120 members in May 2001.

King Fahd's poor health has raised serious concerns about succession. The system of fraternal succession adopted by King Abd-al-Aziz to prevent fratricide among his 44 sons presents the possibility that a series of aging, sickly rulers will leave Saudi Arabia with no direction at a time when strong leadership is required. Although Crown Prince Abdullah, 77, has effectively ruled since Fahd suffered a stroke in 1995, the succession after Abdullah is unclear. A 1994 decree gives the king the unilateral right to name his successor, but philosophical and ideological rifts within the ruling family and varying degrees of power and spheres of influence among potential heirs will make any choice problematic. Of Abd al-Aziz's 25 living sons, many regard themselves as contenders, while others advocate passing power to the next generation.

Saudis have sacrificed civic freedom and political participation for material wealth, modernity, education, and a heavily subsidized welfare state in a social contract that has been the main source of legitimacy for the government. But economic mismanagement, combined with lavish spending by members of the royal family has endangered that contract. Unemployment is estimated at up to 35 percent and is expected to rise as the slow-growing job market provides one job for every two people entering the

workforce each year. Per capita income, more than \$28,000 in the early 1980s, has dropped below \$7,000, while the population has doubled. Billions of dollars have disappeared in unbudgeted expenditures by royals, who keep some 300 palaces in Jeddah alone. Meanwhile, ordinary Saudis must struggle with rolling blackouts and water rationing. While dissent has not seriously threatened the regime, there is concern over the decreased ability of the government to placate citizens. Some within the royal family have advocated political reform, including some form of popular participation in the political process.

Observers note that Saudi Arabia appears to have abandoned efforts at privatization, structural reform, and diversification aimed at alleviating the kingdom's economic problems. Many measures taken to address economic concerns and attract foreign investment are incomplete, vague, or insufficient in meeting investors' concerns. A plan for U.S.-based SBC Communications to invest in the Saudi Telecommunications Company fell through in December 2000 because the Saudi company refused to meet SBC's demands for transparency in its accounting procedures. Meanwhile, the government has issued an extensive "negative list" of industries closed to foreign investment, including the military, publishing, education, insurance, transportation, fishing, real estate, employment services, and poison control. In addition, Islamic law forbids interest, insurance, and income tax; is randomly applied; and allows for no means of redress for economic grievances.

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia has become another source of domestic discontent. As the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank continued, Saudi media carried unprecedented criticism of the United States' perceived pro-Israel bias. Saudis also blamed the United States for maintaining a sanctions policy against Iraq that is viewed as catastrophic for the Iraqi people. Following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Saudi-born terrorist-in-exile Osama bin Laden blasted the Saudi government as "godless" for allowing American troops in Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of the prophet Mohammed and home of Mecca, Islam's holiest site. He also warned that the United States would not enjoy security "before we can see it as a reality in Palestine and before all the infidel armies leave the land of Mohammed." Bin Laden's message resonates with Saudis, who privately donate to Islamic charities used as fronts to support bin Laden's network. It also chips away at the government's claim to religious legitimacy as the defender of Islamic faith and law.

The Saudi regime has attempted to downplay its ties to Washington, and relations between the two were increasingly strained. Crown Prince Abdullah had so far refused to meet with President George W. Bush. Following the September 11 attacks, the Saudi government cut ties with Afghanistan's Taliban regime, which harbors and sympathizes with bin Laden, and froze the assets of some groups and individuals suspected of having terrorist links after Bush warned that countries refusing to act against terrorists would be barred from doing business with American companies. Otherwise, Saudi Arabia was reluctant to cooperate with Washington. It criticized the U.S. policy of support for Israel and spirited a number of Saudis out of the United States before it could be determined whether or not they had information about the terrorists, at least ten of whom were Saudis. Saudi Arabia has been uncooperative in other high-level terror cases as well; it announced in June 2001 that 13 Saudis indicted by a U.S. federal grand jury in connection with the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing, which killed 19 American servicemen, would go to trial in Saudi courts. The FBI complained that Saudi authorities restricted its access to the suspects and evidence in the case. Tensions increased in Oc-

tober when U.S.-led airstrikes on Afghanistan drew harsh criticism from the Muslim clerics whose support gives the Saudi ruling family its legitimacy.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Saudis cannot change their government democratically. Political parties are illegal, and the king rules by decree according to a constitution based on a strict interpretation of *Sharia* (Islamic law). There are no elections at any level. Majlis membership is not representative of the population. A council of senior ruling family members was established in 2000 with Crown Prince Abdullah as chair. Membership includes a broad cross-section of royals, including Prince Talal bin Abd al-Aziz, who has been a vocal proponent of liberalization. Noticeably absent is Interior Minister Nayef bin Abd al-Aziz, who is known for his ultraconservative views. The apparent aim of the council is to facilitate decision making and to provide a wider power base for Abdullah in the interest of political stability.

The judiciary is subject to the influence of the royal family and its associates. The king has broad powers to appoint or dismiss judges, who are selected based on their strict adherence to religious principles. The legal system, based on *Sharia*, allows for corporal punishments, such as flogging and amputation, which are widely practiced. Trials are routinely held in secret. Death by beheading is the prescribed punishment for rape, murder, armed robbery, adultery, apostasy, and drug trafficking. People sentenced to death are often unaware of the sentence and receive no advance notice of their execution. Some are never made aware of the charges against them. The law enables heirs of a murder victim to demand "blood money" in exchange for sparing the life of a murderer. Saudi Arabia executes about 100 people per year, many of them foreigners.

Arbitrary arrest and detention are widespread. Under a 1983 law, authorities may hold detainees for 51 days without trial, but this limit is often exceeded in practice. Detainees are frequently not informed of their legal rights, and may or may not be granted access to counsel at the judge's discretion. Police routinely torture detainees, and signed or videotaped confessions extracted under torture are used, uncorroborated, as evidence. In February 2001, three foreign residents in the kingdom—from the United Kingdom, Canada, and Belgium—confessed on Saudi television to two car bombings in November 2000 that killed a British man. The confessions were made after the accused were held incommunicado for more than a month, and aired before the criminal investigation was complete. The accused face the death Penalty if convicted. In October, the government adopted a new code of criminal procedure. The new regulations allow defendants and suspects in criminal cases to seek legal counsel, limit administrative detention to five days, prohibit the abuse of detainees, subject authorities who have powers of arrest to prosecution, ban detention or imprisonment in places other than jails, and require search warrants for private homes, offices, and vehicles.

Freedom of expression is severely restricted by prohibitions on criticism of the government, Islam, and the ruling family. The government owns all domestic broadcast media and closely monitors privately owned but publicly subsidized print media. The information minister must approve, and may remove, all editors in chief. The entry of foreign journalists into the kingdom is tightly restricted, and foreign media are heavily censored where possible. The government outlawed private ownership of satellite dishes in 1994. Internet access was made available in 1999 with filters to block information deemed pornographic, offensive to Islam, or a threat to state security. All Internet traf-

fic is routed through the official Internet Services Unit which, along with inadequate infrastructure, slows connection speeds. In April 2001, the government announced that it would double the number of banned websites to 400,000. Saudi Arabia is estimated to have some 300,000 Internet users.

Public demonstrations are prohibited, and public gatherings are segregated by sex. There are no publicly active human rights groups, and the government prohibits visits by international human rights groups and independent monitors.

Islam, particularly the Wahhabi branch of Sunni Islam, is the state religion, and all citizens must be Muslim. Shiite Muslims, who constitute about a third of the population, face systematic political and economic discrimination, such as arbitrary arrest on suspicion of subversion or pro-Iranian activities. Riots reportedly occurred in April 2000 following the closure of a Shiite mosque by religious police.

Women are segregated in the workplace, in schools, in restaurants, and on public transportation, and they may not drive. They are required to wear the *abaya*, a black garment covering the head, most of the face, and the body. Officers of the *Mutawwai'in*, or Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, harass women for violating conservative dress codes and for appearing in public with unrelated males. Women may not travel within or outside the kingdom without a male relative. Although they make up half the student population, women account for less than six percent of the workforce. They may not study engineering, law, or journalism. A female member of the royal family was appointed assistant secretary in the ministry of education—the highest position ever held by a Saudi woman. Some private businesses have secretly hired women to work alongside men, and more women are making use of the Internet to do business without having to meet male customers in person. In January, the Saudi interior minister issued a statement ruling out any public debate on the status of women in the kingdom, saying it would be "useless and a hollow exchange of ideas." The statement followed criticism by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which expressed concern over Saudi treatment of women and the possibility of Sharia punishments being applied to children. In November, authorities began granting women their own identification cards. Previously, women were named, but not depicted, as dependents on their fathers' or husbands' cards. Officials explained that the move would help reduce fraud, but it appeared unlikely that women's rights would be affected in any way.

Government permission is required to form professional groups and associations, which must be nonpolitical. Trade unions, collective bargaining, and strikes are prohibited. Foreign workers, who comprise about 60 percent of the kingdom's workforce, are especially vulnerable to abuse, including beating and rape, and are often denied legitimate claims to wages, benefits, or compensation. They are not protected under labor law, and courts generally do not enforce the few legal protections provided to them. A Saudi official reported in April that more than 19,000 foreign maids, mostly from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines, ran away from their employers during 2000 for various reasons, including nonpayment of wages and maltreatment. The maids were reportedly being housed in shelters run by the labor ministry until the disputes were settled.

## ↑ Senegal

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 9,700,000  
 PPP: \$1,419  
 Life Expectancy: 52  
 Ethnic Groups: Wolof (36 percent), Pular (24 percent), Serer (15 percent), other (18 percent)  
 Capital: Dakar



**Trend Arrow:** Senegal received an upward trend arrow for holding free and fair parliamentary elections and for approving a constitution in a referendum that provides for greater rights for women.

### Overview:

The people of Senegal adopted a new constitution by an overwhelming majority in January 2001, reducing presidential terms from seven to five years, setting the number of terms to two and, for the first time, giving women the right to own land. The new constitution also allows the president to dissolve the national assembly without the agreement of a two-thirds majority. President Abdoulaye Wade dissolved the assembly, which had been dominated by the former ruling Socialist Party, and elections were held in April. A coalition led by Wade won 89 of the 120 seats available, followed by the Socialist Party with 10. Smaller parties won the remainder. The Wade government in 2001 signed a peace agreement with the Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC), but it carried little weight because the separatist group is divided.

Since independence from France in 1960, Senegal has escaped military or harshly authoritarian rule. President Leopold Senghor exercised de facto one-party rule under the Socialist Party for more than a decade after independence. Most political restrictions were lifted after 1981. Abdou Diouf, of the Socialist Party, succeeded Senghor in 1981 and won large victories in unfair elections in 1988 and 1993. The presidential poll in 2000 was judged free and fair by international observers. It was the fifth attempt by Wade, of the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS), to win the presidency.

Wade in September said that he was in favor of extraditing former Chadian ruler Hissene Habre, who has been living in exile in Senegal since 1990, if a third country could guarantee a fair trial. A collective of Chadians has accused Habre of torture, killings, and executions while in power. A Senegalese lower court decision that Habre could face trial in Senegal was overturned by the country's highest appeals court, which said that Senegal had no jurisdiction to try Habre because his alleged crimes were committed outside Senegalese territory. International and local human rights groups criticized the Wade government in 2000 after what appeared to be executive interference in efforts to prosecute Habre. A Rwandan genocide suspect was arrested in November 2001 in Senegal at the request of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Senegal's population is mostly engaged in subsistence agriculture. There has been steady growth in the industrial sector, but lack of open competition obstructs independent business development.

### **Political Rights**

#### **and Civil Liberties:**

The Senegalese have the right to choose their leaders freely. Voting regulations blatantly favored the former ruling party for the first three decades after independence. The party used state patronage and state media to protect its position. Changes to the 1992 Electoral Code lowered the voting age to 18, introduced secret balloting, and created a nominally fairer electoral framework. The National Observatory of Elections, which was created in 1997, performed credibly in overseeing the May 1998 legislative polls and the presidential elections in 2000. The 2000 presidential polls overturned four decades of rule by the Socialist Party as Abdoulaye Wade secured 58.5 percent of the runoff vote, against 41.5 percent for Abdou Diouf. Opposition candidates that had lost the first round of voting rallied behind Diouf.

The national assembly in 1998 voted to add an upper house, or senate, which increased its membership to 140, drawing harsh criticism from minority opposition parties. None of the new members would be directly elected, and one-fifth would be appointed by the president. The upper house was abolished in the 2001 referendum, which brought the number of assembly seats back to 120.

Poor pay and lack of tenure protections create conditions for external influence on a judiciary that is, by statute, independent. In high-profile cases, there is often considerable interference from political and economic elites. Uncharged detainees are incarcerated without legal counsel far beyond the lengthy periods already permitted by law. Muslims have the right to choose customary law or civil law for certain civil cases, such as those concerning inheritance and divorce.

Freedom of association and assembly is guaranteed, but authorities have sometimes limited this right in practice. There are credible reports that authorities often beat suspects during questioning and pretrial detention, despite constitutional protection against such treatment. Reports of disappearances in connection with the conflict in Casamance occur regularly. There are reports of extrajudicial killings by both government forces and MFDC rebels. The government rarely tries or punishes members of the armed forces for human rights abuses. Prison conditions are poor. Human rights groups working on local and regional issues are among many nongovernmental organizations that operate freely.

Freedom of expression is generally respected, and members of the independent media are often highly critical of the government and political parties. There are six independent radio stations, some of which broadcast in rural areas. The government does not carry out formal censorship, but some self-censorship is practiced because of laws against "discrediting the state" or disseminating "false news."

Religious freedom in Senegal, which is 90 percent Muslim, is respected. Rivalries between Islamic groups have sometimes erupted into violence. One association, the Mourid, has often used its strong financial and political influence to back the former ruling Socialist Party.

Constitutional rights afforded women are often not honored, especially in the countryside, and women have fewer chances than men for education and formal sector employment. Despite government campaigns, spousal abuse and other domestic violence against women are reportedly common. Many elements of Islamic and local customary law, particularly those regarding inheritance and marital relations, are discriminatory toward women. The 2001 referendum gave women the right to own land for the first time. Senegal's first female prime minister was appointed in March 2001. Although

Senegal banned female genital mutilation in 1999, it is still practiced among some ethnic groups.

Union rights to organize, bargain collectively, and strike are legally protected, but include notification requirements. Most workers are employed in the informal and agricultural sectors. Nearly all of the country's small industrialized workforce is unionized, and workers are a potent political force. The interior ministry must give prior authorization before a trade union can exist legally.

## ↓ Seychelles

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 100,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 70  
 Ethnic Groups: Seychellois (mixture of Asian, African and European)  
 Capital: Victoria



Trend Arrow: Seychelles received a downward trend arrow due to credible opposition complaints of fraud during the 2001 presidential election.

### Overview:

President France Albert René and his ruling Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) party's political dominance was shaken in 2001. In an August 2001 presidential election, René won a narrow victory that engendered widespread opposition complaints of fraud. Otherwise, 2001 was a generally calm year for Seychelles. The government continued to implement its own homegrown form of economic liberalization.

Seychelles, an archipelago of some 115 islands in the western Indian Ocean, was a French colony until 1810. It was then colonized by Britain until independence in 1976. The country functioned as a multiparty democracy for only one year until René, then prime minister, seized power by ousting President James Mancham. Mancham and other opposition leaders operated parties and human rights groups in exile after René made his SPPF the sole legal party. René and his party continued to control government jobs, contracts, and resources. René won one-party "show" elections in 1979, 1984, and 1989. By 1992, however, the SPPF had passed a constitutional amendment to legalize opposition parties, and many exiled leaders returned to participate in a constitutional commission and multiparty elections.

René won a legitimate electoral mandate in the country's first multiparty elections in 1993. The 1998 polls were accepted as generally legitimate by opposition parties, which had waged a vigorous campaign. The Seychelles National Party (SNP) of the Reverend Wavel Ramakalwan emerged as the strongest opposition group by espousing economic liberalization, which René had resisted.

President René also heads the country's defense and interior ministries. Vice President James Michel, who also heads a number of ministries, has assumed a more promi-

ment role in daily government affairs and has been viewed as René's likely successor. In a recent government reshuffle, however, Michel lost the portfolio of economic planning while conserving his other responsibilities as minister of finance, environment, land, and transport.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The president and the national assembly are elected by universal adult suffrage for five-year terms. As amended in 1996, the 1993 constitution provides for a 34-member national assembly, with 25 members directly elected and 9 allocated on a proportional basis to parties with at least ten percent of the vote. Other amendments have strengthened presidential powers. Local governments composed of district councils were reconstituted in 1991 after their abolition two decades earlier.

In the 2001 presidential election, the opposition increased its vote total from 20 percent to 45 percent. President France Albert Rene's victory was marred by widespread opposition claims that the government had cheated. The SNP subsequently filed a complaint with the Seychelles Constitutional Court, citing irregularities linked to the extension of the incumbent's campaign beyond the official period, the posting of false information on a number of websites, the commitment of acts of intimidation against voters, and the use of votes attributed to deceased or underaged persons whose names were uncovered on the lists of registered voters.

In previous presidential and legislative elections in March 1998, the Seychellois people were able to exercise their democratic right to choose their representatives. As in recent elections, however, SPPF control over state resources and most media gave ruling-party candidates significant advantages in the polls.

The judiciary includes a supreme court, a constitutional court, a court of appeals, an industrial court, and magistrates' courts. Judges generally decide cases fairly, but still face interference in cases involving major economic or political actors. There are no Seychellois judges, and the impartiality of the non-Seychellois magistrates may be compromised by the fact that their tenure is subject to contract renewal.

Two private human rights-related organizations (Friends for a Democratic Society and the Center for Rights and Development) operate in the country along with other nongovernmental organizations. Churches in this predominantly Roman Catholic nation have also been strong voices for human rights and democratization, and generally function without government interference. Discrimination against foreign workers has been reported. Security forces have been accused of using excessive force, including torture and arbitrary detention, especially in attempts to curb crime.

Freedom of speech has improved since one-party rule ended in 1993, but self-censorship persists. There is one daily government newspaper, *The Nation*, and at least two other newspapers support or are published by the SPPF. Independent newspapers are sharply critical of the government, but government dominance and the threat of libel suits restrict media freedom. Opposition parties publish several newsletters and other publications. The opposition weekly *Regar* has been sued repeatedly for libel under broad constitutional restrictions on free expression. The government-controlled Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, however, provided substantial coverage to opposition as well as government candidates during the last elections.

Women are less likely than men to be literate, and they have fewer educational opportunities. While almost all adult females are classified as "economically active,"



most are engaged in subsistence agriculture. Domestic violence against women is reportedly widespread, but is rarely prosecuted and only lightly punished. Islanders of Creole extraction face de facto discrimination. Nearly all of Seychelles' political and economic life is dominated by people of European and Asian origin. Approximately 34 percent of the total population is under 15 years of age.

The right to strike is formally protected by the 1993 Industrial Relations Act, but is limited by several regulations. The SPPF-associated National Workers' Union no longer monopolizes union activity. Two independent unions are now active. The government does not restrict domestic travel, but may deny passports for reasons of "national interest." Religious freedom is respected.

Seychelles has few natural resources and little industry. The economy is statist and the Seychelles Marketing Board has a monopoly on a wide range of staple foods. There are major foreign exchange regulations. The government has begun to diversify the economy and move it away from its heavy reliance on tourism, which contributed 70 percent of foreign exchange earnings in 1999.

## ↑ Sierra Leone

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies)  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 5,400,000  
 PPP: \$448  
 Life Expectancy: 45  
 Ethnic Groups: Temne (30 percent), Mende (30 percent), other tribes (30 percent), Creole (10 percent)  
 Capital: Freetown



Trend Arrow: Sierra Leone received an upward trend arrow for progress on disarmament and a decline in human rights abuses.

### Overview:

Disarmament was well under way in Sierra Leone at the end of the year as preparations continued ahead of elections scheduled for May 2002. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) had reached its full capacity of 17,500 troops as the largest peacekeeping operation in the world and was deployed throughout the countryside to collect weapons. By December, more than 36,000 of an estimated 40,000 fighters had been disarmed. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said the wider deployment of UNAMSIL had created a more secure environment, improved freedom of movement, enabled the gradual return of refugees, and promoted economic resurgence in the provinces. Human rights abuses, including abduction, forced conscription, rape, mutilation, and summary execution continued throughout 2001, but they had diminished significantly compared with the previous year. Politicians, former combatants, and civil society representatives joined together in a conference during the year and approved a new electoral system for polls scheduled for May 2002.

Founded by Britain in 1787 as a haven for liberated slaves, Sierra Leone became independent in 1961. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched a guerrilla campaign from neighboring Liberia in 1991 to end 23 years of increasingly corrupt one-party rule by President Joseph Momoh. Power fell into the lap of Captain Valentine Strasser in 1992, when he and other junior officers attempted to confront Momoh about poor pay and working conditions at the front. Momoh fled the country. The Strasser regime hired South African soldiers from the security company Executive Outcomes to help win back key diamond areas. In January 1996, Brigadier Julius Maada-Bio quietly deposed Strasser. Elections proceeded despite military and rebel intimidation, and 60 percent of Sierra Leone's 1.6 million eligible voters cast ballots that eventually resulted in the election of Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as president.

The following year, Major Johnny Paul Koroma toppled the Kabbah government, established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and invited the RUF to join the junta. Nigerian-led West African troops, backed by logistical and intelligence support from the British company Sandline, restored President Kabbah to power in February 1998, but the country continued to be wracked by war. A peace agreement in July 1999 led to the beginning of disarmament, but the disarmament process stopped in May 2000 with the return to hostilities and the taking of about 500 peacekeepers as hostages. The hostage crisis prompted the arrival of hundreds of British troops, who were not part of the peacekeeping force, to help train government forces and act as a deterrent to any possible attack on Freetown. Disarmament resumed in May 2001.

Hostilities could resurface if the electoral process is not seen as transparent and credible. The proportional representation system under which parties were awarded seats in parliament on the basis of the percentage of votes they polled in various constituencies was replaced in 2001 with a direct voting system for legislators in each district. Delegates to a conference that drew up the new rules said proportional, majority-based elections were not feasible because a national census would have to be conducted, constituency boundaries would have to be redrawn, and refugees and internally displaced people would have to be resettled to their original homes.

Sierra Leone has vast resources of diamonds, but smuggling and war have turned it into one of the world's poorest countries. The economy in 2001, however, grew about 6 percent, up from 3.8 percent in 2000, because of relative peace. The UN Security Council in December 2001 agreed to extend the ban on imports of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone because of continued illegal mining of diamonds whose sale has helped purchase weapons. The ban exempts diamond imports from Sierra Leone that carry proven certificates of origin from the government. The U.S. State Department in 2001 designated the RUF as a terrorist organization after reports had linked the group through diamond sales with the Al Qaeda terrorist network.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Presidential and legislative elections in February and March 1996 were imperfect, but the most legitimate since independence. President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's return to office after the AFRC's ouster reestablished representative government, although the legislative system, like most of the country's other institutions, is in disarray. Dozens of political parties have been formed, but most revolve around a personality and have little following.

The judiciary is active, but corruption and a lack of resources are impediments.

Despite these obstacles, it has demonstrated independence, and a number of trials have been free and fair. There are often lengthy pretrial detentions in harsh conditions. The government released more than 70 prisoners during the year, including several members and leaders of the RUF. A special court for Sierra Leone has not yet been set up despite several appeals for additional funding. The court is to try persons deemed most responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity. A truth and reconciliation commission is also to be established.

Human rights abuses, including abductions, maiming, rape, forced conscription, and extrajudicial killing continue to be a problem in the countryside, although violations abated in 2001 with the wider deployment of peacekeepers. Among the most frequent violators were the RUF and the Civil Defense Forces, also known as the *kamajors*. A number of national and international nongovernmental organizations and human rights groups operate openly in Freetown.

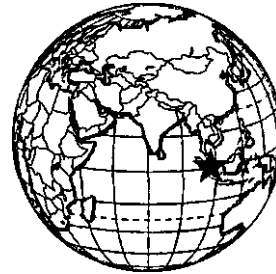
Freedom of speech and of the press is guaranteed, but the government at times restricts these rights. Reporters are intimidated not only by the security forces, but also by the country's various armed factions. Several government and private radio and television stations broadcast. The UN sponsors a community radio project that also receives support from the ministries of information and health. Newspapers openly criticize the government and armed factions. Dozens of newspapers are printed in Freetown, but most are of poor quality and often carry sensational or undocumented stories. Sierra Leone's Independent Media Commission in 2001 approved 21 of 60 newspapers circulating in the capital.

Freedom of religion is guaranteed and respected in practice. The rights of freedom of assembly and association are guaranteed, and these rights are generally respected. Despite constitutionally guaranteed equal rights, women face extensive legal and de facto discrimination as well as limited access to education and formal sector jobs. Married women have fewer property rights than men, especially in rural areas, where customary law prevails. Female genital mutilation is widespread. Abuse of women, including rape, sexual assault, and sexual slavery has escalated dramatically since the war began in 1991.

Workers have the right to join independent trade unions of their choice. About 60 percent of workers in urban areas, including government employees, are unionized. There is a legal framework for collective bargaining. Although the constitution prohibits forced labor, including that performed by children, rebel factions continued their practice of abducting civilians and forcing them to work as virtual slaves performing domestic duties and mining in diamond areas.

## Singapore

Polity: Dominant party  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 4,100,000  
 PPP: \$20,767  
 Life Expectancy: 78  
 Ethnic Groups: Chinese (77 percent), Malay (14 percent), Indian (8 percent), other (1 percent)  
 Capital: Singapore



### Overview:

Singapore's worst economic recession in more than three decades didn't stop the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) from routing the opposition in the November 2001 parliamentary elections. In power since independence in 1965, the PAP campaigned on the theme that no other party had the experience and skills to revive the economy. The opposition, meanwhile, criticized what it called the government's lax policy on foreign workers in a year that saw thousands of Singaporeans lose their jobs. With unemployment rising, exports plunging, and output falling, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong's government boosted spending and eased monetary policy. However, Singapore's small, export-oriented economy is unlikely to be restored to health until demand for electronics goods picks up in the United States and other major trading partners.

Located along major shipping routes in Southeast Asia, Singapore became a British colony in 1867. Occupied by the Japanese during World War II, the city-state became self-governing in 1959, entered the Malaysian Federation in 1963, and became fully independent in 1965 under Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew. Under Lee, the PAP transformed a squalid port city into a technologic hub and regional financial center while restricting individual freedoms.

The PAP won every seat in every election from 1968 to 1981, when the Workers' Party's J. B. Jeyaretnam won a seat in a by-election. Lee, now 78, handed power in 1990 to Goh, an economist by training. Goh, 60, has largely continued Lee's conservative policies and maintained the PAP's dominance in parliament. In the January 1997 elections, the PAP won 81 out of parliament's then 83 seats.

The nine-day campaign, however, featured a rare airing of diverse views on policy issues. Opposition calls for greater freedom of expression and criticism of rising costs of living seemed to resonate among young professionals. Goh responded by warning that neighborhoods voting against the PAP would be the lowest priority for upgrades of public housing estates, where some 85 percent of Singaporeans live.

During the campaign for the November 3, 2001, parliamentary elections, opposition parties criticized the government for not doing more to help Singaporeans hurt by the economic downturn. They called for a minimum wage and a policy of hiring locals before foreign workers. By some estimates, 750,000 of the four million people living in Singapore hold temporary work permits. Repeating a tactic from the 1997 election campaign, the PAP linked priority for public housing upgrades to support for the ruling party. Going one step further, Goh himself promised priority for any ward in Hougang,

an opposition district, that gave more than 45 percent of its votes to the PAP. In the event, the PAP increased its vote share to 75 percent from 65 percent in 1997. Its victory was a foregone conclusion because opposition parties contested only 29 of parliament's 84 seats. The leftist Workers' Party and the centrist Singapore People's Party won one seat apiece.

Veteran opposition politician Jeyaretnam was barred from contesting the elections after the court of appeal in July declared him bankrupt for being a day late in paying an installment on a damages award to PAP politicians who had won a defamation suit. As a bankrupt, Jeyaretnam, 75, was thrown out of parliament, barred from practicing law, and prevented from running for office. The S\$265,000 (\$151,950) damages award stemmed from a 1995 article in the Workers' Party newsletter that described as "government stooges" eight people who had organized a Tamil cultural festival. Jeyaretnam estimates that in his four decades in opposition politics he has paid out more than S\$ 1.5 million in damages and costs to PAP members and others, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in September. The former Workers' Party head also said that he still owes more than S\$500,000 in defamation judgment awards.

Goh has pledged to step down before the next elections, due in 2006. His heir apparent is one of Lee Kwan Yew's two sons, Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. A brigadier general and the central bank chairman, Lee Hsien Loong, 49, has taken a leading role in recent years in banking liberalization and other financial policy matters.

Singapore's economy was hit hard in 2001 as recessions in the United States, Japan, and other key trading partners reduced demand for the city-state's computer chips and other electronics exports. These make up about two-thirds of non-oil exports, which in turn account for 154 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Preliminary data showed that the economy shrank by an estimated 2.2 percent in 2001 after growing by 9.9 percent in 2000. As many as 25,000 Singaporeans lost their jobs during the year.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

The government uses civil defamation laws, strict electoral rules, curbs on civil liberties, patronage, and its influence over Singapore's media to undermine the opposition's prospects in elections. Ordinary Singaporeans, meanwhile, are generally free to live, work, and socialize as they choose but face some restrictions on their rights to speak openly and to enjoy arts and entertainment that are outside the mainstream.

The 1959 constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and created a parliament that is directly elected for a five-year term. Two amendments authorize the government to appoint additional members of parliament to ensure that the opposition has at least three seats. Separately, a 1993 amendment provided for direct presidential elections and gave the president budget-oversight powers and some authority over civil service appointments and internal security matters. The government has used a strict vetting process to prevent any real competition for the office. The current president, S. R. Nathan, 77, a PAP veteran and former ambassador, won the August 1999 election by default after the Presidential Election Commission barred three other candidates on the grounds that they lacked either the requisite competence or integrity.

The PAP runs an efficient, competent, and largely corruption-free government and appears to enjoy genuine popular support. It chalks up its electoral success to its record of having built Singapore into a modern, wealthy society and, it says, the opposition's lack of credible candidates and ideas. Opposition parties, however, say that the playing

field is uneven because of the government's control over the press and use of an array of laws to limit dissent.

Another factor holding back the opposition is its difficulty in fielding viable slates for parliament's multimember districts. Each Group Representation Constituency (GRC) has between three and six seats, and each GRC candidate slate must include at least one Malay, Tamil, or other ethnic minority candidate. The party with a plurality in the district wins all the seats. The current parliament has 15 GRCs and only 9 single-member districts. Moreover, the government requires candidates for all seats to pay deposits of S\$13,000 (US \$7,123) that are forfeited if the candidates don't win a certain percentage of votes.

Notwithstanding the difficulty posed by electoral rules, perhaps the most severe constraint on Singapore's opposition is the PAP's filing of civil defamation and other lawsuits against political foes. "The misuse of defamation suits by PAP leaders has contributed to a climate of self-censorship in Singapore," Amnesty International said the day before the November election. No PAP leader has ever lost a defamation suit against an opposition figure, the London-based group said. Courts have, however, reduced monetary damages in defamation suits and acquitted defendants in other types of cases. Outside observers have criticized many of the convictions. For example, Amnesty International has noted that a 1997 defamation conviction against Workers' Party leader Jeyaretnam was based on the alleged "innuendo" of his statement rather than on Jeyaretnam's actual words.

It is not clear whether the government pressures judges or simply appoints judges who share its conservative philosophy. In any case, government leaders' use of the courts against political opponents and critics and "consistent awards in favor of government plaintiffs" have "led to a perception that the judiciary reflects the views of the executive in politically sensitive cases," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Singapore's human rights record in 2000. The president appoints supreme court judges on the recommendation of the prime minister with the advice of the chief justice. He appoints lower court judges on the recommendation of the chief justice. Chaired by the chief justice, the Legal Services Commission sets the terms of appointment for judges, many of whom have close ties to PAP leaders.

Faced with the government's record of suing critics, journalists sometimes refrain from publishing stories about alleged government corruption and nepotism or the supposed compliance of the judiciary, the U.S. State Department report said. Editorials and domestic news coverage tend to reflect the PAP's views. Some newspapers, however, are increasingly offering frank editorials, columns, and letters to the editor on political issues.

The government last filed serious legal charges against the media in the mid-1990s. A court fined two journalists and three economists under the Official Secrets Act in 1994 for publishing advance GDP figures. Courts also handed down contempt-of-court and libel rulings in 1995 against the *International Herald Tribune* and fined it \$892,000. The government has not wielded the harsh Internal Security Act (ISA) against the press in recent years, but its broad provisions leave the press unclear about what may be published. The colonial-era ISA allows the government to restrict publications that incite violence, might arouse tensions among racial or religious groups, or might threaten national interests, national security, or public order.

Most journalists work for media outlets that are linked to the government. The

privately held Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), which owns all general-circulation newspapers, has close ties to the PAP. By law, the government must approve the owners of key "management shares" in SPH. The government-linked Singapore International Media Pte, Ltd. operates all 4 free television stations and 10 of Singapore's 15 domestic radio stations. Four of the remaining 5 radio stations are run by government-affiliated agencies. Companies with close ties to the government also run Internet service providers and Singapore's cable television service.

Foreign newspapers and magazines are available, although authorities have at times temporarily restricted the circulations of *Time*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *The Economist*, and other foreign publications that carried articles on Singapore the government found offensive. The Newspaper and Printing Presses Act allows authorities to "gazette," or restrict circulation of, any foreign periodical that publishes an article allegedly interfering in domestic politics.

The government censors films, television, videos, music, magazines, and books, mainly for excessive amounts of sex, violence, and drug references. However, authorities have in recent years loosened some restrictions on the arts.

Though the government avidly promotes Internet use for shopping and other daily affairs, 1996 regulations forbid airing of information over the Internet that is against the "public interest," "national harmony," or that "offends against good taste or decency." In practice, authorities prevent access to some Internet sites, most of them pornographic. Several sites host forums for political chat.

The PAP government also prohibits public discussion of sensitive racial and religious issues and closely regulates public speech. Singaporeans must get police permits to hold public talks or make political speeches or else face fines of S\$ 10,000 under the Public Entertainment and Meetings Act. Chee Soon Juan of the opposition Singapore Democratic Party served jail terms of 7 and 12 days in 1999 for making a pair of speeches without licenses in December 1998 and January 1999. Chee opted to serve the sentences rather than pay the fines. He alleged that on previous occasions authorities had denied or delayed granting him licenses until it was too late to make arrangements to speak. The only place where Singaporeans can make public speeches without licenses is the "Speakers' Corner," which is located in a downtown park. Speakers, however, must register with the police at least 30 days in advance.

In one of the few public events since independence with anti-government undertones, some 2,000 people attended an April fundraising rally for the Workers' Party's Jeyaretnam. Police must approve any public assembly of more than five people.

The government has used the 1966 Societies Act to deny registration to groups it considers threats to public order. In recent years, however, authorities have allowed activists to set up several politically oriented nongovernmental groups, including Think Centre, a civil rights group. The act requires most organizations of more than ten people to be registered and restricts political activity to political parties. Despite this latter restriction, however, the PAP has close ties to seemingly nonpolitical associations such as neighborhood groups. Meanwhile, authorities generally prevent opposition parties from forming similar groups.

The government has not used the ISA to hold suspects on political charges since 1989, although it has detained at least six people under the act for alleged espionage since 1997. Most have been released. Historically used mainly against suspected Communist threats, the ISA allows authorities to detain suspects without charges or trials

for an unlimited number of two-year periods. A 1989 constitutional amendment prohibits judicial review of the substantive grounds of detentions under the ISA and the constitutionality of the law. Another law allows the government to detain suspects without trials for renewable one-year periods, although the accused can appeal to the courts for their release. The government uses the Criminal Law Act to detain each year several hundred mainly organized crime or drug-trafficking suspects. Meanwhile, the Misuse of Drugs Act allows authorities to commit, without trials, suspected drug users to rehabilitation centers for up to three years. In any given year, several thousand people are in mandatory treatment and rehabilitation.

Police reportedly at times abuse detainees, the U.S. State Department report said. It added that courts have jailed several officers convicted of such abuses. Authorities use caning to punish some 30 offenses, including certain immigration violations.

Women are active in the professions but are underrepresented in government and politics. Singaporeans of most faiths can worship freely. Jehovah's Witnesses, however, are banned under the Societies Act from practicing their faith because of their refusal to serve in the military. The government also bars meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and Unification Church members. The government actively promotes racial harmony and equity in a society where race riots between Malays and the majority Chinese killed scores of people in the late 1960s. Ethnic Malays, however, have not on average achieved the schooling and income levels of ethnic Chinese or Tamils and reportedly face unofficial discrimination in employment. Several government programs aim to boost educational achievement among Malay students.

Most unions are affiliated with the National Trade Unions Congress, which acknowledges freely that its interests are closely aligned with those of the PAP. The law prevents uniformed employees from joining unions. Around 15 percent of Singapore's workers are unionized. There have been no strikes since 1986, in part because labor shortages have helped employees secure regular wage increases and have given them a high degree of job mobility.

## Slovakia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Mixed capitalist

Population: 5,400,000

PPP: \$10,591

Life Expectancy: 73

Ethnic Groups: Slovak (86 percent), Hungarian (11 percent),

Roma (Gypsy) (2 percent), Czech (1 percent)

Capital: Bratislava

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

In 2001, the Slovak Republic remained vigilant in its bid to join the European Union (EU), and EU Enlargement Commissioner Guenter Verheugen announced that the country had



caught up with its neighbors Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic in the process. Slovakia hopes to join the EU in 2004 and expects to receive an invitation to join NATO in 2002. The passage of a comprehensive constitutional amendment, the adoption of important reform laws, and concerns about corruption also marked the year.

Communism in Czechoslovakia collapsed in 1989. The country held its first free elections in 1990 and began negotiations on separation into two independent states in 1991. In 1993, an independent Slovak constitution took effect and the Czechoslovak union was peacefully dissolved.

Vladimir Meciar and the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) dominated Slovak politics until 1998. Meciar, who served three times as prime minister, battled with President Michal Kovac over executive and government powers, opposed direct presidential elections, resisted economic liberalization, and disregarded the rule of law and a free press. He is suspected of involvement in the 1995 kidnapping of Kovac's son. Under Meciar, Slovakia failed to meet the criteria for opening EU accession talks and to receive an invitation to join NATO.

In 1998, Meciar's HZDS received 27 percent of the vote and 43 seats in parliamentary elections. However, the opposition Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), which received only 26.33 percent and 42 seats, managed to form a new government with the Democratic Left Party (SD), the Hungarian Coalition Party (SMK), and the Party of Civil Understanding (SOP). SDK leader Mikulas Dzurinda became prime minister.

Parliament failed five times in 1998 to elect a new president with a three-fifths majority. Finally, in January 1999, parliament amended the constitution and instituted popular presidential elections. Ten candidates participated in the May 1999 voting. Rudolph Schuster of the SOP defeated Meciar in the second round with 57 percent of the vote. Under Dzurinda and Schuster, Slovakia has improved judicial independence, intensified efforts to combat corruption, jump-started economic reforms, and become a candidate for membership in the EU and NATO.

The Czech and Slovak Republics celebrated the end of their "velvet divorce" in 2000. Slovakia also began EU accession talks and joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Prime Minister Dzurinda's government survived two constitutional challenges to its power by the HZDS. President Schuster survived life-threatening complications from surgery.

In July 2000, parliament approved, in its first reading, a constitutional amendment that was designed, in part, to strengthen judicial independence, reform public administration, and provide for an ombudsman for human rights. Final adoption, which occurred early in 2001, paved the way for the passage of legislation that is considered a prerequisite of EU membership. To that end, parliament adopted the Public Administration Reform Act, which establishes a system of regional self-administration; the Competency Act, which devolves powers to the regions; and the Civil Service Law, which regulates the recruitment and payment of civil servants. Parliament also approved a new Labor Code.

Despite these positive steps, Slovakia was embarrassed when allegations surfaced in 2001 about the misuse of EU funds. Although an investigation revealed no evidence of mismanagement, it did point to a lack of transparency and evidence of conflicts of interest. Also in 2001, Defense Minister Pavol Kanis was forced to resign when he failed to explain the source of his funds for an expensive home.

These events underscored the complexity of implementing a comprehensive anti-

corruption program such as Slovakia's National Program to Fight Corruption, which the government put into place in 2000. Since then, parliament has approved laws on money laundering, freedom of access to information, and political party financing. The new Civil Service Law also contains provisions on conflicts of interest, and an amendment to the criminal code calls for harsher sentences for bribery and abuse of power. Effective enforcement of these and other measures remains an important goal.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Slovak citizens aged 18 and older can change their government democratically under a system of universal, equal, and direct suffrage. Voters elect the president and members of the unicameral parliament. In 2001, the government approved a bill that grants voting privileges to foreigners. Under the new law, permanent residents may vote in elections for municipal and regional governments.

Ten candidates competed in the 1999 presidential race. Public television channels gave equal airtime to candidates, and polling and vote counting were transparent and well organized. Rudolph Schuster, representing the SOP, defeated Vladimir Meciar in a second round of voting.

Parliamentary elections in 1998 were also free and fair. Sixteen parties participated, and six met the five percent threshold for securing seats. The HZDS lost its majority to a coalition of the SDK, the SD, the SMK, and the SOP. The next parliamentary elections will take place in 2002. The HDZS enjoyed a 15-point lead in early opinion polls.

Slovakia's constitution guarantees freedom of speech and bans censorship. The majority of media outlets are privately owned. In June 2000, President Schuster signed a freedom-of-information law designed to increase government transparency. The law took effect in 2001. Prior to regional elections in 2001, Slovak Public Television (STV) aired a parliamentary question-and-answer session during which the prime minister answered queries about public administration reform. Questions were quickly raised about the legality of the telecast, which took place during a pre-election broadcast moratorium. Two employees of STV offered to resign; the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council is investigating the case. In another case, the media-monitoring group MEMO 98 reported in 2001 that TV Markiza's news program devotes a disproportionate amount of airtime to the Citizen's New Alliance party. If the Broadcasting and Retransmission Council concurs, TV Markiza could face a warning and, if the practice continues, suspension of the program.

Parliament also made two decisions in 2001 that affect freedom of expression. First, it amended the Penal code to make Holocaust denials punishable offenses. At the same time, it rejected additional changes to the Penal code that would have removed provisions on the defamation of the head of state and other senior governmental officials.

The Slovak government respects religious freedom. Churches and religious organizations that register with the state are eligible for tax exemptions and government subsidies. In 2000, the government passed a law on freedom of religion and completed a general treaty with the Vatican. Critics of the treaty vowed to oppose future subtreaties that might affirm pro-Catholic views on divorce, abortion, homosexuality, and Catholic education in public schools. In 2001, the ministry of culture announced that the government was preparing a similar treaty with Protestant, Orthodox, and other religious groups.

The government respects the rights of persons to assemble peacefully, strike, peti-

tion state bodies, and associate in clubs, political parties, and trade unions. Judges, prosecutors, firefighters, and members of the armed forces may not strike.

Minorities and ethnic groups have a constitutional right to help resolve issues that concern them. In 1999, parliament passed the Law on the Use of Minority Languages in Official Communications, and in 2001 the government adopted the European Charter of Regional Minority Languages. Despite well-intentioned measures like these, minority groups, especially Roma (Gypsies), continue to experience discrimination. In 2001, human rights groups decried the death of Karol Sendrei, a Roma who died while in police custody. According to reports, police arrested and beat Sendrei after he and his two sons complained of discriminatory treatment by a police officer.

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary and a constitutional court. The adoption in 2001 of a constitutional amendment paved the way for legislative action on measures aimed at improving judicial independence. In its annual progress report on Slovakia's progress toward EU accession, though, the EC noted that "significant improvements ... are also needed to guarantee the judiciary's professional impartiality and political neutrality." In addition, the Council of Europe criticized the Slovak police's treatment of detained persons and the condition of the country's prisons. Late in 2001, parliament approved the creation of an ombudsman's office.

Slovak citizens enjoy a range of personal rights and liberties. The government respects the inviolability of the home, the right to privacy, and the right to move and travel freely. The constitution provides protections for marriage, parenthood, and the family.

Slovakia has a market economy in which the private sector accounts for approximately 80 percent of gross domestic product and 75 percent of employment. Official unemployment remains high at approximately 20 percent, but the government contends that persons who simultaneously work on the black market and collect unemployment benefits may account for as much as 5 percent of the rate.

## Slovenia

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 1
Economy: Mixed capitalist	Civil Liberties: 2
Population: 2,000,000	Status: Free
PPP: \$15,977	
Life Expectancy: 76	
Ethnic Groups: Slovene (88 percent), Croat (3 percent), Serb (2 percent), Bosniak (1 percent), other (6 percent)	
Capital: Ljubljana	



### Overview:

After ten years of independence from the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia has much to celebrate. The country remains a leading candidate for membership in the European Union (EU) and expects to receive an invitation to join NATO. It also boasts one of the highest levels of per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in Central and Eastern Europe.

Slovenia was part of the Hapsburg Empire from 1335 to 1918, at which time it became part of the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. It became a constituent republic of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia after World War II and remained a part of Communist Yugoslavia until 1991. Since then, independent Slovenia has adopted a new constitution, held repeated free and fair direct elections, and undertaken important economic and political reforms.

In 1990, prior to independence, the Democratic United Opposition (DEMOS) secured victory in Slovenia's first multiparty parliamentary elections, and DEMOS leader Lojze Peterle became prime minister. Voters also elected former Communist leader Milan Kucan president. They elected Kucan the president of an independent Slovenia in 1992 and again in 1997.

After parliamentary elections in 1992 and 1996, Janez Drnovsek, the last president of the former Yugoslavia, formed center-left governments led by the Liberal Democracy of Slovenia (LDS) party. In April 2000, however, Drnovsek's government collapsed when the Slovenian People's Party (SLS) withdrew and he lost a confidence vote in the national assembly. The SLS joined forces with the Slovenian Christian Democrats (SKD) in a partnership, commonly known as SLS+SKD, and nominated Andrej Bajuk, an economist and an Argentine banker of Slovenian descent, to be prime minister. Parliament approved Bajuk after three rounds of voting.

An SLS+SKD coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SDS) proved short-lived, and Bajuk broke with the new party in August 2000 to form his own—the New Slovenian Party. He stayed in power until the October parliamentary elections, when Drnovsek's LDS won 36.21 percent of the vote and formed a coalition government with the SLS+SKD, the United List of Social Democrats (ZLSD), and the Slovenian Democratic Party of Pensioners (DeSUS). Official election results were LDS, 34 seats; SDS, 14; ZLSD, 11; SLS+SKD, 9; New Slovenian, 8; DeSUS, 4; Nationalist Party, 4; and Youth Party, 4. Drnovsek was returned to power.

The European Commission (EC) announced in its 2001 "Report on Slovenia's Progress Toward Accession" that the country continues to move forward in meeting the requirements of EU membership. The report details a number of positive developments such as the adoption of a code of conduct for civil servants, progress in reducing the backlog of pending court cases, and the creation of a privatization timetable. The report also notes a new anticorruption office, which the government created in response to a Council of Europe report that cited a "disparity ... between the low number of offences detected, prosecuted or punished in Slovenia and the general perception of an increasing, quite widespread corruption." Nonetheless, the council report acknowledges that "Slovenia is one of the Central and Eastern European countries that seems less affected by corruption" and that "Slovenian authorities have made an impressive effort to follow international standards in the anti-corruption field."

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Slovenia is a parliamentary democracy with independent legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. Voters can change their government under a system of universal, equal, and direct suffrage. They elect the president and members of the 90-seat national assembly. Parliament chooses the prime minister. There is also a 40-seat national council, a largely advisory body that represents professional groups and local interests.

Elections in Slovenia are free and fair. Former Communist leader Milan Kucan has been the president since 1990. He is not eligible to run in the 2002 election. The LDS and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek have dominated Slovenia's post-Communist government for eight years. Drnovsek briefly lost power in 2000 to economist and center-right nominee Andrej Bajuk.

Parliament approved a new system of proportional representation in 2000. The new electoral code raises the threshold for securing seats from 3.2 percent to 4 percent and ends the use of preferential party lists for allocating seats to candidates who do not win direct mandates. This system guided parliamentary elections in October 2000, in which candidates from eight parties participated. When the LDS received a majority of the vote, it formed a new coalition government and returned Drnovsek to the post of prime minister. Slovenia's constitution entitles Italian- and Hungarian-ethnic communities to one deputy each in the national assembly.

In 2001, the constitutional court struck down Article 39 of Slovenia's law on local self-government for its lack of specificity on how to implement a provision that guarantees seats for Roma (Gypsies) in local governments. Also in 2001, the government pledged to support the country's German-speaking population through educational and cultural programs. The decision was intended to appease Austria, which had pressed for formal recognition of this ethnic minority in Slovenia.

The government respects the constitutional rights of freedom of speech, expression, and the press. Insulting public officials, however, is prohibited by law. Most print media outlets are privately owned and support themselves with advertising revenues. Some electronic media outlets, such as Slovenia Radio-Television (RTV), remain state owned. RTV has three radio stations and two television networks. In 2001, parliament approved a controversial new media law that, among other things, regulates the protection of freedom of expression, prohibits the incitement of inequality and intolerance, requires domestic productions to account for at least 20 percent of television broadcasts, and compels media outlets to seek the opinion of their editorial staffs on the selection of editors in chief. The law also creates an agency for telecommunications and broadcasting.

The constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and religion. In order to receive tax rebates, religious groups must register with the state. More than 70 percent of the population is Roman Catholic. In 2001, controversy surrounded the Catholic Church's claims on property seized under communism when two government ministries issued conflicting decisions on cases involving the return of property in kind versus financial compensation. The debate largely centered on interpretations of the 1991 Denationalization Act, which, according to the *East European Constitutional Review*, "restricts in kind restitution of property that is a public good."

The government respects the right of individuals to assemble peacefully, form associations, participate in public affairs, and submit petitions. Military and police personnel may not join political parties. Workers enjoy the right to establish and join trade unions, to strike, and to bargain collectively. According to the EC, Slovenia's trade unions actively participate "in the process of adopting relevant legislation ... and in decision-making on wage, labour and pension policies." In 2001, parliament revised the procedures on holding referendums. Among the provisions is a requirement that the national assembly carry through on the results of a referendum within one year of the balloting.

Slovenia has an independent judiciary that consists of a supreme court, an administrative court, regional and district courts, and an appeals court. There is also a constitutional court. The constitution guarantees individuals due process, equality before the law, and a presumption of innocence until proven guilty. While the EC has criticized the judiciary for long court delays, it acknowledged progress in 2001 in "reducing the backlog of pending court cases" and noted specific measures such as the creation of a program that makes rotating judges available to courts with large caseloads. However, it also noted concerns about increased police brutality.

Citizens of Slovenia enjoy many other personal rights and freedoms. These include the freedom to travel, move, and choose a place of residence; the rights to privacy and the inviolability of the home; the right to health care and social security; and the freedom to work. The constitution provides special protection for marriage, the family, and children. It defines specific rights and obligations for parents.

Slovenia has a constitution that guarantees—and a government that respects—private property rights and free enterprise. Still, organizations like the International Monetary Fund have urged that Slovenia move faster to divest itself of large state enterprises, to reduce its budget deficit, and to cut inflation. According to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the private sector only accounts for about 55 percent of GDP. In January 2000, important legislation reforming the country's pay-as-you-go pension system took effect. In 2001, Prime Minister Drnovsek announced that his country might enter the EU as a net contributor to the budget.

## Solomon Islands

Polity: Parliamentary democracy	Political Rights: 4
Economy: Capitalist	Civil Liberties: 4
Population: 500,000	Status: Partly Free
PPP: \$2,050	
Life Expectancy: 67	
Ethnic Groups: Melanesian (93 percent), Polynesian (4 percent), Micronesian (1.5 percent), other (1.5 percent)	
Capital: Honiara	



### Overview:

A peace agreement signed in October 2000 appeared to falter in April 2001 when it became clear that the illegal paramilitary Malaita Eagle Force (MEF) was consistently failing to disarm. In June, during a serious outbreak of armed violence, several peace monitors were fired upon and gunmen attempted to assassinate the leader of Guadalcanal province. Parliamentary elections held on December 5 resulted in defeat for the ruling People's Progressive Party. In mid-December, Sir Allan Kemakaza was chosen by parliament as the new prime minister. However, donor concerns regarding corruption and economic instability were heightened by the fact that Kemakaza had been dismissed as deputy prime minister earlier in the year amid allegations of financial impropriety.

The Solomon Islands, a twin chain of islands stretching nearly 900 miles in the

western Pacific, became a British protectorate in the late 1800s and an independent member of the Commonwealth in 1978. Politics in this parliamentary system is characterized by frequently shifting partisan loyalties. In August 1997, Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, head of the Alliance for Change and its dominant Solomon Islands Liberal Party, was elected prime minister. Pledges to implement reforms to end government corruption and mismanagement won his government critical support from foreign banks and aid donors.

Long-standing ethnic tensions between the Gwale people, who are natives of the island of Guadalcanal, and those from the island of Malaita (60 miles away) worsened in January 1999, when Ezekiel Alebua, premier of Guadalcanal, asked the government to pay his province for hosting the capital, Honiara, and suggested that people from outside the province should not be allowed to own land there. The Gwale majority has long complained that migrants from elsewhere in the Solomon Islands are taking local jobs and land. Fighting broke out in June 1999 when militants of the Gwale-dominated Istambu Freedom Movement (IFM) struck in the countryside and then moved into Honiara.

The government declared a state of emergency, and Alebua called for a media ban on statements about the ethnic unrest in his province. In July 1999, the conflict ended with the signing of the Honiara peace accord. Under the agreement, the militants agreed to disarm in return for an official review to ensure "even development" throughout the islands. However, the peace process failed, and violence continued in the year 2000. An estimated 200 people have been killed and 30,000 have become refugees as a result of the conflict.

In June 2000, an MEF-led coup took over the capital, Honiara, and captured Prime Minister Ulufa'alu, who was then forced to resign. Opposition leader Manassah Sogavare was narrowly elected as the new prime minister in an emergency vote held on June 30. To bring the MEF to the negotiating table, the new government paid \$1.6 million in compensation for lost land and damaged property suffered by the Malaitans. Following this, the Townsville Peace Agreement was signed in Australia on October 14, 2000; it included provisions for laying down arms and establishing an international ceasefire monitoring group. However, peace remained tenuous and the police were unable to bring law and order back to Honiara. To consolidate the peace process, premiers of the various provinces met to consider implementing a federal system. In December 2000, a blanket amnesty law for virtually all crimes committed during the two-year ethnic conflict was rushed through parliament.

The breakdown of the two former militant groups has hindered the implementation of the disarmament process, with an estimated 500 high-powered weapons still to be recovered. Citing financial hardship, the government in August refused further demands from former militants for monetary compensation. The slaying of a prominent militant leader led the IFM to withdraw from a planned peace review in September.

The conflict has crippled the island's economy as well as affecting international commerce for other countries in the region. Guadalcanal Island has the country's only international airport and its two international seaports, which are regional transport hubs. Business declined as much as 50 percent as a result of the violence, and the once-flourishing export sector has disintegrated. In addition, political instability has reduced government revenue by around 60 percent, leading to an accumulation of both domestic and international debt. Desperate for new funds, Sogavare had sought additional assistance from Taiwan, even threatening to switch official diplomatic recognition to China.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of the Solomon Islands can change their government democratically. Under the 1977 constitution, the 50-member unicameral parliament is directly elected for a four-year term.

Executive power is vested in a prime minister and cabinet, and a governor-general serves as head of state. Traditional chiefs wield formal authority in local government. Party affiliations are weak and based largely on personal loyalties. In December, a total of 328 candidates from seven political parties stood for parliamentary seats in elections that were judged free and fair by international observers.

The judiciary is independent, and procedural safeguards are adequate, with a right of ultimate appeal in certain circumstances to the Privy Council in London. The constitution provides for an ombudsman's office to investigate claims of unfair treatment by the authorities, but its effectiveness is limited in practice by a lack of resources. During the conflict, some members of the 900-strong police force participated in torture, extrajudicial killing, and other violence against civilians. More than 100 officers who joined the MEF during the June 2000 coup have been reinstated in the police service without being held accountable for abuses they may have committed as MEF members. Since the coup, the police force has not functioned as an effective institution.

The country's three private newspapers vigorously criticize government policies, but have limited circulation outside the towns. There is a private FM radio station, but the radio service of the state-owned Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation is the most important source of information and generally offers diverse viewpoints. Curbs on the media were imposed during the state of emergency in Guadalcanal in 1999, and the government was slow in lifting them even after ending the emergency. In March 2001, a spokesman for the prime minister said the government believed in and advocated freedom of the media. However, he also warned media organizations to be mindful of their reporting and professional in their duties. In September, the British government funded a media workshop on election reporting.

Religious freedom is respected in this predominantly Christian country. Freedom of assembly is also respected in practice. Although public assembly requires a government permit, none have been denied for political reasons. Bans on militant groups were announced by the government in 1999 and 2000, but were later suspended. In June, police fired tear gas into a civilian crowd at a show held to promote peace in Honiara.

The law recognizes the right of workers to form and join unions and to strike. Approximately 10 to 15 percent of the population is employed in the wage economy, and about 60 to 70 percent of those are organized in trade unions. Unions frequently exercise their right to bargain collectively. In August, a planned strike action by members of various public sector unions whose salaries had not been paid was called off.

Women face discrimination in education and employment opportunities, and are underrepresented in government and politics. Critics have demanded greater government efforts to address domestic violence, and as a result of the breakdown in law and order since 1998, women have become particularly vulnerable to rape and other forms of violence.



## Somalia

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (transitional) (insurgencies)  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Population: 7,500,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 46  
 Ethnic Groups: Somali (85 percent), other, including Bantu and Arab (15 percent)  
 Capital: Mogadishu

Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 7  
 Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Somalia feared becoming the next target of the United States in its war on terrorism in 2001. U.S. military reconnaissance flights and other surveillance activities were stepped-up in Somalia as the United States sought to prevent the country from becoming a new base for the Al-Qaeda terrorist network. U.S. authorities also froze the assets of the Al Barakaat telecommunications and money-transfer company on suspicion that its owners were aiding and abetting terrorism, a charge they deny. Somalia's Transitional National Government (TNG) and various factions said they would cooperate in the war on terrorism. Meanwhile, the TNG and a number of factions signed a peace deal in December 2001, but some key factions were not part of the agreement. However, the process indicated a greater commitment to reconciliation, which was largely attributed to the appointment of a new prime minister, Hasan Abshir Farah. The former prime minister was forced out in a vote of no-confidence on charges of mismanagement and failure to bring peace to Mogadishu.

Somalia, a Horn of Africa nation, has been wracked for more than a decade by civil war, clan fighting, and natural disasters ranging from drought to flood to famine. Extensive television coverage of famine and civil strife that took approximately 300,000 lives in 1991 and 1992 prompted a U.S.-led international intervention. The armed humanitarian mission in late 1992 quelled clan combat long enough to stop the famine, but ended in urban guerrilla warfare against Somali militias. The last international forces withdrew in March 1995 after the casualty count reached the thousands. Approximately 100 peacekeepers, including 18 U.S. soldiers, were killed. The \$4 billion United Nations intervention effort had little lasting impact.

Somalia gained independence in July 1960 with the union of British Somaliland and territories to the south that had been an Italian colony. Other ethnic-Somali-inhabited lands are now part of Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. General Siad Barre seized power in 1969 and employed increasingly divisive clan politics to maintain power. Civil war, starvation, banditry, and brutality have wracked Somalia since the struggle to topple Barre began in the late 1980s. When Barre was deposed in January 1991, power was claimed and contested by heavily armed guerrilla movements and militias based on traditional ethnic and clan loyalties.

The Conference for National Peace and Reconciliation in Somalia adopted a charter in 2000 for a three-year transition and selected a 245-member transitional assem-

bly, which functions as an interim parliament. Minority groups are included, and 25 of the members are women. The breakaway regions of Somaliland and Puntland do not recognize the results, nor do several faction leaders. A government security force in Mogadishu has been cobbled together from members of the former administration's military, the police, and militias.

The closure of Al Barakaat left Somalia's economy in tatters and hurt many Somali families who depended on overseas remittances they received through the company. A ban, prompted by fears that Somali livestock carried Rift Valley fever, imposed by Persian Gulf states in 2000 on the export of Somali livestock exacerbated economic difficulties. Yemen lifted the ban in December 2001.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The elections in 2000 marked the first time Somalis have had an opportunity to choose their government on a somewhat national basis since 1969. Some 3,000 representatives of civic and religious organizations, women's groups, and clans came together as the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development, following Djibouti-hosted peace talks, to elect a parliament in August 2000. The 245 members of the Transitional National Assembly elected the president. More than 20 candidates contested the first round of voting for the presidency. The Inter-Governmental Authority chose the lawyers who drafted the country's new charter.

Somalia's new charter provides for an independent judiciary, although a formal judicial system has ceased to exist. Islamic courts operating in Mogadishu have been effective in bringing a semblance of law and order to the city. Efforts at judicial reform are proceeding slowly. The Islamic courts were supposed to come under the control of the transitional government in 2001, but some continued to function on their own. Most of the courts are aligned with various subclans. Prison conditions are harsh in some areas, but improvements are underway.

Human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killing, torture, beating, and arbitrary detention by Somalia's various armed factions remain a problem, but security has improved markedly compared with previous years. Few politically motivated killings, disappearances, or incidents of torture were reported. Most violations are linked to banditry. Several international aid organizations, women's groups, and local human rights groups operate in the country.

Somalia's charter provides for press freedom. Independent radio and television stations have proliferated. Most of the independent newspapers or newsletters that circulate in Mogadishu are linked to one faction or another. Journalists face harassment; however, most receive the protection of the clan behind their publication. The Transitional National Government launched its first radio station, Radio Mogadishu, in August 2001. There are three private radio stations and two run by factions.

Somaliland has exercised de facto independence from Somalia since May 1991. A clan conference led to a peace accord among its clan factions in 1997, establishing a presidency and bicameral parliament with proportional clan representation. Somaliland is far more cohesive than the rest of the country, although reports of some human rights abuses persist. Somaliland has sought international recognition as the Republic of Somaliland since 1991. A referendum on independence and a new constitution was approved in May 2001, opening the way for a multiparty system. Elections are scheduled for 2002.

Puntland established a regional government for itself in 1998, with a presidency

and a single-chamber quasi legislature known as the Council of Elders. Political parties are banned. The traditional elders chose Abdullahi Yusuf as the region's first president for a three-year term. A crisis erupted in 2001 when Abdullahi Yusuf refused to relinquish power, claiming he was fighting terrorism, after Jama Ali Jama was elected to replace him. Puntland at the end of 2001 was effectively divided between regions controlled by Ali Jama and those controlled by Abdullahi Yusuf.

Although more than 80 percent of Somalis share a common ethnic heritage, religion, and nomadic-influenced culture, discrimination is widespread. Clans exclude one another from participation in social and political life. Minority clans are harassed, intimidated, and abused by armed gunmen.

Somalia is an Islamic state, and religious freedom is not guaranteed. The Sunni majority often view non-Sunni Muslims with suspicion. Members of the small Christian community face societal harassment if they proclaim their religion.

Women's groups were instrumental in galvanizing support for Somalia's peace process. As a result of their participation, women occupy at least 30 seats in parliament. The country's new charter prohibits sexual discrimination, but women experience such discrimination intensely under customary practices and variants of Koranic law. Infibulation, the most severe form of female genital mutilation, is routine. UN agencies and nongovernmental organizations are working to raise awareness about the health dangers of the practice. Various armed factions have recruited children into their militias.

The charter provides workers with the right to form unions, but civil war and factional fighting led to the dissolution of the single labor confederation, the government-controlled General Federation of Somali Trade Unions. Wages are established largely by ad hoc bartering and the influence of the clan affiliation.

## South Africa

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 43,600,000  
 PPP: \$8,908  
 Life Expectancy: 53  
 Ethnic Groups: Black (75 percent), white (14 percent), mixed (9 percent), Indian (2 percent)  
 Capital: Pretoria



### Overview:

South Africa continues to provide a remarkable, powerful example of a positive democratic transition in an extremely diverse country. Consolidation of South Africa's democratic transition proceeded under the new constitution that took effect in February 1997. The country's independent judiciary continues to function, on balance, very well. Elections at all levels of government have taken place repeatedly. The press, trade unions, and other independent institutions play important roles in articulating a wide variety of interests.

This generally positive perspective, however, must be tempered by the recognition that serious problems regarding democratic consolidation, economic and social development, health, and group relations exist. The durability of the new democratic structures is uncertain since South Africa remains deeply divided by ethnicity and class. AIDS is rampant throughout the country, which is also plagued by corruption and by a rising crime rate that has reached endemic proportions.

In 2001, tension increased between the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and various groups, including the trade unions, elements of the press, traditional leaders, and the white minority. Key areas of disagreement between the ANC and the Congress of South African Trade Unions have included the government's approach to dealing with key problems such as AIDS and its conservative economic policies.

President Thabo Mbeki has received increasing criticism for his positions on a number of issues, including his support for embattled President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. Mbeki has also spent considerable political capital arguing that HIV does not necessarily cause AIDS. The ANC leadership has focused blame for the country's problems on the former white-supremacist regime. This argument has begun to lose some of its potency with the passage of time. Also in 2001, former senior ANC leaders, Cyril Ramaphosa, Tokyo Sexwale and Matthews Phosa were publicly named as being under suspicion of plotting to overthrow and harm Mbeki.

In November 2001, the ANC reached a cooperation agreement with the New National Party (NNP), the successor party to the apartheid-era ruling party. The agreement paves the way for the NNP to return to government at all levels, as well as giving the ANC a foothold in the Western Cape, a key province where it previously had no governing role. The major opposition grouping, the Democratic Alliance, which had included the NNP, split, in part over the issue of whether to seek an alliance with the ANC to govern Western Cape Province.

South Africa's apartheid government, which came to power in 1948, reserved political power for the white minority while seeking to balkanize the black, Indian, and mixed-race, or "colored," communities. Increasing international ostracism, civil unrest, and the growing strength of the ANC eventually forced the South African government to negotiate with its adversaries. Momentum for change accelerated with the accession to power of Frederick de Klerk and global and regional moves towards greater democratization in the late 1980s. In 1990 De Klerk freed ANC leader Nelson Mandela from 27 years of prison, and a negotiation process which resulted in legitimate multiparty elections in 1994, was initiated. These elections brought Mandela and the ANC to power at the national level.

South Africa's regional relations are highly sensitive and complicated. In addition to Zimbabwe's increasing instability, Angola continues to suffer from civil conflict. Strife in the Great Lakes region, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, also impedes economic and political progress. In 2001 long-running negotiations to achieve a possible resolution of Burundi's civil conflict, led by former President Mandela, resulted in the installation of a coalition government. This agreement was underwritten by the South African government in the form of South African troops being sent to the country as peacekeepers.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** South Africans have the right, in theory and practice, to change their government. Two successful national elections have taken

place since 1994. Elections for the 400-seat National Assembly and 90-seat National Council of Provinces are by proportional representation based on party lists. The National Assembly elects the president to serve concurrently with its five-year term. Local and municipal elections were held in 1995, 1996, and early December, 2000. The 1996 polls had been twice postponed due to continuing disagreements between the government and traditional chiefs, who feared losing power to the new authorities and the central government.

In general, the electoral process, including extensive civic and voter education, balanced state media coverage, and reliable balloting and vote counting, has worked properly. An exception is in KwaZulu/Natal, where political violence and credible allegations of vote rigging have devalued the process.

The South African constitution is one of the most liberal in the world. It includes a sweeping bill of rights. In early 2000 the parliament approved legislation outlawing discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, or sex. Parliament has passed more than 500 laws relating to the constitution, revamping the apartheid-era legal system.

In 2000, the cabinet also endorsed a code of ethics that would require the president and national and provincial cabinet ministers to abide by standards of behavior dealing with potential and real conflicts of interest, and to disclose financial assets and gifts valued above a determined amount.

The now-concluded Truth and Reconciliation Commission had sought to heal divisions created by the apartheid regime through a series of open hearings. From 1996 to 1998, the commission received more than 20,000 submissions from victims and nearly 8,000 applications for amnesty from perpetrators. In 1998 the commission released a report on human rights abuses during the apartheid years that largely focused on atrocities by the white-minority government, but which also criticized the ANC. The commission's amnesty committee remained in existence until June 2001 to complete the task of assessing thousands of applications for amnesty from self-confessed perpetrators of human rights abuses.

A constitutional court has been created to enforce the rules of the new democracy. The 11-member court has demonstrated considerable independence. Lower courts generally respect legal provisions regarding arrest and detention, although courts remain understaffed. Efforts to end torture and other abuses by the national police force have been implemented. The constitutionally mandated Human Rights Commission was appointed by parliament to "promote the observance of, respect for, and the protection of fundamental rights."

Free expression in media and public discourse is generally respected. A variety of newspapers and magazines publish reportage, analysis, and opinion sharply critical of the government, political parties, and other societal actors. Concerns about possible infringements on the freedom of the press, however, arose early in 2000, when the Human Rights Commission issued subpoenas to the editors of a number of leading publications to appear before an investigation into racism in the media. After receiving considerable criticism, the commission compromised, issuing "invitations" to the editors instead of legally binding subpoenas. Radio broadcasting has been dramatically liberalized, with scores of small community radio stations now operating. The state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation is today far more independent than during apartheid, but still suffers from self-censorship.

Equal rights for women are guaranteed by the constitution and promoted by the constitutionally mandated Commission on Gender Equality. Laws such as the Maintenance Act and the Domestic Violence Act are designed to protect women in financially

inequitable and abusive relationships, and other areas of social inequity. These laws, though a step in the right direction, nevertheless do not provide the infrastructure for their implementation. Discriminatory practices in customary law remain prevalent. In addition, the past several years have been marked by an increase in violence against women. It is estimated that every 26 seconds a woman is raped in South Africa. Violence against children is also reportedly widespread.

The breakdown of law and order is a serious problem. An estimated four million illegal firearms circulate in South Africa. Nationally, police make arrests in only 45 percent of murder cases and 12 percent of robberies, compared with 70 percent and 30 percent, respectively, in the United States. South Africa's murder rate is on a par with Colombia's, and rising. Firearms account for 30 percent of deaths. In recent years South Africa has ranked first in the world in terms of the number of per capita rapes and armed robberies. Tension has also grown between elements of the nation's Muslim minority and the government. A number of self-styled vigilantes, some with links to criminals, have been charged with a string of violent actions, especially in the Cape Town area.

In response to this problem and to the September 11 attacks in the United States, the government is drafting a terrorism bill. It is not yet clear how the new law would affect the two militant Muslim organizations in South Africa, *Qibla* and the People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD), which were branded "terrorist" groups by the U.S. State Department in 1998. The government has blamed PAGAD for some 190 bombings in Cape Town and accused it of trying to destabilize the country.

The proposed terrorism law has alarmed South Africans who remember the days when groups such as the ANC were persecuted as terrorist organizations and anti-apartheid activists were detained for up to 90 days without trial. Human rights groups are particularly worried about a clause in the new bill that allows for detention without trial for 14 days for interrogation purposes.

Prison conditions are characterized by overcrowding. The prison system has a capacity of 100,000 but has been holding as many as 170,000 individuals. In 2001 the government announced that spending on the integrated justice system, the police, courts, and correctional services would increase by 7.2 percent a year to allow for infrastructure improvements and the hiring of 6,000 new police officers.

Labor rights codified under the 1995 Labor Relations Act (LRA) are respected, and there are more than 250 trade unions. The right to strike can be exercised after reconciliation efforts. The LRA allows employers to hire replacement workers. The ANC government has introduced several labor laws designed to protect the rights of workers, although it has taken other actions that weaken labor union positions in bargaining for job security, wages, and other benefits.

South Africa faces other serious problems. It has one of the fastest-growing AIDS infection rates in the world. About 4.7 million people in South Africa are believed to be HIV-positive, higher than in any other country. Up to 250,000 deaths from AIDS occur each year and the health crisis poses an extremely serious political and social problem.

The quality of schooling is extremely uneven. More than three-quarters of South Africa's people are black, but they share less than a third of the country's total income. The white minority retains most economic power. Corruption is a serious and growing problem. Unemployment stands at about 40 percent among blacks and 4 percent among whites; an estimated 500,000 private sector jobs have been lost since 1994. Half of the population of 41 million lives below the poverty line.

## Spain

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Status: Free  
 Population: 39,800,000  
 PPP: \$18,079  
 Life Expectancy: 78  
 Ethnic Groups: Mediterranean and Nordic stock  
 Capital: Madrid



### Overview:

Spain experienced yet another year of separatist violence carried out by members of the nationalist Basque Fatherland and Liberty party (ETA). Amidst the violence, marked by car bombings and assassinations, moderate Basque nationalists won regional elections in the spring. Fractures between Spain's 17 autonomous zones and the central government in Madrid deepened in 2001; Catalonia's president declared he would not seek reelection because of his frustration over his region's lack of taxation authority. Spain faced an immigration crisis in 2001 with thousands of illegal immigrants arriving by boat from North Africa, straining relations with Morocco. Following the September 11th terrorist strike against the United States, Spain arrested several Arab men suspected of involvement in the attack.

Spain's Basques were the first group known to have occupied the Iberian Peninsula. The country's current language and laws are based on those of the Romans, who arrived in the second century B.C. In the year 711, the Moors invaded from North Africa, ruling for 700 years. The unification of present-day Spain dates to 1512. After a period of colonial influence and wealth, the country declined as a European power and was occupied by France in the early 1800s. Subsequent wars and revolts led to Spain's loss of its colonies in the Americas by that century's end. Francisco Franco began a long period of nationalist rule after the victory of his forces in the 1936-1939 civil war. In spite of the country's official neutrality, Franco followed Axis policies during World War II. Even with its closed economy, the country was transformed into a modern industrial nation in the postwar years. After a transitional period upon Franco's death in 1975, the country emerged as a parliamentary democracy. It joined the European Union (EU) in 1986.

The Spanish government began negotiations with the ETA in 1998, establishing a ceasefire and aiming to end a conflict that has claimed approximately 800 lives since 1970. The two sides were emboldened to negotiate after witnessing the positive results of the signing of the Northern Ireland peace accords. By December 1999, however, the ETA had announced an end to the ceasefire, angered by what it perceived as slow progress in the talks. It subsequently stepped-up its attacks in both frequency and deadliness.

Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar has refused any resumption of negotiations with the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) until it heeds Spanish government demands that it publicly isolate the ETA by backing out of a pact it had forged with Euskal Herritarrok, ETA's apparent political wing. The pact, signed in 1998, was designed to bring the ETA into the political mainstream.

Regional elections in May saw moderate PNV members claim victory in Spain's northern region, despite a concerted campaign by the national government to portray the moderates as complicit in terrorism. Prime Minister Aznar maintains the PNV shares the same secessionist goals as the ETA. However, Euskal Herritarrok lost 7 of its 14 seats in the election, indicating a possible rejection among Basque voters of terrorism committed in their name.

Perhaps in response to the PNV's electoral gains, Basque-separatist violence took on a disturbing pattern through the end of the year. After car bombings and shootings in the winter, resulting in the deaths of local moderate Basque leaders, ETA operatives shifted their attacks to Madrid. In June, a Spanish military general was wounded in a car bomb. In July, a car bomb in Madrid killed a policeman; it was followed by a bombing in Barcelona that injured three people. In August, a 62-year-old grandmother was killed and her 16-month-old grandson seriously injured in San Sebastian when a bomb hidden in a toy exploded. In November, a car bomb in Madrid wounded 100 people, narrowly missing its apparent target, a government official. Immediately after the bombing, police arrested two ETA suspects in Madrid, confiscating explosives, guns, and forged papers. The next day, a Spanish judge was shot and killed outside his home in northern Spain. Police believed the ETA carried out the assassination in response to the arrests.

Catalonia's regional president, Jordi Pujol, announced his intention not to seek an eighth term in the 2003 elections, citing frustration over lack of budgetary control. Catalonia's regional government complains that its inability to collect tax revenues from Catalonia's six million people prevents economic development of the region. Spain's central government has generally been wary of devolving too many powers to the country's 17 autonomous regions, for fear of fragmenting the country.

### Political Rights

#### and Civil Liberties:

Spanish citizens can change their government democratically. Spain has been governed democratically since 1977, after nearly 40 years of dictatorship under Franco and a brief transitional government under Adolfo Suarez. The country is divided into 17 autonomous regions with limited powers, including control over such areas as health, tourism, local police agencies, and instruction in regional languages. The bicameral federal legislature includes a territorially elected senate and a Congress of Deputies elected on the basis of proportional representation and universal suffrage. Although a law stipulates that women must occupy 25 percent of senior party posts and a feminist party has been officially registered since 1981, female participation in government remains minimal.

The Supreme Tribunal heads the judiciary, which includes territorial, provincial, regional, and municipal courts. The post-Franco constitution and 1996 parliamentary legislation established the right to trial by jury.

Freedom of speech and a free press are guaranteed. The press has been particularly influential in setting the political agenda in recent years, with national daily newspapers such as *El Mundo*, *ABC*, and *El Pais* covering corruption and other issues. A new conservative daily, *La Razon*, was launched in 1998. In addition to the state-controlled television station, which has been accused of pro-government bias, there are three independent commercial television stations. Members of the press were among ETA targets for assassination in 2001. A journalist in the Basque region who had been previously threatened by ETA was wounded by a mail bomb in May. The director of *El Diario Vasco*, a newspaper, was assassinated the same month.



Spain lacks antidiscrimination laws, and ethnic minorities, particularly immigrants, continue to report bias and mistreatment. In particular, North African immigrants report physical abuse and discrimination by authorities and are frequently the subjects of attack by Spanish civilians. After receiving large numbers of illegal immigrants in 2000, which led to severe outbreaks of racial and anti-immigrant violence, Spain faced a continuing influx of illegal immigrants in 2001. Scores of illegal immigrants, mostly North Africans, arrived by boat throughout the year, many not surviving the short, yet often treacherous, journey. Some estimates are that 3,000 people had drowned over the last five years while trying to reach Spain. The Spanish interior ministry estimate that 50,000 legal and illegal workers arrive each year, mostly from North Africa.

In February the government passed a new immigration law allowing for the imposition of heavy fines against those employing illegal immigrants. The law also seeks to stem the flow of immigrants entering Spain illegally, and to crack down on smugglers of immigrants.

During one week in August, 1,000 illegal immigrants arrived from Morocco. Several drowned trying to reach Spanish shores. Spain had signed an agreement with Morocco in July to control people smuggling. The continuing arrival of immigrants led to strained relations between the two countries.

In August, the Basque region's interior ministry banned an independence rally as part of a crackdown on separatist violence. In rallies earlier in the summer, young people burned the Spanish flag and honored ETA "martyrs" who had died during failed bombing attempts.

The rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining are constitutionally guaranteed. The country has one of the lowest levels of trade union membership in the EU, and unions have failed to prevent passage of new labor laws facilitating dismissals and encouraging short-term contracting.

In 1978, the constitution disestablished Roman Catholicism as the state religion, but directed Spanish authorities to "keep in mind the religious beliefs of Spanish society." Freedom of worship and the separation of church and state are respected in practice. Spain is home to many cultural and linguistic groups, some—such as the Basques—with strong regional identities.

## Sri Lanka

Polity: Presidential  
democracy

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist-statist

Population: 19,500,000

PPP: \$3,279

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Sinhalese (74 percent), Tamil (18 percent), other (8 percent)

Capital: Colombo

Political Rights: 3

Civil Liberties: 4

Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

Political instability plagued Sri Lanka in 2001, complicating President Chandrika Kumaratunga's efforts to find a solution to an ongoing civil war. After her minority People's Alliance government faced a series of no-confidence motions throughout the year, elections were held on December 5 that returned the opposition to power. A daring rebel attack on the international airport in July left 18 people dead and thousands of tourists stranded, and caused damage estimated at more than \$350 million.

Since independence from Great Britain in 1948, political power in this island nation has alternated between the conservative United National Party (UNP) and the leftist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP). While the country has made impressive gains in literacy, basic health care, and other social needs, its economic development has been stunted and its social fabric tested by the civil war that began in 1983. The conflict initially pitted several Tamil guerrilla groups against the government, which is dominated by the Sinhalese majority. The war came in the context of long-standing Tamil claims of discrimination in education and employment opportunities, as well as a series of anti-Tamil riots predating independence. By 1986, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which called for an independent Tamil homeland in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, had eliminated most rival Tamil guerrilla groups and was in control of much of the northern Jaffna Peninsula.

In a failed effort to disarm the LTTE, the UNP brought in an Indian peacekeeping force between 1987 and 1990. By 1987, the government was also fighting an insurgency in the south by the leftist People's Liberation Front (JVP). The JVP insurgency, and the brutal methods used by the army to quell it in 1990, killed 60,000 people. A previous JVP insurgency in 1971 had killed some 20,000 people.

As the civil war between the government and the LTTE continued, a suspected LTTE suicide bomber assassinated President Ranasinghe Premadasa in 1993. In 1994, Kumaratunga ended nearly two decades of UNP rule by leading an SLFP-dominated People's Alliance (PA) coalition to victory in parliamentary elections, and then won the presidential election against the widow of the UNP's original candidate, whom the LTTE had assassinated.

Early in her term, Kumaratunga tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a peace agreement with the LTTE. Since then, she has pursued a military solution while attempting to devolve power to eight semiautonomous regional councils, including one covering the contested north and east, where Tamils would be in a majority. However, she was

unable to enact the relevant constitutional reforms. The UNP, leftist parties, and the influential Buddhist clergy claim the proposals would lead to an independent Tamil state, while mainstream Tamil-based parties say the amendments do not offer Tamils enough autonomy.

Having made the amendments a centerpiece of her campaign, Kumaratunga won early presidential elections in December 1999. Three days before the vote, separate bombings at PA and UNP rallies killed at least 38 people and slightly wounded Kumaratunga. Although the PA won the most seats in parliamentary elections held in October 2000, it failed to win a majority.

In June 2001, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress (SLMC) withdrew from the governing coalition and joined the opposition, leaving the government without a parliamentary majority. The defection came after SLMC leader Rauf Hakeem was summarily dismissed as minister for trade and shipping. In an effort to avoid a planned no-confidence motion, Kumaratunga suspended parliament for two months on July 10. A vote on constitutional reforms was then delayed until September, when proposals to put the police, judiciary, public service, and elections offices under independent commissions were overwhelmingly adopted by parliament after the UNP gave the minority government its support. However, the reforms did not address the issue of the separatist war in the northeast.

Facing a second no-confidence motion in October, President Kumaratunga dissolved parliament and scheduled snap elections for December 5, just 14 months after the last polls were held. In polling marred by violence and intimidation, during which the army prevented tens of thousands of minority Tamil voters from traveling out of rebel-controlled areas to cast their votes, the UNP and its allies won 114 out of a possible 225 seats. UNP leader Ranil Wickremasinghe became prime minister, although Kumaratunga remains in office as president. In response to a ceasefire offer by the LTTE at the end of December, the new government declared a month-long truce with the rebels, announced that it was lifting an economic embargo imposed on rebel-held territory, and pledged to restart Norwegian-brokered peace talks.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Sri Lankans can change their government through elections based on universal adult suffrage. The 1978 constitution vested strong executive powers in a president who is directly elected for a six-year term and can dissolve parliament. The 225-member parliament is also directly elected for a six-year term, through a mix of single-seat, simple-plurality districts and proportional representation.

While elections are generally free, they are marred by irregularities, violence, and intimidation. The independent Center for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) reported 2,734 incidents of election-related violence during the campaign leading up to the December 5 parliamentary elections. The organization recorded 47 murders and more than 1,500 assaults, threats, and other abuses in the five weeks leading up to the vote, terming it a "clear qualitative and quantitative increase in the incidence of violence" over the previous general election. Their monitoring of polling centers on election day indicated that 779 centers, or 13.41 percent of the total monitored by the CMEV, conducted elections that were "seriously flawed."

While the judiciary is independent, the rule of law is weak. This has allowed security forces to commit abuses with near impunity, often facilitated by sweeping security laws. Since the civil war began in 1983, successive governments have kept all or parts

of Sri Lanka under a near continuous state of emergency. President Chandrika Kumaratunga promulgated new, stricter emergency regulations and amendments in May 2000 and extended them islandwide. Previously, they had mainly been in force in the north and east and in Colombo. The new emergency regulations permitted authorities to restrict press freedom; temporarily banned public meetings and processions; and permitted officials to ban organizations considered to be a threat to national security, public order, or the provision of essential services. Like the measures they replaced, the new regulations allowed authorities to hold suspects in preventive detention for up to one year without charge, with a limited right to judicial review. In addition, they removed certain safeguards relating to detention and extended, to nine months, the maximum period that authorities can hold suspects without filing charges under nonpreventive detention procedures. In June, in order to avoid having to ask parliament to renew the country's legal state of emergency, the government invoked the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Public Security Ordinance to claim emergency-style powers against the Tamil rebels fighting in the north and east of the country.

According to the U.S. State Department, authorities detained more than 2,819 people from January to August 2000 under emergency regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Most were released after several days or within several months. Human rights groups allege that the security laws contain inadequate safeguards for detainees and facilitate long-standing practices of torture and disappearances. Amnesty International said in 1999 that "torture continues to be reported almost (if not) daily" in the context of the civil war, while police officers "regularly torture" criminal suspects and people arrested over land disputes or other private matters.

While there has been little progress in reducing acts of torture, there has been a decline in the number of reported disappearances. After eight bodies, including that of a five-year-old child, were discovered in a mass grave at Mirisuvil late last year, 14 soldiers were arrested in connection with the killings, although they have not yet been brought to trial. Security forces were responsible for at least 761 extrajudicial killings or disappearances between April 1995 and the end of 1999, according to the U.S. State Department. Some observers attribute the subsequent drop in reported disappearances to the 1998 convictions of, and death sentences handed down against, five soldiers in the 1996 murders of a schoolgirl and three others in Jaffna.

Nonwithstanding these convictions, the Kumaratunga government generally did not investigate disappearances that occurred between 1994 and 2001. However, it has established commissions that investigated and reported on earlier disappearances that occurred in the context of the civil war with the LTTE or the JVP insurgency. Between 1987 and 1990 alone, some 20,000 people were reported missing. Currently some 350 cases against 550 police officers and members of the security forces are being prosecuted.

In addition to torture and disappearances, soldiers, police, and state-organized civilian militias have also committed extrajudicial executions and rapes of alleged LTTE supporters, as well as of Tamil civilians. In July, a strike was observed throughout the north and east to protest against a rise in the number of Tamil women raped by the security forces. In response to urban terrorism attacks by the LTTE, authorities continued to detain and interrogate hundreds of Tamils, most of whom were released after a few days or hours. The estimated one million internally displaced persons as well as other Tamil civilians in the north and east faced arbitrary arrest, restrictions on their freedom of movement, and other abuses by soldiers and police.

The LTTE directly controls some territory in the northern Vanni jungle and maintains de facto control over many areas in the Eastern Province. The rebels continued to be responsible for summary executions of civilians who allegedly served as informers or otherwise cooperated with the army; disappearances; arbitrary abductions and detentions; torture; and forcible conscriptions of children. In October, Amnesty International appealed to the LTTE to honor its own pledge and halt the ongoing recruitment of children as combatants. The group raises money through extortion, kidnapping, theft, and the seizure of Muslim homes, land, and businesses, and has used threats and attacks to close schools, courts, and government agencies in its self-styled Tamil homeland. The LTTE's urban terrorism attacks in Sinhalese-majority areas in recent years have killed hundreds of civilians, including several high-ranking government officials.

As part of its war against the LTTE, the military arms the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and several other anti-LTTE Tamil paramilitary groups. In July, Amnesty International noted an upsurge of abuses by PLOTE in the Eastern Province and in the Vavuniya area, including disappearances, torture, arbitrary detentions, and the forced recruitments of child soldiers. During the year, errant shelling and artillery fire killed scores of civilians in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. Overall, the civil war has reportedly killed about 64,000 people, including many civilians.

Much of the information from the war zones is fragmentary because the government has restricted press freedom in general and coverage of the war in particular. New emergency regulations introduced by the government in May 2000 empowered authorities to arrest journalists, ban the sale and distribution of newspapers, shut down printing presses, and exercise prior censorship on all news coverage on broadly drawn "national security" grounds. In another move to strengthen the country's censorship laws, the government banned live broadcasts of all television and radio programs in May. In July, the government warned local publications that printing or broadcasting "false information" about the forthcoming referendum on the constitution could lead to prosecution. However, in a positive step, the government decided at the end of May to lift the censorship of military-related news, and in July allowed journalists to enter the war zone.

In addition to placing broad legal restrictions on the press, the Kumaratunga administration has filed criminal defamation charges against several editors, including Victor Ivan, the editor of the *Ravaya* newspaper. In June, Dharmaratnam Sivaram, the editor of *TamilNet*, a well-known Internet news site that reports on human rights violations, was accused by a state-run newspaper of being a spy for the LTTE. At the end of December, Sivaram and a colleague were beaten and stabbed by a group of unknown assailants in a newspaper office in Batticaloa. Security forces occasionally harass and assault journalists, particularly Tamils. While private newspapers, magazines, radio, and television stations criticize officials and government policies, journalists do practice some self-censorship. The government controls the largest newspaper chain, two major television stations, and a radio station; and political coverage in the state-owned media favors the ruling party. Unidentified gunmen killed three journalists in 1999 and a freelance reporter for the BBC in October 2000.

Women are underrepresented in politics and the civil service. Female employees in the private sector face some sexual harassment as well as discrimination in salary and promotion opportunities. Rape and domestic violence against women remain serious problems, and authorities weakly enforce existing laws.

Freedom of assembly is generally respected, although both main political parties

occasionally disrupt each other's rallies and political events. Restrictions on public gatherings were vigorously enforced on May 10, when police used tear gas to disperse around 150 Sinhalese protestors gathered in Colombo. Police also banned an opposition rally held in order to protest Kumaratunga's suspension of parliament. When thousands of activists defied the ban, two people were killed and more than 30 were seriously wounded in the ensuing violence. In July, after students at Jaffna University boycotted classes to protest the arrest of one of their leaders, authorities closed the entire university in a bid to end protests against the security forces.

Religious freedom is respected, although the constitution gives special status to Buddhism and there is some discrimination and occasional violence against religious minorities. Some of the worst communal violence in recent years occurred in October 2000, when Sinhalese mobs killed 26 Tamil detainees at a government-run rehabilitation center. Following Tamil protests against the massacre, clashes between Sinhalese and Tamils in several central hill districts killed four people. Ethnic unrest within the Muslim minority erupted in early May. A harsh crackdown by police on a Muslim protest in Mawanella, 12.5 miles west of Kandy, left one man dead and 20 others injured and sparked violent protests in Muslim areas in the already troubled east of the country. The LTTE also discriminates against Muslims and has attacked Buddhist sites in the past.

Except in war-affected areas, human rights and social welfare nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) generally operate freely. Trade unions are independent and engage in collective bargaining. Except for civil servants, most workers can hold strikes. However, under the 1989 Essential Services Act, the president can declare a strike in any industry illegal. President Kumaratunga has used the act to end several strikes. Employers on tea plantations routinely violate the rights of the mainly Tamil workforce. Government surveys suggest more than 16,000 children between the ages of 10 and 14 work full-time. A 1998 United Nations study estimated that there are 30,000 child prostitutes in coastal resort areas, although the government and NGOs offer lower figures.

## Sudan

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary (military-dominated)  
 Political Rights: 7  
 Civil Liberties: 7  
 Status: Not Free

Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 31,800,000

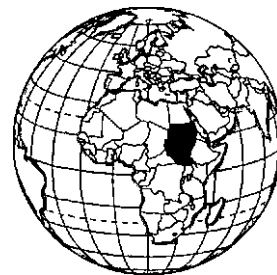
PPP: \$664

Life Expectancy: 56

Ethnic Groups: Black (52 percent), Arab (39 percent),

Beja (6 percent), other (3 percent)

Capital: Khartoum



### Overview:

Having effectively marginalized Islamic ideologue and former regime strongman Hassan al-Turabi, President Omar al-Bashir further consolidated his power during 2001 and continued to

emerge from diplomatic isolation. On the latter front, Al Bashir took the opportunity following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States to pledge cooperation in combating terrorism, and therefore to lay the foundation for improved relations with Washington. U.S.-Sudanese relations did improve somewhat during the year despite a lack of concrete evidence that Sudan has stopped harboring terrorists or their supporters.

The Sudanese civil war moved into its nineteenth year with no end in sight despite African- and Arab-sponsored peace initiatives. Such initiatives have taken on greater urgency since the 1999 inauguration of a Sudanese oil pipeline, which now finances Khartoum's war efforts. The government has intensified fighting around oil fields in an apparently new policy aimed at driving out or exterminating inhabitants who might pose a threat to its control of the fields.

Africa's largest country has been embroiled in civil wars for 35 of its 45 years as an independent state. It achieved independence in 1956 after nearly 80 years of British rule. The Anyanya movement, representing mainly Christian and animist black Africans in southern Sudan, battled Arab Muslim government forces from 1956 to 1972. The south gained extensive autonomy under a 1972 accord, and for the next decade, an uneasy peace prevailed. In 1983, General Jafar Numeiri, who had toppled an elected government in 1969, restricted southern autonomy and imposed *Sharia* (Islamic law). Opposition led again to civil war, and Numeiri was overthrown in 1985. Civilian rule was restored in 1986 with an election that resulted in a government led by Sadiq al-Mahdi of the moderate Islamic Ummah Party, but war continued. Lieutenant General Omar al-Bashir ousted al-Mahdi in a 1989 coup, and the latter spent seven years in prison or under house arrest before fleeing to Eritrea. Until 1999, al-Bashir ruled through a military-civilian regime backed by senior Muslim clerics including al-Turabi, who wielded considerable power as the ruling National Congress (NC) party leader and speaker of the 400-member national assembly.

Tensions between al-Bashir and al-Turabi came to a head in December 1999. On the eve of a parliamentary vote on a plan by al-Turabi to curb the president's power, al-Bashir dissolved parliament and declared a state of emergency. He introduced a law allowing the formation of political parties, fired al-Turabi as NC head, replaced the cabinet with his own supporters, and held deeply flawed presidential and parliamentary elections, which the NC won overwhelmingly, in December 2000. Al-Turabi formed his own party, the Popular National Congress (PNC), in June 2000, but was prohibited from participating in politics. In January 2001, the Ummah Party refused to join al-Bashir's new government despite the president's invitation, declaring that it refused to support totalitarianism. Al-Bashir renewed the state of emergency for another 12 months in January.

Al-Turabi and some 20 of his supporters were arrested in February 2001 after he called for a national uprising against the government and signed a memorandum of understanding in Geneva with the southern-based rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Al-Turabi and four aides were charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government, and al-Turabi was placed under house arrest in May. He was released in October and the charges were dropped. No explanation was given, but al-Bashir promised to open up politics and promote democracy.

The current civil war broadly pits northern Arab Muslims against southern-based black African animists and Christians. Some pro-democracy northerners, however, have allied themselves with the SPLA-led southern rebels to form the National Democratic

Alliance (NDA), while northern rebels of the Sudan Allied Forces have staged attacks in northeastern Sudan. Some southern groups have signed peace pacts with the government, and there is fighting among rival southern militias. A convoluted mix of historical, religious, ethnic, and cultural tensions makes peace elusive, while competition for economic resources fuels the conflict.

The government continued to bomb civilian as well as military targets, and to arm tribal militias as proxy fighting forces. International humanitarian relief efforts are hampered by ceasefire violations and are sometimes deliberately targeted by parties to the conflict. A Danish pilot was killed in May when the Red Cross plane he was flying came under fire over southern Sudan. It was unclear who was responsible. In March, pro-government militia abducted four aid workers but released them a week later. Several nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) reported intensified fighting and increasing numbers of displaced persons in oil-rich areas, and assert that oil interests are fueling an ethnic cleansing campaign that has uprooted more than 36,000 people.

A joint Libyan-Egyptian peace initiative calls for democracy within a unified state based on recognition of Sudan's ethnic and religious diversity. All major parties to the conflict have nominally approved the initiative, though many have expressed reservations, particularly about the lack of a provision for southern self-determination. Peace talks under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have focused on southern self-determination, borders, and the application of Sharia in the south. However, prospects for a settlement, or even for serious multilateral negotiations, appear dim; it seems unlikely that the government will halt the war until it has complete control of southern oil fields.

Al-Bashir has begun to lift Sudan out of its international isolation by sidelining al-Turabi, who is seen as the force behind Sudan's efforts to export Islamic extremism. Although new vice president Ali Osman Mohammed Taha, who replaced al-Turabi as Islamic ideologue, maintains a firm commitment to Sudan as an Islamic state and its jihad against non-Muslims, al-Bashir has managed to repair relations with several nations, including Iran, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia, and even the United States. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, al-Bashir condemned terrorism, issued a statement rejecting violence, and offered to cooperate in combating terrorism. The U.S. State Department reported that Sudanese officials had arrested about 30 associates of Saudi-born terrorist-in-exile Osama bin Laden, who resided in Sudan for five years in the 1990s. Though the report was unconfirmed by Khartoum, the United States abstained from a late-September UN Security Council vote, clearing the way for the UN to lift sanctions on Sudan, imposed in 1996 after suspects in an assassination attempt against Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak fled to Sudan. However, the United States renewed its own sanctions for a year in November, citing human rights abuses and Sudan's reputation for terrorism.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Sudanese cannot change their government democratically. December 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections cannot credibly be said to have reflected the will of the people. The major opposition parties, which are believed to have the support of most Sudanese, boycotted in protest of what they called an attempt by a totalitarian regime to impart the appearance of fairness. The European Union declined an invitation to monitor the polls to avoid bestowing legitimacy on the outcome. Omar al-Bashir, running against



former president Jafar Numeiri and three relative unknowns, won 86 percent of the vote. NC candidates stood uncontested for nearly a third of parliamentary seats, and more than 100 seats are reserved for presidential appointees. Voting did not take place in some 17 rebel-held constituencies, and government claims of 66 percent voter turnout in some states were denounced as fictitious.

Serious human rights abuses by nearly every faction involved in the civil war have been reported. Secret police operate "ghost houses," or detention and torture centers, in several cities. Government armed forces routinely raid villages, burn homes, kill men, and abduct women and children to be used as slaves in the north. Relief agencies have liberated thousands of slaves by purchasing them from captors in the north and returning them to the south. The government continued to bomb civilian installations and relief sites. International aid workers have been abducted and killed.

Although there has been no organized effort to compile casualty statistics in southern Sudan since 1994, the total number of people killed by war, famine, and disease is believed to exceed two million. Distribution of food and medical relief is hampered by fighting and by the government's deliberate blockage of aid shipments. The World Health Organization reported a case of polio in southern Sudan in July and expressed concern that many more people might be infected. In November, the government called a four-week ceasefire to allow for vaccinations and aid drops. More than four million people are internally displaced, and that number is growing as the government fights to clear black Africans from oil fields or potential oil drilling sites. The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Sudan reported in July 2001 that the human rights situation in the country was worse than one year ago and was concerned that oil is fueling the government's war against civilians.

Soldiers continue to carry out a policy of "depopulating" the Nuba Mountains, a 30,000-square-mile area in the heart of Sudan. The black Africans native to the Nuba region numbered more than one million in 1985, and have been reduced to some 300,000 today. The government frequently bombs the region and enforces a blockade that prevents food, fuel, clothing, and medicine from entering.

The judiciary is not independent. The chief justice of the supreme court, who presides over the entire judiciary, is government appointed. Regular courts provide some due process safeguards, but special security and military courts, used to punish political opponents of the government, do not. Criminal law is based on Sharia and provides for flogging, amputation, crucifixion, and execution. Ten southern, predominantly non-Muslim, states are officially exempt from Sharia, although criminal law allows for its application in the future if the state assemblies choose to implement it. Arbitrary arrest, detention, and torture are widespread, and security forces act with impunity. Prison conditions do not meet international standards.

Six NDA leaders arrested in December 2000 went on trial in March 2001 for plotting an uprising with a U.S. diplomat. The diplomat was expelled shortly after meeting with the defendants. President al-Bashir announced in October that the case would be dropped, but gave no explanation. In November, Ahmed al-Mirghani, a leading opposition figure, returned to Sudan from 12 years of exile in Egypt. Al-Bashir welcomed the former head of the State Council, which represented political parties before al-Bashir's coup, in a move aimed at demonstrating the government's commitment to reconciliation.

Press freedom has improved since the government eased restrictions in 1997, but journalists practice self-censorship to avoid harassment, arrest, and the closure of their publications. There are reportedly nine daily newspapers and a wide variety of Arabic-

and English-language publications. All of these are subject to censorship. Penalties apply to journalists who allegedly harm the nation or economy or who violate national security. A 1999 law imposes Penalties for "professional errors." The editor of a leftist paper was jailed in January 2001 after an article alleging financial mismanagement by courts. Two journalists were jailed in February for failing to pay fines incurred for Libeling the local government in Khartoum. In February, al-Turabi's PNC began printing the first opposition paper to appear in Sudan for more than a decade, but the paper was banned later that month. A BBC correspondent was arrested in April when he went to cover an Easter event in Khartoum. He was released without charge after a week. The English-language *Khartoum Monitor* was suspended temporarily in September because of "inflammatory" articles. Twenty-two journalists from *al Watan* were arrested in November when they protested an official ban on a corruption story. The president controls the National Press and Publications Council, which may impose suspensions, bans, or fines at will.

Emergency law severely restricts freedom of assembly and association. Riot police used tear gas and batons to break up a demonstration in Khartoum by thousands of students protesting an increase in bus fares. PNC members have been arrested and detained at random during the year, including Hassan al-Turabi, who spent eight months of 2001 detained for conspiracy to overthrow the government.

Islam is the state religion, and the constitution claims Sharia as the source of its legislation. At least 75 percent of Sudanese are Muslim, though most southern Sudanese adhere to traditional indigenous beliefs or Christianity. The overwhelming majority of those displaced or killed by war and famine in Sudan have been non-Muslims, and many starve because of a policy under which food is withheld pending conversion to Islam. Officials have described their campaign against non-Muslims as a holy war. Under the 1994 Societies Registration Act, religious groups must register in order to gather legally. Registration is reportedly difficult to obtain. The government denies permission to build churches and destroys Christian schools, centers, and churches. Catholic priests face random detention and interrogation by police. Fifty-three Christians protesting a government order to change the venue of an Easter ceremony were flogged in April, and 47 of them were sentenced to 20-day jail terms. Amnesty International reported that many people were injured when police fired bullets at the protesters.

Women face discrimination in family matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, which are governed by Sharia. Public-order police frequently harass women and monitor their dress for adherence to government standards of modesty. Human Rights Watch reported in July 2001 that three young women were beaten and verbally abused by police in such a case. Female genital mutilation occurs despite legal prohibition, and rape is reportedly routine in war zones. President al-Bashir announced in January 2001 that Sudan would not ratify the international Convention on Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women because it "contradicted Sudanese values and traditions." Children are used as soldiers by government and opposition forces in the civil war. The SPLA, which reportedly employs some 13,000 children, promised to demobilize at least 10,000 by the end of 2002.

There are no independent trade unions. The Sudan Workers Trade Unions Federation is the main labor organization, with about 800,000 members. Local union elections are rigged to ensure the election of government-approved candidates. A lack of labor legislation limits the freedom of workers to organize or bargain collectively.

## Suriname

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 400,000  
 PPP: \$4,178  
 Life Expectancy: 71  
 Ethnic Groups: East Indian (37 percent), Creole (31 percent), Javanese (15 percent), other (17 percent)  
 Capital: Paramaribo

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

The May 2001 death of a labor leader, who was to be the star witness in a trial against former Suriname dictator Desi Bouterse and others accused of 15 political killings, initially appeared to rob the prosecution of key testimony needed to convict the narcotics-running one-time strongman. However, the government vowed that testimony given by the witness during a preliminary hearing would be submitted in the trial by the judge who questioned him, a move defense lawyers said they would oppose claiming they will have been denied the right to cross-examine the witness. The loss of the lone survivor of the December 8, 1982, massacre of 16 Bouterse opponents came amidst a renewed push by the Dutch to bring the retired army colonel to account for the murders and for his role in the 1982 coup. The once all-powerful dictator had already been tried and convicted by a Dutch court in absentia on charges of having introduced more than two tons of cocaine into the Netherlands between 1989 and 1997.

The Republic of Suriname achieved independence from the Netherlands in 1975, which had acquired it as a result of the Treaty of Breda with the British in 1667. Five years after independence, a military coup, which brought Bouterse to power as the head of a regime that brutally suppressed civic and political opposition, initiated a decade of military intervention in politics. In 1987, Bouterse permitted elections under a constitution providing for the directly elected, 51-seat National Assembly, which serves a five-year term and selects the state president. If the National Assembly is unable to select a president with the required two-thirds vote, a Peoples' Assembly, composed of parliament and regional and local officials, chooses the president. The New Front for Democracy and Development, a three-party coalition, handily won the 1987 elections. The military-organized National Democratic Party (NDP) won just three seats.

In 1990, the army ousted President Ramsewak Shankar, and Bouterse again took power. International pressure led to new elections in 1991. The New Front, a coalition of mainly East Indian, Creole, and Javanese parties, won a majority, although the NDP increased its share to 12. The National Assembly selected the Front's candidate, Ronald Venetiaan, as president.

Bouterse quit the army in 1992 in order to lead the NDP. The Venetiaan government took some constitutional steps to curb military influence and, in late 1995 and early 1996, purged several high-ranking pro-Bouterse military officials. The

government's economic structural adjustment program led to social and labor unrest amidst an inflationary spiral and the collapse of the Surinamese currency.

During the campaign for the May 23, 1996, parliamentary elections, the NDP pledged to reverse many of the economic programs of the Venetiaan government. The four-party New Front lost seats, winning only 24, and entered into a coalition with the smaller Central Bloc, consisting of two opposition groups. The alliance proved insufficient to gain the necessary two-thirds parliamentary majority needed to return Venetiaan to office.

Bouterse's NDP, with 16 seats, joined with the Javanese-based Party of National Unity and Solidarity and dissident members of the East Indian-based United Reform Party to press for the convening in September of the constitutionally mandated 869-member People's Assembly. The deadlock was broken when Jules Wijdenbosch, a former deputy party leader under Bouterse, was elected president.

As president, Wijdenbosch steered a more independent course from Bouterse than many expected, although official protection allowed Bouterse to remain one step ahead of Dutch police as the Europeans sought his arrest. Efforts by his government to promote investment and prune public spending resulted in clashes with organized labor. At the same time, low prices for Suriname's exports and the manipulation of the currency by local drug lords created both economic chaos and disturbances on the street. In late 1998, the government oversaw the takeover of Suriname's traditionally independent high court. In May 1999, massive antigovernment protests and a continuing economic crisis forced Wijdenbosch to sack his entire 15-person cabinet. Three weeks later he announced that elections would take place a year early.

In the May 25, 2000, national elections, Venetiaan's center-right New Front, running on promises to fight corruption and speed economic development, won a resounding victory, garnering a majority of 51 National Assembly seats—three times as many as its closest rival. The legacy left by the Wijdenbosch government was daunting: a near empty treasury, 20 percent unemployment, and 100 percent inflation. The new government promised to investigate all human rights violations that had occurred in the previous two decades, including the 1982 executions of 15 of the Bouterse regime's foremost opponents. Bouterse responded by saying that if he were brought up on charges he would release secrets—"all dirty"—about leaders of the new government that he apparently had collected in the 1980s as the country's intelligence chief. In late 2000, the self-proclaimed "Jungle Man" Bouterse denied reports that he was planning a coup attempt and training an army of Amerindians deep inside the country's interior.

The death of labor leader Fred Derby, who headed the Suriname Labor Party (SPA), which forms part of Venetiaan's coalition, not only threatened to deprive the courts of an essential witness in the country's most important human rights case, but also raised questions about a possible return of massive labor unrest. The February 2001 release of 100 prisoners from the Paramaribo prison, which authorities said was done to accommodate overcrowded conditions there, created worries about rising crime in what was still one of the safest countries in the Western Hemisphere.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Suriname can change their government democratically. Political parties largely reflect the cleavages in Suriname's ethnically complex society, a factor contributing to parliamentary gridlock and, in the past, to dictator Desi Bouterse's popularity. A record 23 parties competed in the 2000 elections. Civic institutions remain weak.

The judiciary is weak, is susceptible to political influence, and suffers from ineffectiveness and a huge backlog of cases. The civilian police abuse detainees, particularly during arrests; guards mistreat prisoners; and the prisons are dangerously overcrowded.

Proximity to Colombia, connivance on the part of senior political leaders, a small number of often corrupt police patrolling vast areas, and a pool of willing recruits for criminal enterprises has meant that Suriname's drug trade continued to flourish, even after Bouterse left power. Active-duty and former army officers are involved in Suriname's two largest groups trafficking in illegal drugs. Drug-money laundering is largely conducted through representatives in the Hindu business community and frequently passes through to the Netherlands, where authorities have found it difficult to combat the transactions conducted through myriad small, tightly knit family enterprises. Bouterse himself tried to hide his hand in the drug trade and is known to use lumber, canning, shipping, and import-export firms to conduct his illegal business.

In 2000, there was an increase in narcotics-related attacks on police precincts and military posts in the eastern city of Moengo. In 2001, the locality of Redi Doti, in the central part of the country, was reported to be the site of numerous landings of drug planes at local airstrips. In February, agents seized a record 130,000 pills of the synthetic drug Ecstasy at the port in Paramaribo, through which the illegal substance is usually transshipped from the Netherlands to the United States. In recent years cooperation between the Surinamese authorities and international law enforcement organizations has improved.

In response to government plans to call Bouterse into account for the 1982 massacre—a long-standing demand of relatives of those murdered—Bouterse's allies released a letter from the former wife of the justice minister in which she tended to support claims that the minister was a bigamist, a spousal abuser, and a pedophile. In response, Bouterse, who says he has more derogatory information about other officials in his files, was sued for defamation.

The government generally respects freedom of expression. Radio is both public and private. A number of small commercial radio stations compete with the government-owned radio and television broadcasting system. State broadcast media generally offer pluralistic viewpoints.

Both indigenous and tribal peoples, the latter called Maroons—the descendants of escaped African slaves who formed autonomous communities in the rain forest in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—reside within Suriname's borders. Indigenous people number 12,000 to 15,000 people (four percent of the population); Maroons number 40,000 to 50,000. Their rights to their lands and resources, to cultural integrity, and to the autonomous administration of their affairs are not recognized in Surinamese law. Despite numerous attempts and agreements between the state and the indigenous peoples and Maroons, all of which have been disregarded, this situation has not changed. A breakdown in the rule of law over the past five years, disputes between the executive and judiciary, and an absence of adequate domestic guarantees have forced the Maroons to seek protection of their rights in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Indigenous and Maroon land and resource rights are repeatedly violated: in particular, the state has granted large areas of lands as concessions to logging and mining interests. These concessions were made without any form of consultation with affected

village authorities and without any attempt to safeguard subsistence and other rights. Approximately 30,000 small-scale Brazilian gold miners, licensed by the state, and numerous local miners are working on indigenous and Maroon lands, causing severe environmental degradation, health epidemics (malaria and sexually transmitted diseases), and social problems. The state has made no attempt to mitigate the impact of local and multinational operators on the environment, and in general Suriname lacks environmental laws and monitoring capacity. Discrimination against indigenous peoples and Maroons is widespread in law and practice and is especially pronounced in the provision of education and health services.

Constitutional guarantees of gender equality are not enforced, and the Asian Marriage Act allows parents to arrange marriages for their children without their consent. Human rights organizations function relatively freely. Several organizations specifically address violence against women, reports of the trafficking of Brazilian women for prostitution, and related issues.

Workers can join independent trade unions, and the labor movement is active in politics. Collective bargaining is legal and conducted fairly widely. Civil servants have no legal right to strike.

## Swaziland

Polity: Traditional  
monarchy

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 1,100,000

PPP: \$3,987

Life Expectancy: 40

Ethnic Groups: African (97 percent), European (3 percent)

Capital: Mbabane

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 5

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Swaziland made no progress in 2001 on political reform, despite completion of work by the Constitutional Review Commission in the previous year. Political activists had little faith that the commission, which was formed in 1996 and largely composed of traditional chiefs or members of the royal family, would make recommendations that would lead to genuine reform. Political change has effectively been ruled out beyond the introduction of a bill of rights. The commission recommended retaining the country's existing power structure, meaning that party politics will remain banned, and the monarchy will continue to wield absolute power.

Swaziland has been ruled by decree since 1973, when King Sobhuza II repealed the 1968 constitution and declared himself absolute monarch. Swaziland, Africa's last remaining absolute monarchy, is the only southern African country without an elected government. King Mswati III is the latest monarch of the Dlamini dynasty, under which the Swazi kingdom expanded and contracted in conflicts with neighboring groups. Britain declared the kingdom a protectorate to prevent Boer expansion in the 1880s and assumed administrative power in 1903. In 1968, Swaziland regained its independence,

and an elected parliament was added to the traditional kingship and chieftaincies. Sobhuza n, Mswati's predecessor, who died in 1983, ended the multiparty system in favor of the *tinkhundla* (local council) system in 1973.

King Mswati III in August 2001 revoked a royal decree that stripped the courts of their independence and muzzled the press. The decree would have allowed him to ban newspapers, jail his critics, and overturn court rulings. It introduced a state of emergency, gave the justice minister the power to appoint and fire judges at will, and prohibited newspapers from challenging publishing bans. The decree was widely condemned by Swaziland's trade unions and pro-democracy groups, as well as the powerful Congress of South African Trade Unions. The decree was revoked after the United States threatened to withdraw preferential trade benefits enjoyed by Swaziland.

Most Swazis remain engaged in subsistence agriculture. A drop in the world price of gold has hurt the economy, as many Swazi families depend on income from men working in South African mines.

### Political Rights

#### and Civil Liberties:

Swazis are barred from exercising their right to elect their representatives or to change their government freely. All of Swaziland's citizens are subjects of an absolute monarch. King Mswati III. Royal decrees carry the full force of law. Voting in the October 1998 legislative elections was marked by very low turnout and was neither open nor fair. It was based on the Swazi *tinkhundla* system of closely controlled nominations and voting that seek to legitimize the rule of King Mswati III and his Dlamini clan. Security forces arrested and briefly detained labor and other pro-democracy leaders before the elections and after a series of bomb blasts. The 55 elected members of the national assembly were government-approved and were joined by 10 royal appointees. The king also appoints 20 members of the senate, with the remaining 10 selected by the national assembly.

The dual-system judiciary, which is based on Western and traditional law, is generally independent in most civil cases, although the royal family and the government can influence the courts. In 1998, the king issued an administrative order that strengthened the judicial powers of traditional chiefs appointed by the king. Prison conditions have improved slightly.

There are regular reports of police brutality, including torture and beating. Security forces generally operate with impunity. Freedom of expression is seriously restricted, especially regarding political issues or matters concerning the royal family. An opposition leader, Mariko Masuku, of the People's United Democratic Movement, was detained in October 2001 after defying bail conditions. Legislation bans publication of any criticism of the monarchy. Self-censorship is widespread. Broadcast and print media from South Africa are received in the country. There is one independent radio station, but it broadcasts religious programming.

A court overturned a government ban in 2001 on the independent newspaper *The Guardian* and the monthly *Nation* magazine. Police raided the offices of *The Nation* and confiscated copies of the magazine after a court said it could resume publishing. Eighty journalists of the *Swaziland Observer* sued the paper for unfair dismissal in 2001. It had been closed in 2000 after reporters were accused of meddling in the private affairs of the royal family. The newspaper was later reopened.

Freedom of religion is respected, although there are no formal constitutional pro-

visions protecting the practice. The government restricts freedoms of assembly and association. A 1973 decree prohibits meetings of a political nature without police consent.

The legal code provides some protection against sexual harassment, but in general Swazi women encounter discrimination in both formal and customary law. Employment regulations requiring equal pay for equal work are obeyed unevenly. Married women are considered minors, requiring spousal permission to enter into almost any form of economic activity, and they are allowed only limited inheritance rights. Violence against women is common, despite traditional strictures against it.

The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, the country's largest labor organization, has been a leader in demands for democratization. Unions are able to operate independently under the Industrial Relations Act, which allows workers in all elements of the economy, including the public sector, to join unions. Wage agreements are often reached by collective bargaining, and 80 percent of the private workforce is unionized. Swaziland's industrial court in May 2001 ordered the government and police to stop interfering with meetings called by Swaziland's trade unions.

## Sweden

**Polity:** Parliamentary democracy

**Economy:** Mixed capitalist

**Population:** 8,900,000

**PPP:** \$22,636

**Life Expectancy:** 80

**Ethnic Groups:** Swedish (89 percent), Finnish (2 percent), other, including Lapp [Saami] (9 percent)

**Capital:** Stockholm

**Political Rights:** 1

**Civil Liberties:** 1

**Status:** Free



### Overview:

Since 1998 Prime Minister Goran Persson has led a left-of-center coalition including his Social Democratic Party (SDP), the formerly Communist Left Party, and the Green Party.

Sweden's historical position of neutrality became the topic of parliamentary debate after the terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001. Debate over whether the country should join the European Monetary Union (EMU) continued from years past. Several people were sentenced to prison terms after violent anti-globalization riots during a summit meeting.

Sweden is a constitutional monarchy and a multiparty parliamentary democracy. After monarchical alliances with Finland, Denmark, and Norway between the eleventh and nineteenth centuries, Sweden emerged as a modern democracy.

Sweden has remained nonaligned and neutral since World War I. However, in November 2000, Prime Minister Persson announced his intention to end Sweden's policy of military neutrality, declaring the stance irrelevant in the post-Cold War era. The announcement raised some concern among political opponents that Sweden would have to form alliances in wartime, as well as identify potential enemies. While continuing to



rule out NATO membership, Persson insisted that non-neutrality would place Sweden in a better position to address post-Cold War issues such as disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and European stability. Instability in the Balkans during the 1990s led to an increase of immigrants to Sweden from Yugoslavia, sparking intolerance and nationalist and extremist violence. Sweden is an active member of NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

Debate over Sweden's traditional neutral stance became more pronounced in the latter part of 2001. After the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the ruling Social Democrats began speaking openly of breaking from neutrality in the event of a major terror attack close to Sweden. Other members of the governing coalition, including the Greens, declared their wish for Sweden to remain neutral.

In July, several people were sentenced to prison terms for their role one month earlier in anti-globalization riots during a European Union summit in Gothenburg. Swedish police officers, overwhelmed by the violent protestors, opened fire with live ammunition; 90 people were hurt during the riots.

Sweden is faced with the difficult decision of whether to join the EMU. While the country joined the European Union in 1995, it did so grudgingly. The SDP's two coalition partners oppose joining the EMU and are unenthusiastic about Sweden's European Union membership. The SDP has promised a referendum on whether to join the EMU.

In September the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rated the Swedish economy as the world's most knowledge based. The economy, however, suffered setbacks during the year, especially in the telecommunications sector. Ericsson, a major mobile-phone provider, instituted massive layoffs. The company accounts for eight percent of Sweden's annual gross domestic product.

Sweden administers one of the world's most extensive welfare systems. The Persson government has been assailed for maintaining high taxes, which, critics say, make Sweden less competitive and encourages a brain drain of young, educated professionals.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Swedes can change their government democratically. The 310-member, unicameral *Riksdag* (parliament) is elected every four years through universal suffrage. To ensure absolute proportionality for all parties that secure more than four percent of the vote, an additional 39 representatives are selected from a national pool of candidates. Single-party majority governments are rare.

Citizens abroad are entitled to vote by absentee ballot in national elections, and non-nationals in residence for three years may vote in local elections. The Saami (Lapp) community elects its own local parliament with significant powers over education and culture. The Saami parliament serves as an advisory body to the government. The role of King Carl Gustaf XVI, who was crowned in 1973, is ceremonial. The prime minister is appointed by the speaker of the house and confirmed by the *Riksdag*.

The media are independent. Most newspapers and periodicals are privately owned. The government subsidizes daily newspapers regardless of their political affiliation. The ethnic press is entitled to the same kind of subsidies as the Swedish press. The Swedish Broadcasting Corporation and the Swedish Television Company broadcast weekly radio and television programs in several immigrant languages. In recent years, new satellite- and ground-based commercial television channels and radio stations ended the

government monopoly on broadcasting. Internet penetration rates in Sweden are among the highest in the world; more than half the population is on-line.

Citizens may freely express their ideas and criticize their government. The government is empowered to prevent publication of information related to national security. A quasi-government body censors extremely graphic violence from films, videos, and television programs.

International human rights groups have criticized Sweden for its immigration policies, which have severely limited the number of refugees admitted annually. Stricter asylum criteria were adopted in the 1990s after decades of relatively relaxed rules. Nordic immigrants may become citizens after two years, while others must wait a minimum of five years. Critics charge that the country does not systematically provide asylum seekers with adequate legal counsel or access to an appeals process. The jobless rate among non-Nordic immigrants is close to 20 percent, whereas among the general population it is about 6 percent. Immigrants, half of whom are from other Nordic countries, make up about 10 percent of the Swedish population. In May reports surfaced that the national immigration board used devious methods to deport asylum seekers. In at least one case, the board summoned an asylum seeker to discuss a supposed job offer to a man from the Balkans. Upon his arrival, he was seized by police and deported.

Dozens of violent incidents with anti-immigrant or racist overtones are reported annually, and the government supports volunteer groups that oppose racism. The Nationalsocialistisk Front, the leading neo-Nazi group in Sweden, has an estimated 1,500 members and was recently permitted to register as a political party.

Although the country's 17,000 Saami enjoy some political autonomy, Sweden was the last Nordic country to approve a parliament for its Lappic population.

Religious freedom is constitutionally guaranteed. Approximately 85 percent of the population is Lutheran. On January 1, 2000, Sweden officially disestablished the Church of Sweden from the state, following the norm in Western Europe to sever ties between the state and an official religion. The move effectively reduced the once-substantial subsidies to the church and redirected them to other religious institutions, including those associated with Catholics, Muslims, and Jews. The growing numbers of non-Lutherans in Sweden prompted the move. There are approximately 200,000 Muslims, 160,000 Roman Catholics, 100,000 Orthodox Christians, and 16,000 Jews in Sweden.

Freedom of assembly and association is guaranteed, as are the rights to strike and participate in unions. Strong and well-organized trade union federations represent 90 percent of the labor force. Despite historical ties with the SDP, the labor movement has become increasingly independent.

The country's independent judiciary includes 6 courts of appeal, 100 district courts, a supreme court, and a parallel system of administrative courts.

Women constitute approximately 45 percent of the labor force, but their wage levels lag behind those of men. Approximately 43 percent of the members of parliament are women, the highest proportion in the world.

# Switzerland

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy (federal)  
Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 7,200,000  
PPP: \$27,171  
Life Expectancy: 80

Political Rights: 1  
Civil Liberties: 1  
Status: Free



Ethnic Groups: German (65 percent), French (18 percent),  
Italian (10 percent), Romansch (1 percent), other (6 percent)  
Capital: Bern

## Overview:

A bad year for Switzerland, 2001 began with foreign criticism of its banking system, which was followed by a gunman's murderous rampage in a public building, controversial public referenda, the bankruptcy of its national airline, and a catastrophic, fatal tunnel fire. Combined, the events served to shake Switzerland's normally tranquil democratic foundations.

With the exception of a brief period of centralized power under Napoleonic rule, Switzerland has remained a confederation of local communities as established in the Pact of 1291. Most responsibility for public affairs rests at the local and cantonal levels. The 1815 Congress of Vienna formalized the country's borders and recognized its perpetual neutrality. Switzerland is often cited as a rare example of peaceful coexistence in a multiethnic state. The republic is divided into 20 cantons and 6 half-cantons and includes German, French, Italian, and Romansch communities.

In October 1999, the right-wing Swiss People's Party, with its popular and combative member, Christoph Blocher, registered dramatic gains in national elections. Running on an anti-immigration and anti-European Union (EU) platform, the party went on to become the second largest in parliament, earning 44 seats against the 51 held by the ruling Social Democrats.

In 2000, international pressure forced Switzerland to make its notoriously opaque banking system less secretive. Investigations were initiated against key Russian businesspeople suspected of money laundering. Public assets deposited into Swiss accounts by Nigeria, Pakistan, and other countries were also investigated. However, a French parliamentary report issued in February 2001 accused Switzerland of continuing to tolerate money laundering. The report called upon the international community to pressure Swiss bankers to overhaul their culture of secrecy.

Criticism of Switzerland's closed banking system only intensified after the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States. As governments moved to freeze bank accounts suspected of belonging to the Qaeda terrorist group, British Treasury Secretary Gordon Brown called Switzerland the "weak link" in the international effort to clamp down on terrorist finances. While firmly rejecting the charges, by November the Swiss government moved to freeze 24 bank accounts linked to several individuals with suspected terrorist connections.

In September, a man armed with assault rifles shot and killed 14 people in a local assembly building in the northeast town of Zug. The shocking crime cast a spotlight on Switzerland's notoriously relaxed security system; most politicians rarely use security

details. The brazen attack also raised new questions over Switzerland's open gun laws. Every male over 18 must be prepared to be called for military service. Many are issued weapons, which they may keep at home. Within days of the shooting, new security measures were implemented nationwide. The weapons used in the Zug shooting were standard military issue. The creation of checkpoints at cantonal and federal office buildings, among other measures, introduced new restrictions in an otherwise overwhelmingly open and free democracy.

In October, Swissair, Switzerland's national airline, declared bankruptcy and grounded all its aircraft. Thousands of passengers were stranded for two days before the government temporarily rescued the company with a multibillion-dollar bailout.

Officially neutral and nonaligned, Switzerland is not a member of the United Nations or the EU. In a national referendum in March, voters again rejected United Nations membership. In a 1992 referendum, a narrow majority of voters rejected joining the European Economic Area, membership in which is seen as a step toward EU membership. Since then, the government has grown increasingly anxious to negotiate a pact with the EU to give Swiss industries and service sectors some benefits of access to the single European market.

In 1996, Switzerland joined NATO's Partnership for Peace program, through which it can participate in nonmilitary humanitarian and training missions. However, in a June 2001 referendum, voters approved arming Swiss soldiers who participate in international peacekeeping operations. The vote, which passed by an extremely narrow margin, followed a bitter fight between the government and a coalition of nationalist and pacifist parties concerned that Swiss youth would be put in danger. Switzerland's neutrality laws previously prohibited Swiss troops from carrying arms while on foreign missions.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

The Swiss can change their government democratically. Free and fair elections are held at regular intervals. Initiatives and referenda give citizens an additional degree of involvement in the legislative process. The cantonal system allows considerable local autonomy, and localities' linguistic and cultural heritages are zealously preserved.

At the national level, both houses of the Federal Assembly have equal authority. After legislation has been passed both in the directly elected, 200-member National Council and in the Council of States, which includes two members from each canton, it cannot be vetoed by the executive or reviewed by the judiciary. The seven members of the Federal Council (*Bundesrat*) exercise executive authority. They are chosen from the Federal Assembly according to a "magic formula" that ensures representation of each party, region, and language group. Each year, one member serves as president.

The judicial system functions primarily at the cantonal level, with the exception of a federal supreme court that reviews cantonal court decisions involving federal law. Switzerland's judiciary is independent.

The right to free speech is protected. The government's postal ministry operates broadcasting services, and the broadcast media enjoy editorial autonomy. Foreign broadcast media are readily accessible. In addition, there are many private television and radio stations. Privately owned daily, weekly, and monthly publications are available in each of the most common languages and are free from government interference.

The country's antiracist law prohibits racist or anti-Semitic speech and actions, and

is strictly enforced by the government. A March 2000 poll revealed deep rooted anti-Semitism in Swiss society. Sixteen percent of respondents acknowledged holding fundamentally anti-Semitic views, while 60 percent admitted to holding anti-Semitic sympathies. At a time when the country is being held accountable to a greater degree than ever before for its treatment of Nazi victims, in particular for turning away Jewish refugees fleeing German persecution during World War II, 45 percent of those polled believed the country owes no apology to the Jews for its wartime behavior.

Foreigners constitute 20 percent of the population of Switzerland, which has the strictest nationality laws in Europe. Immigrants must live in the country for at least 12 years before obtaining citizenship. Towns can hold public votes on whether to grant foreign residents citizenship. While regarded as a democratic procedure, this practice is also seen as discriminatory.

In a local referendum held in March 2000, residents of Emmen, in Lucerne canton, approved only 8 of 56 citizenship applications. The approvals were granted only to those of Italian origin. All those denied citizenship were of Balkan background. The vote was based on detailed personal information, including the salaries, tax status, and hobbies of the applicants. The far-right People's Party countenanced the vote. Some within the party advocated similar votes throughout the country; the referendum was put forward in part because Switzerland's population growth is due almost entirely to immigration. Voters were apparently mindful of the potential public relations and economic damage should the measure pass.

During the Kosovo war of 1999, thousands of ethnic-Albanian refugees expelled from the Serbian province flooded into Switzerland. As a result, Swiss voters approved tighter asylum laws in a June 1999 vote. The new rules made it harder for refugees to claim asylum based on persecution in their home countries. Voter approval was highest in the German-speaking region, whose citizens were the most vocal in denouncing the presence of Kosovar Albanians.

In 1995, federal laws aimed at dissuading drug traffickers from entering Switzerland authorized pretrial detention of legal residents for as long as nine months. With 33,000 drug addicts in a population of seven million, the use of hard drugs has become one of the country's most pernicious social ailments. In June 1999, Swiss citizens voted to continue a state program that provides heroin, under medical supervision, to hardened addicts.

A Nigerian asylum seeker died while in police custody in May 2001. Police officers forcibly restrained the man as they prepared to deport him, applying pressure to his thorax. He died of asphyxiation. A judicial inquiry was promptly convened.

In October, the EU called for stricter road transport regulations in Switzerland and throughout the Union after 11 people died in a fire in the St. Gotthard tunnel in the Swiss Alps. Two trucks collided in the tunnel, which lacked a dividing barrier between lanes. The accident closed the tunnel for days, severely disrupting a major commercial artery between Italy and Switzerland.

Although a law on gender equality took effect in 1996, women still face some barriers to political and social advancement. In March 2000 voters rejected minimum quotas for women in parliament. Only two women serve in the seven-member governing coalition, and women occupy just 23 percent of parliamentary seats. While legal parity formally exists between the sexes, some studies have estimated women's earnings to be 15 percent lower than men's for equal work. Women were not granted universal

suffrage until 1971, and the half-canton Appenzell-Innerrhoden did not relinquish its status as the last bastion of all-male suffrage in Europe until 1990. Until the mid-1980s, women were prohibited from participating in the Bundesrat. In 1997, journalists revealed that hundreds of women had been forcibly sterilized under a cantonal law passed in 1928. In June 1999, Swiss voters rejected a government proposal to introduce paid maternity leave. Swiss law bans women from working for two months after giving birth, but without any guaranteed wages during that period.

Freedoms of assembly, association, and religion are observed. While no single state church exists, many cantons support one or several churches. Taxpayers may opt not to contribute to church funds, yet in many instances, companies cannot. Human rights monitors operate freely.

Workers may organize and participate in unions and enjoy the right to strike and bargain collectively. Unions are independent of the government and political parties, and approximately one-third of the workforce holds union membership.

## Syria

Polity: Dominant party (military-dominated)  
 Political Rights: 7  
 Civil Liberties: 7  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Status: Not Free  
 Population: 17,100,000 [Note: there are about 38,200 people living in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights—18,200 Arabs (16,500 Druze and 1,700 Alawites) and about 20,000 Israeli settlers]  
 PPP: \$4,454  
 Life Expectancy: 70  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab (90 percent), other, including Kurd and Armenian (10 percent)  
 Capital: Damascus



### Overview:

Glimmers of Syrian civil society activity emerged during in 2001, as a result in large part to President Bashar al-Assad's earlier pledges to advance political reforms. However, by year's end, whatever progress had been made was effectively snuffed out as the government curtailed informal gatherings and jailed opposition leaders, critical journalists, and intellectuals. President Assad's room for maneuverability seemed curtailed by an influential old guard in the ruling Baath Party, a group accustomed to the repressive and corrupt status quo that had defined the rule of the president's late father, Hafez al-Assad. Many analysts predict Bashar will be forced to walk a tightrope in the foreseeable future as he balances modernizing his country with placating Baathist hardliners. Peace talks with Israel remained stalled during the year. Facing greater public discontent in Lebanon, Syria redeployed its forces there during the year, withdrawing completely from the capital, Beirut. Syria, included on the U.S. State Department list of countries supporting terrorism, appeared to cooperate with the United States in its war against global terrorism after Al Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11.

Following four centuries of rule under the Ottoman Empire, Syria came under French control after World War I and gained independence in 1941. A 1963 military coup brought the pan-Arab, Socialist Baath Party to power. As head of the Baath military wing, Hafez al-Assad took power in a 1970 coup and formally became president of the secular regime in 1971. Members of the Alawite Muslim minority, which constitutes 12 percent of the population, were installed in most key military and intelligence positions and continue to hold those positions today.

The 1973 constitution vests executive power in the president, who must be a Muslim and who is nominated by the Baath Party to be elected through popular referendum. The 250-member People's Assembly holds little independent legislative power. The minimum age for president was lowered in June 2000 from 40 to 34, when Bashar al-Assad, at age 34, assumed the presidency after his father's death.

In the late 1970s, the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood, drawn from the Sunni majority, carried out antigovernment attacks in several northern and central towns. In 1982, the government sent the army into the northern town of Hama to crush a Muslim Brotherhood rebellion. As many as 20,000 militants and civilians died in the resulting bloodshed, which decisively ended active opposition to the regime to this day.

In June 2000, after Bashar became president, the 90-member central committee of the governing Baath party was overhauled with the election of 62 new members, among them top army officials. This action seemed to indicate a concerted effort on the new president's part to ensure loyalty at the highest levels of government and to consolidate his rule, which led to hopes that the young, Western-educated, new president would push through political and economic reform. The president relaxed some restrictions, such as permitting informal gatherings of government critics.

In the beginning of 2001, President Assad raised hopes that he would expand his liberalization campaign. In February, he announced that private universities could be established, thus ending 50 years of socialist government control over higher education. He also publicly hinted at the prospect of allowing the formation of independent political parties. The trend toward greater freedom would, however, be reversed by the middle of the year.

In August a member of parliament, Mohammed Mamoun al-Humsi, staged a hunger strike to protest the government's refusal to implement meaningful political reforms. He called for an end to martial law, the creation of a parliamentary commission on human rights, and the implementation of anticorruption measures.

Syria made no progress with Israel regarding negotiations over the Golan Heights. Indeed, no talks took place in 2001. Israel has in the past agreed in principle to return all of the Golan to Syria in return for security guarantees. Prior to losing the Golan in the Six Day War in 1967, Syria had used the territory to shell northern Israeli towns.

Tensions between Syria and Israel remained high during the year. In April, after the Lebanese-based and Syrian-backed Hezbollah guerrilla group killed an Israeli soldier in an attack along the Israel-Lebanon border, Israeli fighter jets bombed a Syrian radar installation in Lebanon. Three Syrian soldiers were killed in the strike. Syria, which continues to maintain its 35,000-strong troop presence in Lebanon, often sanctions Hezbollah attacks against Israeli forces, ostensibly as a pressure tactic to force Israel to return the Golan Heights on Syrian terms.

During Pope John Paul II's visit to Syria in May, President Assad used the occasion to launch a stinging public attack against Israel, calling it a racist state. The rebuke

was seen by many analysts as an attempt by the relatively untested president to shore up his stature in the Arab world, while leading to concerns in the West over his judgment and political acumen.

While Syria pledged its cooperation with the United States in the war against terrorism, some U.S. officials remain skeptical of Bashar's commitment. In addition to backing Hezbollah, Syria harbors radical Palestinian terror groups opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Syria faced growing calls within Lebanon for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from that country. Many felt more emboldened in criticizing the Syrian presence with the seemingly reform-minded Bashar in power; his father had dealt harshly with any dissent related to Syria's Lebanese occupation. In June, Syrian troops redeployed throughout the country and withdrew completely from Beirut. Viewing the move as largely symbolic, the Lebanese stepped up their vocal opposition to Syria's overbearing presence in their country.

Antiquated infrastructure and an overbearing and corrupt bureaucracy characterize Syria's economy. There are no industrial zones, nor is there a modern banking system. However, in 2001, the government authorized the creation of private banks for the first time.

Syrian unemployment registered 20 percent in 2001. With the population growing two times faster than the economy, Bashar al-Assad, upon assuming office, pledged to combat corruption and attract foreign investment. As first steps, he liberalized the rules against holding foreign currency and narrowed the powers of the economic security courts. However, by the end of 2000 and throughout 2001, the president's drive to modernize the economy seemed to taper off, leading to speculation that he faced significant challenges from those grown accustomed to benefiting from a closed, statist economy.

Agriculture accounts for roughly 50 percent of exchange earnings and exports, and farmers make up 30 percent of the Syrian workforce, a segment of the economy hit hard by a 1999 drought. Oil accounts for approximately half of the country's exports, but many predict Syria will have to import oil within ten years as fields run dry. Syria is known to be a major transit point of processed opiates, including heroin, from Central Asia. The country earns an estimated \$1 billion a year on drug smuggling to the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa.

Greater calls from parliament for economic accountability and transparency emerged during the year. In what was seen as an attempt to stimulate the economy, President Assad oversaw a cabinet reshuffle in December. Some long-time cabinet officials were let go.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Syrians cannot change their government democratically, though they ostensibly vote for the president and the People's Assembly. President Bashar al-Assad maintains absolute authority in the military-backed regime.

The Emergency Law, in effect almost continuously since 1963, allows authorities to carry out preventative arrests and to supersede due process safeguards in searches, detentions, and trials in the military-controlled state security courts, which handle political and security cases. Several nongovernmental security services operate independently of each other and without judicial oversight. Authorities monitor personal communications and conduct surveillance of suspected security threats.



The judiciary is subservient to the government. Defendants in ordinary civil criminal cases have some due process rights, though there are no jury trials. In state security courts, confessions obtained through torture are generally admitted as evidence. Nevertheless, acquittals have been granted in political cases.

Hundreds of political prisoners remain behind bars. However, the government in November released more than 100 members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood and the Iraqi Baath Party.

Freedom of assembly is largely nonexistent. Technically, the interior ministry must grant citizens permission to hold meetings, and the government or Baath party organizes most public demonstrations. However, once Bashar succeeded his father, citizens felt more emboldened to meet and criticize the government. Syrian intellectuals began meeting regularly to debate issues surrounding social, economic, and political reform. They issued calls for the creation of civil institutions such as an independent press, trade unions and associations, and political parties.

Sensing an emboldened civil society, the government in 2001 clamped down on the informal dialogue forums attended by critics, intellectuals, and democracy proponents. In January, democracy activists announced they had gathered 1,000 signatures on a petition demanding greater political freedom and calling for the cancellation of emergency laws and an end to the one-party system. The following month, the government informed forum organizers that they needed permission to hold their meetings. The directive followed statements by President Assad to the London-based Arabic daily *Al-sharq Al-Awsat* that dialogue groups could only discuss the past and not debate possible future changes. He also ruled out criticism of the Baath Party, saying "the government will stand firmly against any work that might cause harm to the public interest." Soon after the president's comments, Baath party members began speaking out against political pluralism on the grounds that it would lead to the disintegration of the state.

In September, the government jailed Riad Turk, the secretary-general of the political office of the banned Communist Party and a government opponent. Two hundred intellectuals called for his immediate release and for those behind his arrest to be tried. Later in the month, Riad Seif, a member of parliament and an outspoken critic, was arrested for hosting an unlicensed political discussion forum.

Freedom of association is restricted. Private associations must register with the government, which usually grants registration to groups that are nonpolitical.

While the government authorized the creation of new independent newspapers during the year, freedom of expression in Syria suffered an overall setback in 2001. In January, *Sawt al-Sha'b*, the first newspaper not affiliated with the Baath party, was launched. In February, Ali Farzat, a well-known Syrian cartoonist, began publishing *Al-Domari*, an independent, satirical newspaper devoting ample space to mock governmental corruption. In May, prominent human rights activist Nizar Nayyof was released from prison after nine years behind bars. The renaissance, however, was to be short lived.

In September, partly in response to increasing calls for political reform, the government passed a new restrictive press law. The law allows for longer sentences for press offenses, legalized censorship, and the arrest of those calling for reform or constitutional changes. The law also grants the prime minister a veto if, in his judgment, a publication "undermines the general interest."

The atmosphere worsened with renewed official harassment of Nizar Nayyof. In

May, military intelligence agents reportedly detained him for 24 hours after abducting him outside his doctor's office. They allegedly tried to bribe him into remaining silent on Syrian human rights abuses and beat him when he refused to cooperate. In July, Nayyounf left for Paris for medical care, but not before announcing the formation of the Committee for Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation. The committee is to seek legal action against government officials and Islamist opposition members who have committed rights violations. By September, the government issued a warrant for Nayyounf's arrest on charges of trying to illegally modify the constitution and publishing "false" news reports abroad. With Nayyounf out of reach in France, the government began intimidating his family. In October, his brothers were dismissed from their teaching posts at government-run schools. In December, three other family members began a hunger strike in response to harassment, attacks on their property, and death threats, all suspected to have been carried out by government agents.

Internet access in Syria remains inchoate and highly restrictive. Government ministries, some businesses, universities, and hospitals are connected to the Internet, although on government-controlled servers. While private access is not sanctioned, some private homes are believed to be connected to the Internet via Lebanese service providers. Bashar al-Assad is leading the drive to connect Syria to the Internet, but the country's ruling structure and intelligence services remain steadfastly against widespread access. Satellite dishes are illegal, although they are increasingly tolerated.

The state prohibits Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists from worshipping as a community and from owning property. The security apparatus closely monitors the tiny Jewish community, and Jews are generally barred from governmental employment. They are also the only minority group required to have their religion noted on their passports and identity cards. Religious instruction is mandatory in schools, with government-approved teachers and curricula. Separate classes are provided for Christian and Muslim students.

Although the regime has supported Kurdish struggles abroad, the Kurdish minority in Syria faces cultural and linguistic restrictions, and suspected Kurdish activists are routinely dismissed from schools and jobs. Some 200,000 Kurdish Syrians are stateless and unable to obtain passports, identity cards, or birth certificates as a result of a policy some years ago under which Kurds were stripped of their Syrian nationality. The government never restored their nationality, though the policy ended after the 1960s. As a result, these Kurds are unable to own land, to gain government employment, or to vote.

Traditional norms place Syrian women at a disadvantage in marriage, divorce, and inheritance matters. Syrian law stipulates that an accused rapist can be acquitted if he marries his victim. Violence against women, including rape, is high in Syria. Women also face legal restrictions on passing citizenship on to children.

All unions must belong to the government-controlled General Federation of Trade Unions. By law, the government can nullify any private sector collective-bargaining agreement. Strikes are prohibited in the agricultural sector and rarely occur in other sectors owing to previous government crackdowns.

## Taiwan (Rep. of China)

Polity: Presidential democracy  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 22,500,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 75  
 Ethnic Groups: Taiwanese (84 percent), mainland Chinese (14 percent), Aborigine (2 percent)  
 Capital: Taipei

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

After losing the presidency in 2000, the conservative Koumintang Party (KMT) lost control of Taiwan's parliament for the first time in the December 2001 elections. Analysts said the defeat could be a harbinger of the once-mighty KMT's eventual demise, as party leader Lien Chan's goal of eventual reunification with mainland China resonates little with the island's native-Taiwanese majority. The vote strengthened the political hand of President Chen Shui-bian, whose centrist Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the most legislative seats. The KMT had used its control of parliament to block Chen's legislation and frustrate efforts to deal with an economic recession that threw thousands out of work. Amid plunging global demand for its high-tech exports, Taiwan's economy was expected to show a full year of contraction in 2001 for the first time since records began in 1962. China, meanwhile, downplayed the pro-independence DPP's victory, but relations between Beijing and Taipei remained stalemated.

Located some 100 miles off the southern coast of China, Taiwan became the home of the KMT's government-in-exile in 1949, after Communist forces overthrew the nationalists following two decades of civil war on the mainland. While Taiwan is de facto independent, Beijing considers it to be a renegade province of China and has long threatened to invade if the island formally declares independence.

After four decades of authoritarian KMT rule, Taiwan's democratic transition began in 1987, when the government lifted martial law after 38 years. The KMT's Lee Teng-hui in 1988 became the first native-Taiwanese president. This broke the stranglehold on politics by mainland refugees, who along with their descendants make up less than 15 percent of Taiwan's population. In his 12 years as president, Lee oversaw far-reaching political reforms including Taiwan's first multiparty legislative elections in 1991 and direct presidential elections in 1996. Lee also played down the KMT's historic commitment to eventual reunification with China, promoting instead a Taiwanese national identity that undermined Beijing's claim that there is only "one China."

Rifts within the KMT helped the DPP's Chen win the March 18, 2000, presidential election, ending five decades of KMT rule. In contrast to Lee's general reluctance to foster closer relations with China, Chen and his two opponents called for closer economic ties with the mainland. In addition to downplaying his party's formal advocacy of independence from Beijing, Chen, a former Taipei mayor, also pledged during the campaign to pass laws against financial and corporate corruption. Under an 82 percent

turnout, Chen won 39 percent of the vote. James Soong, a former KMT secretary-general who broke with the party to run as an independent, took 37 percent, while Lien Chan, the vice president and KMT party leader, won 23 percent.

From the outset, Chen, 50, found his domestic initiatives stymied by a KMT-dominated legislature and his efforts to improve cross-strait relations frustrated by Beijing's suspicion of the president for his past support of Taiwanese independence. Chen's October 2000 order to halt construction of the island's fourth nuclear power plant led to a political crisis that lasted until January, when Taiwan's highest court ruled that the government had not followed proper procedures in its decision to stop the KMT-supported project. Chen backed down, and work resumed in February on the \$6 billion plant.

The KMT fought the December 1, 2001, parliamentary elections deeply divided over whether to continue endorsing former President Lee's policy of promoting a Taiwanese national identity or to embrace recent efforts by party leader Lien to return the KMT to its traditional advocacy of eventual reunification. For his part, President Chen has had fairly little success in his efforts to foster closer economic links and high-level contacts with China. Beijing says it will hold formal talks on improving relations only if Taipei explicitly recognizes mainland China's sovereignty over Taiwan. However, Chen, along with many Taiwanese, is against entering into talks if the one-China principle is a precondition.

In the December vote, the DPP won 87 of parliament's 225 seats, up from 70 in 1998, while the KMT took 68, down from 123. The new People's First Party, headed by Soong, the KMT defector, won 46 seats, while the Taiwan Solidarity Union, backed by former President Lee, won 13 seats and a minor party took 1.

Taiwan's economy was mired in recession for much of 2001, as the global slowdown reduced demand for the island's exports, particularly electronic goods. They make up more than 35 percent of total export revenues. Overall, exports make up around half of gross domestic product. The economy shrank by 4.2 percent year-on-year in the third quarter, the second quarterly contraction in a row, after growing by 6.0 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, unemployment reached a record 5.3 percent in October. Beyond the immediate gloom, analysts say that the island needs to boost its high-end manufacturing and services industries to offset a continuing exodus of Taiwanese factories to mainland China.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Taiwanese can change their government through elections and enjoy most basic rights. The constitution vests executive power in a president who is directly elected for a four-year term. The president appoints the prime minister and can dissolve the legislature. The latter is directly elected for a three-year term and can dismiss the prime minister and cabinet in a no-confidence vote.

The administration of President Chen Shui-bian has taken some steps to crack down on what is widely known as the black money nexus of politicians, state resources, and organized crime that flourished under KMT rule. "Some legislative committees have become dominated by former gangsters who use their clout over government departments and state-owned businesses to line their own pockets or those of their friends," *The Economist* of London said in March 2000, just before Chen's victory. In an effort to curb the influence of money in politics, the justice department launched a crack-down in 2001 on vote buying in local elections.

Though it lost the presidency in 2000, the KMT continues to benefit politically from spoils racked up during its five decades as the ruling party. KMT members still hold key bureaucratic posts, and the party itself owns a major television station and has business interests reportedly worth \$2.6 billion. Revenues from these firms help pay for KMT campaigns and, allegedly, are used to buy votes.

Despite recent judicial reforms, Taiwan's courts are still not fully independent. "Corruption and political influence remain serious problems" in the judiciary, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Taiwan's human rights record in 2000. Moreover, police occasionally use force to obtain confessions from suspects, while judges at times accept confessions that clearly contradict available evidence or plain logic, the report added. Notwithstanding these concerns, defendants in ordinary cases generally receive fair trials. Recent judicial reforms include the creation of an independent committee to decide judicial appointments and promotions using secret balloting.

Taiwanese newspapers report aggressively on corruption and other sensitive issues and carry outspoken editorials and opinion pieces. However, laws used by past governments to jail journalists remain on the books. "The most serious threat to press freedom in Taiwan remains the persistence of criminal Penalties for libel, defamation, and insult," the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists said in its year-end report for 2000. In a positive development, the high court in 2000 upheld a lower court ruling that raised the legal barrier for news organizations to be convicted of libel.

Broadcast television stations are subject to some political influence by their owners, the U.S. State Department report said. The government, DPP, KMT, and armed forces are each the largest shareholder in or are otherwise associated with one of Taiwan's five islandwide broadcast television stations. The fifth is run by a nonprofit public foundation. Any party influence over regular television is offset, however, by the availability to some 80 percent of Taiwanese households of roughly 100 local and international private cable television stations.

Though it has refused to license private islandwide radio stations, the government has in recent years issued dozens of licenses for private regional stations. Critics say that many of these stations have limited broadcast ranges, many of the available frequencies are in remote areas, and licensing rules require radio station owners to have more capital than actually is required to operate stations. The government says the \$50 million (U.S.\$1.45 million) required capitalization is based on actual business costs and points out that radio stations serving designated ethnic groups or certain other socially beneficial purposes need put up only \$1 million. Though no longer enforced, laws remain on the books barring Taiwanese from advocating communism or independence from China.

Taiwanese women face job discrimination, and violence against women is a major concern. In the absence of strong enforcement of laws against sex discrimination, women say they are often forced to quit jobs because of marriage, age, or pregnancy, and are promoted less frequently and receive lower salaries than their male counterparts, according to the U.S. State Department report. Women are also underrepresented in government and politics, although Annette Lu in 2000 became Taiwan's first female vice president. Rape and domestic violence are serious problems, according to the U.S. State Department report. Although two recent laws allow authorities to investigate complaints of domestic violence and prosecute rape suspects without the victims actually pressing charges, cultural norms inhibit many victims from reporting these crimes to the police.

Although there are no accurate statistics, anecdotal evidence suggests that child

prostitution is a serious problem, particularly among Taiwan's 380,000 aborigines. Descendants of Malayo-Polynesians, aborigines also face discrimination in mainstream society and have few land rights. Ethnic Chinese developers use "connections and corruption to gain title to Aboriginal land," and aborigines say they are also prevented from owning certain ancestral lands under government control, the U.S. State Department report said. Taiwanese of all faiths can worship freely.

Most Taiwanese workers can join trade unions, but the law restricts the right to strike and collective bargaining is not practiced widely. The Chen administration recognized three islandwide labor federations in 2000, ending the KMT-affiliated Chinese Federation of Labor's long-standing status as Taiwan's sole labor federation. Teachers, civil servants, and defense industry workers are barred from joining unions or bargaining collectively. The labor law's restrictions on the right to strike include provisions allowing authorities to order mediation of labor disputes and banning work stoppages while mediation is in progress.

Roughly 30 percent of Taiwan's 9.7 million workers are unionized. Collective bargaining, however, tends to be practiced only in large firms, which make up fewer than 5 percent of all enterprises. Employers sometimes take advantage of illegal foreign workers by deducting money from their wages without their agreement and having them work extended hours without overtime pay, according to the U.S. State Department report.

## Tajikistan

Polity: Presidential      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 6  
 Population: 6,200,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$1,031  
 Life Expectancy: 68  
 Ethnic Groups: Tajik (65 percent), Uzbek (25 percent),  
 Russian (4 percent), other (6 percent)  
 Capital: Dushanbe



### Overview:

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, DC, the small, impoverished nation of Tajikistan was thrust into the international spotlight as a potential base for the U.S.-declared war on terrorism. Fears of an influx of Afghan refugees or a backlash by the Taliban or other domestic radical forces highlighted concerns that events in Afghanistan could destabilize Tajikistan's still fragile four-year peace. At the same time, the nation struggled to cope with the devastating effects of a two-year drought, including impending famine in parts of the country.

Conquered by Russia in the late 1800s, Tajikistan was made an autonomous region within Uzbekistan in 1924 and a separate socialist republic of the U.S.S.R. in 1929. Tajikistan declared independence from the U.S.S.R. in September 1991, and two months later, former Communist Party leader Rakhman Nabiyeu was elected president.

Nabiyeu's increasing consolidation of the power of the old guard, many of whom

were from the more prosperous northern province of Leninabad, at the expense of other regional factions, led to increasing opposition to his rule. In May 1992, supporters and opponents of Nabiyeu clashed in the streets of Dushanbe, with the violence quickly spreading beyond the capital. Clans from the Gharm and Kurgan-Tyube regions in the east and the Pamiris from the mountainous Gorno-Badakhshan area in the south sought to unseat the ruling northern Leninabadi and southern Kulyabis from power. These long-simmering clan-based tensions, combined with various anti-Communist and Islamist movements, soon plunged the country into a five-year civil war for central government control. In September, Communist hardliners forced the resignation of President Nabiyeu, who was replaced in November by leading Communist Party member and ethnic-Kulyabi Emomali Rakhmonov. The following month, Rakhmonov launched attacks in the Gharm and Gorno-Badakhshan regions, causing tens of thousands to flee into neighboring Afghanistan.

In November 1994, Rakhmonov was elected president after most opposition candidates were either prevented from competing in or boycotted the poll. March 1995 parliamentary elections, in which the majority of seats were won by pro-government candidates, were boycotted by the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), a coalition of various secular and Islamic opposition groups that emerged during the war as the main opposition force fighting against President Rakhmonov's government.

Following a December 1996 ceasefire, President Rakhmonov and UTO leader Said Abdullo Nuri signed a formal peace agreement in Moscow on June 27, 1997, officially ending the civil war, which had claimed tens of thousands of lives and left several hundred thousand refugees. The accord called for opposition forces to be merged into the regular army, granted an amnesty for UTO members, provided for the UTO to be allotted 30 percent of senior government posts, and established a 26-member National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), with seats evenly divided between the government and the UTO. The NRC was charged with implementing the peace agreements, including preparing amendments for a referendum on constitutional changes that would lead to fair parliamentary elections. By the end of 1998, nearly all exiled UTO leaders and Tajik refugees from Afghanistan had returned, although the government had pushed back parliamentary elections scheduled for June of that year.

During 1999, the government and the UTO took steps towards implementing the peace accord: parliament adopted a resolution in May granting a general amnesty to more than 5,000 opposition fighters; several members of the UTO were appointed to government posts; and the UTO announced that it had disbanded all of its military formations. In a September nationwide referendum, voters approved a series of constitutional amendments permitting the formation of religion-based political parties. This move paved the way for the legal operation of the Islamic opposition, including the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), which constitutes the backbone of the UTO. In November, President Rakhmonov was reelected president with a reported 97 percent of the vote in a poll criticized by international election observers for widespread irregularities.

As the final stage in the implementation of the 1997 peace accord, Tajikistan held parliamentary elections in February (for the 63-seat lower house) and March 2000 (for the 33-member upper house). In the February poll, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) of President Rakhmonov received nearly 65 percent of the vote, followed by the Communist Party with 20 percent and the IRP, which was plagued by internal divisions, with 7 percent. Although the participation of six parties and a number of independent

candidates in the poll provided some political pluralism, international election observers, including a joint mission by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations, cited serious problems, including the exclusion of certain opposition parties, biased state media coverage, and a lack of transparency in the tabulation of votes. In the March elections to the upper house of parliament, in which regional assemblies elected 25 members and President Rakhmonov appointed the remaining 8, the PDP obtained the overwhelming majority of seats.

With the conclusion of the 1997 peace agreement following parliamentary elections, the NRC was formally disbanded and a UN observer mission withdrew in May 2000 after nearly six years in Tajikistan. However, important provisions of the peace accord remained unimplemented, with demobilization of opposition factions incomplete and the government failing to meet the 30 percent quota of senior government posts to be awarded to the UTO. Dushanbe's failure to stop the movement of Islamic guerillas on its territory, mosdy members of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), strained relations with Tashkent and Bishkek. The IMU, which is attempting to overthrow the Uzbekistan government, had used Tajikistan as a transit country from its training camps in Afghanistan for armed incursions into the Kyrgyz Republic in 1999 and Uzbekistan in 1999 and 2000.

Throughout 2001, Tajikistan's internal security situation continued to be precarious as outbreaks of violence linked to regional clan feuds and political rivalries plagued the country. From April through September, three senior government officials—First Deputy Interior Minister Khabib Sanginov, presidential foreign policy advisor Karim Yuldashev, and Culture Minister Abdurahim Rahimov—were assassinated. The fragility of the country's peace process was further underscored by two hostage-taking events in June led by former UTO field commanders, who were protesting the arrest of other UTO members in connection with Sanginov's murder. Although all of the hostages were released unharmed, the government subsequently launched a six-week military operation against the rebels, whom they claimed had been linked to some 270 murders since 1998. The fighting that ensued reportedly resulted in the capture or deaths of dozens of rebel fighters, including one of the rebel leaders, as well as numerous civilians. On September 5, seven former Tajik opposition fighters were formally charged with Sanginov's murder.

After a decade of relative obscurity on the international scene, Tajikistan suddenly saw its profile rise in the wake of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The nation's strategic value as a possible base for U.S. retaliatory actions against the Taliban lay in its 1,200-kilometer border along Afghanistan's northeastern region—the stronghold of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance forces. At the same time, the continued inability of the shaky secular-Islamic ruling coalition to assert control over substantial portions of the country's territory, much of which is under the sway of local warlords, remained a serious issue of concern for the emerging U.S.-backed antiterrorism coalition.

Following several weeks of confusing media reports on Tajikistan's role in the antiterrorism campaign, Dushanbe announced the day after the first U.S.-led strikes in Afghanistan on October 7 that it had agreed to the sharing of intelligence information and the opening of the country's airspace for humanitarian flights. The government denied, however, that it had plans to allow U.S. troops or warplanes to use its territory for military strikes against the Taliban. In early November, Tajik officials authorized



the U.S. military to begin assessing conditions at three of its airbases. A month later, the government announced that advanced detachments of foreign troops had begun arriving in Tajikistan, although it insisted that they would take part only in rescue and humanitarian operations.

Tajikistan's cautious reaction stemmed from fears of possible retaliatory measures by Taliban forces, as well from domestic radical Islamists and others, if it provided more extensive support to the U.S.-led coalition; while the IRP pursues its agenda through established political means, some former UTO members continue to engage in armed opposition to the national government. Tajikistan's participation in the U.S.-backed coalition was further complicated by its dependence on Russia for maintaining its national security. Tajikistan remains the only Central Asian country in which Moscow has ground forces stationed, including some 10,000 troops along the Tajik-Afghan border. The government also expressed worry over the possibility of a new wave of Afghan refugees, whom officials insisted they would not let into the country because of economic and security concerns.

After years of economic devastation wrought by the civil war, Tajikistan continued to suffer the effects of a two-year drought. International aid agencies warned that an estimated one million Tajiks could face starvation without adequate food assistance. According to the World Bank, an estimated 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Citizens of Tajikistan cannot change their government democratically. The 1994 constitution provides for a strong, directly elected executive who enjoys broad authority to appoint and dismiss officials. Amendments to the constitution adopted in a 1999 referendum further increased the powers of the president by extending his term in office from five to seven years and creating a full-time, bicameral parliament whose members would be appointed directly by the president or elected by indirect vote through local parliaments led by presidential appointees. Neither the country's presidential polls in 1994 and 1999 nor the parliamentary elections of 1995 and 2000 were free and fair.

Despite formal guarantees of freedom of speech and the press, media freedoms remain severely curtailed by the government. Independent journalists continue to be threatened by removal of their accreditation, denial of access to state printing facilities, and acts of physical violence. Consequently, self-censorship among journalists is widespread. In July 2001, Dodojon Atovullo, the exiled editor of the independent opposition newspaper *Charogi Ruz* (Light of Day), was arrested in Moscow on charges of sedition and insulting President Emomali Rakhmonov and threatened with extradition to Tajikistan. Following pressure from international organizations and other governments, he was released after six days in custody. *Charogi Ruz* has published articles accusing Tajik authorities of corruption, including tax evasion and involvement in narcotics trafficking.

The state Committee on Religious Affairs registers religious communities, largely to ensure that they do not become overtly political. The government continued to arrest members of *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* (Islamic Party of Liberation), which calls for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate throughout the Muslim World, and handed down increasingly lengthy prison sentences. According to a report by the International Crisis Group, while *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* officially rejects the use of violence, some members reportedly do not exclude support for armed resistance or for the IMU.

The state strictly controls freedom of assembly and association for organizations of apolitical nature. Nongovernmental and political groups must obtain permits to hold public demonstrations, and organizers of protests have at times faced government reprisals. Although a May 1998 ban on religion-based parties was lifted in September 1999, leading to the registration of the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP), the government has stopped or limited the activities of certain other political parties. Despite legal rights to form and join trade unions, labor rights are largely ignored in practice.

The judiciary is directly influenced by the executive branch, on which most judges depend for their positions, as well as by some armed paramilitary groups. Many judges are poorly trained and inexperienced, and bribery is reportedly widespread. Police routinely conduct arbitrary arrests of citizens and beat detainees to obtain confessions. Prison conditions have been described as life threatening because of overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. In August 2001, parliament approved an amnesty for 19,000 prisoners to mark the tenth anniversary of the country's independence. High levels of criminal and political violence, including hostage taking and extortion, continue to affect the personal security of most citizens. Certain regions of the country remain largely under the control of former rebel fighters from the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), who have rejected the terms of the 1997 peace accord, and government and various former opposition groups continue to engage in armed skirmishes. Since neighboring Afghanistan's Taliban launched a major offensive in northeastern Afghanistan over a year ago, an estimated 15,000 Afghans who fled have been living in squalid camps on islands in the middle of the Pyandzh River separating the two countries; despite calls by international aid groups, the Tajik government has refused to allow them to cross into Tajikistan.

The government imposes some restrictions on the right of its citizens to choose a place of residence and to travel, including sometimes lengthy exit visa procedures. Checkpoints manned by interior ministry troops and customs officials have extorted money from drivers and passengers, limiting their freedom of movement. Corruption, which is reportedly pervasive throughout the government, civil service, and business sectors, restricts equality of opportunity.

Although women are employed throughout the government and the business world, they continue to face traditional societal discrimination. Domestic violence is reportedly common, and there are credible reports of trafficking of women for prostitution. The participation of women in criminal activities, including the drug trade, has increased as a result of the country's widespread poverty.

## ↑ Tanzania

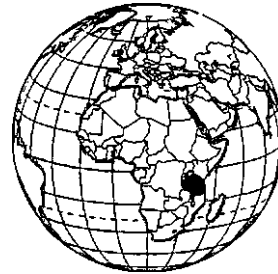
Polity: Dominant party    Political Rights: 4  
 Economy: Mixed statist    Civil Liberties: 4  
 Population: 36,200,000    Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$501

Life Expectancy: 53

Ethnic Groups: African (99 percent), other, including Asian, European, and Arab (1 percent)

Capital: Dar-es-Salaam

Trend Arrow: Tanzania received an upward trend arrow due to the negotiated resolution of an opposition-ruling party dispute over the electoral process in Zanzibar and Pemba.



### Overview:

Tanzania held legislative and presidential elections in October 2000, the second since the reintroduction of multiparty politics. Incumbent President Benjamin Mkapa won reelection with about 70 percent of the vote, and the ruling Chama Cha Mapazindi (CCM) won an overwhelming victory in the 275-member legislature. The conduct of these elections represented a modest improvement over the preceding polls in 1995.

The elections were marred, however, by fraudulent polls biased in favor of the ruling party in the federated semiautonomous isles of Zanzibar and Pemba. The status of these islands in relation to the mainland has long provoked tension. The opposition Civic United Front (CUF) and independent observers convincingly demonstrated that the ruling CCM had engaged in fraud to maintain power. Subsequent rioting in Zanzibar in January 2001 resulted in the deaths of more than 40 people. CUF members of parliament subsequently boycotted the legislature. In October the CCM and the CUF announced an agreement designed to resolve the political crisis and allow for more transparent government, but the CUF subsequently threatened to pull out of the agreement, claiming that it had been unilaterally altered by the CCM.

After Tanzania gained independence from Britain in 1961, the CCM, under President Julius Nyerere, dominated the country's political life. The Zanzibar and Pemba islands were merged with Tanganyika to become the Union of Tanzania after Arab sultans who had long ruled the islands were deposed in a violent 1964 revolution. For much of his presidency, President Nyerere espoused a collectivist economic philosophy known in Swahili as *ujamaa*. Although it may have been useful in promoting a sense of community and nationality, this policy resulted in significant economic dislocation and decline, the effects of which continue to be felt. During Nyerere's tenure, Tanzania also played an important role as a "Front Line State" in the international response to white-controlled regimes in southern Africa.

Nyerere retained strong influence after he officially retired in 1985. Although opposition parties were legalized in 1992, the CCM continues to dominate the country's political life. Progress towards democratic consolidation and strong economic growth remain inhibited by high levels of corruption and weak opposition parties.

Although Tanzania has avoided the civil strife that has wracked many of its neighbors, and its economy is growing modestly, there are a number of serious issues that, if not addressed, could affect the country's longer-term stability. These include relations

with the Zanzibar archipelago; the presence in Tanzania of 500,000 refugees from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda; and the need for relief from the country's \$8 billion debt.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The ability of Tanzanians to freely choose their political leaders is not yet firmly entrenched in practice. Although the 2000 national elections avoided the massive logistical and administrative chaos of the preceding elections, the CCM continues to enjoy considerable advantages of incumbency that inhibit the realistic prospect of an alternation of power. In addition, the 2000 elections in Zanzibar demonstrated that progress towards more legitimate electoral processes is not uniform nationwide. Massive electoral irregularities prompted authorities to annul the vote in almost one-third of constituencies. Ballot papers arrived hours late in some areas, and many people were unable to vote. A claim by the CUF leader that the CCM had manipulated the election to avoid defeat was bolstered by observers from the Commonwealth and the Organization of African Unity. The October 2001 agreement to defuse the Zanzibar crisis represents a positive step, but it is not at all clear whether the agreement holds the key to sustained democratic consolidation.

The previous legislative and presidential elections, in 1995, had been the most open on mainland Tanzania since independence. The CCM's landslide legislative victory had been seriously tainted, however, not only by poor organization but also by fraud and administrative irregularities. In addition, extensive use of state broadcasting and other government resources during the campaign favored the ruling party. The CCM won 80 percent of the 232 directly elected seats in the national assembly. The voting in Zanzibar was plainly fraudulent, with the island's high court summarily rejecting opposition demands for fresh polls.

Thirteen opposition parties have formal status. Some of them are active, but they tend to be divided and ineffective. The CUF has sought to establish significant support on the Tanzanian mainland, and its presidential candidate received the second highest number of votes in the 2000 presidential elections. Another major opposition party, the National Convention for Constitution and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi), whose leader, Augustine Mrema, was runner-up to President Benjamin Mkapa in the 1995 presidential election, has split in two. Parties with parliamentary representation receive government subsidies, but they criticize the low level of funding and the formula by which it is allocated.

Tanzania's judiciary has displayed signs of autonomy after decades of subservience to the one-party CCM regime, but it remains subject to considerable political influence. Constitutional protections for the right to free assembly are generally, but not always, respected. Laws allow rallies only by officially registered political parties, which may not be formed on religious, ethnic, or regional bases and cannot oppose the union of Zanzibar and the mainland. Freedom of religion is respected.

Print and electronic media are active, but media impact is largely limited to major urban areas. Private radio and television stations began receiving licenses at the beginning of 1994, but they are not allowed to cover more than 25 percent of the country's territory, according to the 1993 Broadcasting Act. The stated rationale for the limitation is to protect national interests. In Zanzibar the government controls the electronic media.

Arrest and pretrial detention laws are often ignored. Prison conditions are harsh, and police abuses are said to be common. According to government estimates there are approximately 45,000 inmates in the country's prisons although their collective capac-

ity is only 21,000. Such overcrowding has caused widespread concern. Questions are being raised regarding the safety and health of prisoners, including minors and women, who have been subjected to sexual harassment and human rights abuses.

Many nongovernmental organizations are active, and some have been able to influence the public policy process. The broad distribution of Tanzania's population among many ethnic groups has largely diffused potential ethnic rivalries that have wracked neighboring countries. The refugee influx is currently a big burden for Tanzania, which alone hosts more than 800,000 refugees. It is estimated that more than 26,000 refugees have been naturalized since 1961.

Women's rights guaranteed by the constitution and other laws are not uniformly protected. Especially in rural areas and in Zanzibar, traditional or Islamic customs discriminatory toward women prevail in family law, and women have fewer educational and economic opportunities. Domestic violence against women is reportedly common and is rarely prosecuted. Human rights groups have sought laws to bar forced marriages, which are most common among Tanzania's coastal peoples. The employment of children as domestic servants is widespread.

Workers do not have the right to organize and join trade unions freely. Essential workers are barred from striking. Other workers' right to strike is restricted by complex notification and mediation requirements. Collective bargaining effectively exists only in the small private sector. Approximately 85 percent of Tanzania's people survive through subsistence agriculture. Economic decline in Zanzibar continues to dim the islands' prospects.

Corruption remains a serious problem, although the government has made some attempts to address it. The government developed a national action plan for the control of corruption. The Prevention of Corruption Bureau recorded an increasing number of reported incidents on corruption from 432 cases in 1998 to 1,461 cases at the end of 2000, although it is not clear whether this represents an increase in corruption or increased reporting and improved detection of corruption. Tanzania ranked 76th out of 90 countries in Transparency International's 2000 Corruption Perceptions Index. Interpol has warned that Tanzania has become a major center for the transport of drugs from Asia to Europe.

## Thailand

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy  
Economy: Capitalist-  
statist

Population: 62,400,000

PPP: \$6,132

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Thai (75 percent), Chinese (14 percent), other (11 percent)

Capital: Bangkok

Political Rights: 2

Civil Liberties: 3

Status: Free



### Overview:

As Thailand's economy slowed in 2001, Thaksin Shinawatra, who became prime minister in January after his conservative

party won a landslide election victory, launched populist programs aimed at helping poorer Thais and small businessmen. The Thai Loves Thai (TRT) party's near parliamentary majority, and Thaksin's financial clout as Thailand's wealthiest businessman arguably made him the country's strongest-ever civilian leader. Thailand's constitutional court cleared Thaksin, 52, of corruption charges in August, lifting political uncertainty but leading some Thais to question whether the court had bowed to public and political pressure. Reformist politicians and activists also feared that Thaksin's government would undermine economic and political reforms put into place to improve transparency and accountability in the wake of the financial crisis that began in 1997. They pointed, for example, to Thaksin's stated desire to reign in Thailand's new independent anticorruption agency.

Known as Siam until 1939, Thailand is the only Southeast Asian nation never colonized by a European country. Beginning with a 1932 coup that transformed the kingdom into a constitutional monarchy, the army ruled periodically for the next six decades. The army last seized power in 1991, when it overthrew a hugely corrupt elected government. After soldiers shot dead more than 50 pro-democracy protesters in Bangkok in March 1992, Thailand returned to civilian rule when the country's revered monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, convinced the military to appoint a civilian prime minister.

Thailand's export-led economy grew by nearly ten percent per year on average in the decade prior to 1997. By then, years of heady expansion, poor bank supervision, and an increasingly overvalued currency pegged to the U.S. dollar had inflated asset prices, left companies saddled with \$63 billion in foreign debt, and contributed to large current account deficits. When slowing exports and a weakening economy in 1997 punctured the asset bubble and eroded corporate profits, many companies were unable to pay their foreign and domestic debts and bank losses mounted.

After spending billions of dollars fruitlessly defending the *baht* against speculators, the government floated the currency in July 1997 and agreed in August to a \$17.2 billion bailout led by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and conditioned on financial austerity. As members of Bangkok's middle class protested against corruption and economic mismanagement, parliament approved a reformist constitution in September and in November elected the Democratic Party's Chuan Leekpai, a former prime minister with a clean reputation, to head a coalition government. The new constitution created independent elections and anticorruption bodies and introduced direct senate elections.

Hoping to stabilize the *baht* and reinvigorate the banking system, the Chuan government kept interest rates high and closed 56 ailing finance companies. The opposition blamed the tight monetary policy for pushing the economy into recession in 1998 and hurting farmers and other ordinary Thais. Thailand's economy shrank an estimated 7 to 8 percent in 1998 but rebounded in 1999, growing by 4.3 percent.

Criticizing the government for supposedly favoring the urban middle class over ordinary Thais, Thaksin, a former deputy prime minister, emerged as the leading challenger to Chuan in the spring of 2000 and then unseated him in the January 6, 2001, elections. During the campaign, Thaksin pledged to help poorer Thais hurt by the financial crisis by introducing cheap health care, a debt moratorium for farmers, and investment funds for each village. Providing evidence to support some of Thaksin's charges against the government, a July 2000 World Bank study said that Thailand's poorest workers continued to be hit the hardest in the aftermath of the crisis. They

suffered from lower wages and higher unemployment. Thaksin, who built his fortune in telecommunications, also promised to set up a government agency to buy bad loans from banks. Chuan campaigned on his success in restoring economic growth and stabilizing the baht. Thailand's economy grew by 4.4 percent in 2000, and the baht remained well above its crisis lows despite sliding 13.5 percent against the dollar during the year.

Thaksin's TRT party won 248 out of parliament's 500 seats. It formed a coalition government with two other conservative parties—the Thai Nation Party, with 41 seats, and the New Aspiration Party, with 36—and the centrist National Development Party, with 29. Chuan's Democratic Party won 128 seats, with four smaller parties taking the remainder.

Thaksin's TRT won the elections despite a December 2000 ruling by Thailand's new National Counter Corruption Commission (NCCC) that Thaksin had deliberately falsified wealth disclosure statements as a cabinet minister in 1997. Had the constitutional court not cleared him, Thaksin could have been banned from holding office for five years.

Amid the distraction posed by Thaksin's court case, his government began providing one million baht (\$22,000) to each of Thailand's 77,000 villages for small-scale loans and low-cost health care to Thais without medical insurance. It also set up an asset management company to take over some bad loans from banks. The government justified using public money to prop up banks on the grounds that many indebted firms continued to defy creditors even after the Chuan government had created a new bankruptcy court and passed tougher foreclosure laws. More than 40 percent of bank loans are classified as "distressed assets," according to an August 2001 IMF report. Late in the year economists were estimating that the economy would grow by one percent or less in 2001 amid plunging global demand for Thailand's electronics exports. Overall, exports make up around 65 percent of gross domestic product.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Thais can change their government through elections that are marred by fraud, irregularities, and some political killings.

Thailand's overall human rights record is generally positive, but police often are implicated in wrongful killings and other abuses, business firms frequently violate labor laws, and prostitution and trafficking of women are widespread. Observers say that official corruption is widespread and linked to trafficking and other illicit acts.

As in previous elections, candidates doled out huge sums of money to buy votes in the January 2001 balloting. Politicians handed out to voters at least 20 billion baht (\$465 million) during the campaign and on election day, according to Bangkok's Nakhon Ratchasima Rajabhat Institute, which monitors poll fraud. In 62 districts, the Election Commission either disqualified candidates or warned them about graft allegations and ordered second rounds of polling. The commission, however, took little or no action on many of the more than 1,000 allegations of fraud. Some critics suggested that Thaksin's party might have pressured commission members to overlook violations.

Observers gave varying accounts of the number of killings linked to the January elections. *The Economist* of London put the figure at 43, but the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Thailand's human rights record in 2000 said that violence related to the January general elections and 2000 senate vote had killed a total of 11 people. There is no evidence of government involvement in any of the killings.

Thailand's constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and his cabinet. The house of representatives has 400 single-member districts and 100 party-list seats, all directly elected for four-year terms. The senate has 200 members who are directly elected for six-year terms.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that ordinary Thais often must bribe bureaucrats to receive basic governmental services and that officials routinely take bribes to ignore many types of crime. "Routine demands for bribes undermine the rule of law and permit the continuation of various illegal activities such as income tax evasion, illegal gambling, drug violations, goods smuggling, trafficking in persons, and prostitution," according to the U.S. State Department report. The Berlin-based Transparency International's 2001 Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Thailand in a tie with Malawi for 61st place out of 91 countries. The top-ranked country, Finland, is considered the least corrupt. Moreover, more than 40 percent of gross domestic product is estimated to be underground.

In a positive development, the government's anti-money laundering agency has indicted many low level money launderers and ordered police to seize property and assets of many drug traffickers. The agency has acted under tough laws passed in 1999 that cover crimes ranging from white-collar fraud to prostitution.

Though "the judiciary generally is regarded as independent, it is subject to corruption and has a reputation for venality," the U.S. State Department report said. The judiciary also lacks a sufficient number of qualified judges and has huge case backlogs. Defendants generally receive adequate due process rights.

Thailand's poorly trained police frequently are implicated in wrongful killings and rights violations against criminal suspects and detainees. Officers at times kill armed drug traffickers and other criminal suspects while apprehending them. While police in some of these cases may be justified in using lethal force, at least some of the killings are unwarranted, according to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the press. In addition, authorities have investigated officers accused of raping or extorting sex from female detainees. Police also reportedly beat some suspects to extract confessions, according to the U.S. State Department report. Thai prisons and immigration detention centers are severely overcrowded, and inmates generally lack proper medical care, the report added.

Thai newspapers freely criticize government policies and report allegations of official corruption and human rights abuses, but journalists exercise some self-censorship regarding the monarchy and national security issues. *The Nation* of Bangkok and some other dailies continued to criticize Thaksin's policies after he took office. The opposition Democratic Party, however, alleged that other papers might have toned down their criticism because of the advertisements they receive from state companies and Thaksin's Shin Corporation and its subsidiaries. Radio and television stations also generally offer diverse political views. The government or armed forces either directly or indirectly own or oversee most radio and broadcast television stations. By law, radio stations must renew their licenses annually. In a controversial move, the private iTV television station sacked 23 staff in February who complained that the station's election coverage had favored Thaksin. Shin Corporation is iTV's largest shareholder.

Bangkok's middle class and rural farmers frequently and freely hold rallies against government policies. Though not used in recent years, laws broadly prohibit verbally defaming the monarchy (lese majesty), inciting public disturbances, threatening national



security, or insulting Buddhism. In addition, the constitution allows the government to restrict free expression on national security, public order, and other grounds.

Tens of thousands of Thai women and children work as prostitutes, many of them after being trafficked to cities from their villages. Authorities prosecute relatively few traffickers, and many police, soldiers, and local officials are involved in trafficking, the U.S. State Department report said. Some women, reportedly from hill tribes and neighboring countries, are forced into prostitution, the report added. In addition, many prostitutes work as bonded laborers in order to pay off loans made to their parents by brothel owners. Thailand has at least 200,000 prostitutes, according to NGO and government estimates.

Domestic violence is a serious problem, although rules of evidence make prosecuting offenders difficult and police do not vigorously enforce relevant laws, according to the U.S. State Department report. The report added that many women do not report domestic assault and rape, in part because "law enforcement agencies are widely perceived to be incapable of bringing perpetrators to justice." The government has taken some positive measures such as deploying teams of female police officers in some station houses to encourage women to report sexual crimes.

Women make up more than half of university graduates and are increasingly entering the professions. They continue, however, to face unofficial discrimination in hiring and wages, the State Department report said. Women also are underrepresented in politics, government, and senior civil service posts.

Thais of all faiths worship freely, with Buddhism having the most followers. Muslim Malays, who make up around ten percent of Thailand's population, face some private sector job discrimination, according to the U.S. State Department report. Roughly half of the 700,000 to 880,000 members of hill tribes reportedly lack citizenship. This leaves them ineligible to vote, own land, or be covered under labor laws and makes it harder for them to access education and health care. The government in 2000 eased the rules for hill tribe members to be eligible for and obtain citizenship, but it is not yet clear how many so-called highlanders have benefited from the changes.

In the workplace, employers often violate the country's poorly enforced labor laws, use child labor, and discriminate against union members and organizers. Press reports suggest that more than half of Thai workers, particularly those in rural areas, receive less than the minimum wage. NGOs say that upwards of one million Thai children work on family farms and that two to four percent of children between the ages of 6 and 14 work in urban jobs. Working conditions in private factories are often poor and dangerous. Moreover, Thailand reportedly has many forced-labor sweatshops in which employers prevent workers from leaving the premises, the U.S. State Department report said.

Employers reportedly discriminate against both union workers and those trying to set up new unions, according to the U.S. State Department report. Unions can bargain collectively, but in practice private sector employers enjoy considerable economic leverage and generally set wages unilaterally. Fewer than two percent of Thai workers are unionized. Strikes are legal in the private sector but not for state enterprise workers.

Maintaining its long-standing policy of harboring refugees fleeing conflict in neighboring Southeast Asian countries, the government provides in its border areas temporary asylum to some 120,000 Burmese refugees who in recent years fled fighting and gross human rights abuses. Authorities, however, have arrested as illegal aliens some Burmese living outside designated camps.

## Togo

Polity: Dominant party (military-influenced)    Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Mixed statist    Civil Liberties: 5  
 Population: 5,200,000    Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$1,410  
 Life Expectancy: 55  
 Ethnic Groups: Ewe, Mina, Kabye, 34 other tribes (99 percent), other (1 percent)  
 Capital: Lome



### Overview:

Legislative elections that were to have taken place in October 2001 were postponed until at least March 2002 following a report from the United Nations that said the Independent Electoral Commission was unprepared to conduct a poll. This is the second time the elections have been delayed. Prime Minister Agbeyome Kodjo attributed the delay to insufficient funds. The elections are to replace the 1999 vote that was boycotted by the opposition over allegations of fraud. Efforts at political reconciliation suffered in 2001 following the jailing of two prominent opposition figures. Yawovi Agboyibo and student union leader Hounjo Mawudzuro were detained after publicly criticizing Togolese officials. There were a series of street protests, despite a ban on public marches, that were severely repressed by security forces. Adding to the political tension was Kodjo's call for the constitution to be amended to allow President Gnassingbé Eyadéma, Africa's longest-serving head of state, to run for a third term in 2003.

Togoland was a German colony for more three decades until France seized it at the outset of World War I. It was held as French territory until its independence in 1960. The country's founding president, Sylvanus Olympio, was murdered in 1963 as Eyadéma, then a demobilized sergeant who had served in France's colonial wars, led an army coup to topple the country's democratically elected government. After assuming direct power in 1967, Eyadéma suspended the constitution and extended his repressive rule through mock elections and a puppet political party. In 1991, free political parties were legalized, and multiparty elections were promised. The transition faltered, however, as soldiers and secret police harassed, attacked, or killed opposition supporters. Eyadéma won fraudulent elections in 1993 and 1998.

Another UN report in 2001 said that there were strong reasons to believe that serious violations had occurred during the 1998 presidential election, emphasizing that allegations by London-based Amnesty International of extrajudicial killings "must be taken into consideration." The UN report said the victims were mainly members of opposition parties and that there were indications that the perpetrators of the crimes were police, other security officers, and militias under their control. The violations included executions, torture, degrading treatment, rape, and kidnappings.

Eighty percent of Togolese are engaged in subsistence agriculture. Corruption, military spending, and large, inefficient state-owned companies impede economic growth.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The Togolese people cannot choose their representatives freely. In the 1993 presidential election, which the opposition boycotted, President Gnassingbé Eyadéma claimed to have won 96 percent of the vote. His June 1998 reelection was blatantly fraudulent, with the government claiming he had won approximately 51 percent of the vote, thereby enabling him to avoid a runoff election against a single opposition candidate. Electoral rolls were suspect, and multiple voter cards were issued. The National Election Commission was not independent and was either unable or unwilling to provide adequate logistical support. Hundreds of domestic, European Union-trained observers were denied accreditation. Eyadéma spent lavishly and used state resources for his campaign.

Violence and intimidation marred the 1994 legislative elections. Opposition parties won a majority in the national assembly, but splits and flawed 1996 by-elections allowed Eyadéma's Rally of the Togolese People party to regain control of the legislature. The opposition boycotted March 1999 legislative polls, which were marred by fraud and saw the ruling party win 79 out of 81 contested seats. The remaining two seats went to independent candidates. Togo's Independent Electoral Commission was created in 2000, replacing the National Election Commission, and is composed of ten ruling-party members and ten members from opposition parties.

The judiciary is still heavily influenced by the president. Traditional courts handle many minor matters. Courts are understaffed and inadequately funded. Pretrial detentions are lengthy, and prisons are severely overcrowded. Killing, arbitrary arrest, and torture continue, although they have abated. Security forces commit abuses with impunity, and illegal detention is common. Human rights groups are closely monitored and sometimes harassed.

A number of private newspapers publish in Lome, but independent journalists are subject to harassment and the perpetual threat of various criminal charges. There are more than a dozen independent newspapers that publish sporadically, and at least 20 private radio stations. Most of the independent broadcast media outlets, however, offer little vibrant local news coverage or commentary. The government controls the state broadcast media and allows little opposition access. The Press and Communication Code of 1998 declares in its first article that the media are free, but restricts press freedom in most of the 108 other articles. It is libelous to "offend the honor, dignity or esteem" of the president and other government leaders; offenders can be sentenced to up to six months in prison. The Togolese Media Observatory, which includes both government and private journalists, was established in November 1999 and is charged with protecting press freedom and improving the professionalism of journalists.

There were several attacks on the press in 2001. At least four journalists were detained, a radio station was temporarily closed, and a weekly newspaper seized. Three of the four journalists were released in November. In January, Radio Jeunesse Espoir, which is run by the Roman Catholic Church, was sealed off by authorities after it announced that a memorial mass would be held for Sylvanus Olympio, the country's first president.

Constitutionally protected religious freedom is generally respected. Freedom of assembly is allowed, but is often restricted among the government's political opponents. Demonstrations are often banned or violently halted. Ethnic discrimination is rife among the country's 40 ethnic groups. Political and military power is narrowly held by members of a few ethnic groups from northern Togo, especially Eyadéma's Kabye-

ethnic group. Southerners dominate the country's commerce, and violence occasionally flares between the two groups.

Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, women's opportunities for education and employment are limited. A husband may legally bar his wife from working or may receive her earnings. Customary law bars women's rights in divorce and denies inheritance rights to widows. Violence against women is common. Female genital mutilation is widely practiced by the country's northern ethnic groups. A 1998 law prohibiting the practice is not enforced. Several organizations promote the rights of women. Child trafficking is a problem.

Togo's constitution includes the right to form and join unions, but essential workers are excluded. Health care workers may not strike. Only 20 percent of the labor force is unionized. Unions have the right to bargain collectively, but most labor agreements are brokered by the government in tripartite talks with unions and management.

## Tonga

Polity: Traditional  
monarchy

Economy: Capitalist  
Population: 100,000  
PPP: na

Life Expectancy: 71  
Ethnic Groups: Polynesian  
Capital: Nuku'alofa

Political Rights: 5  
Civil Liberties: 3  
Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

Following revelations that a royally appointed "court jester," American businessman Jesse Bogdonoff, had swindled the kingdom out of \$26 million held in the Tonga Trust Fund, two cabinet ministers were forced to resign in late September 2001. Shortly thereafter, the elderly king's health worsened, which led to a leadership crisis and struggle for power between two of his heirs. Several roads in the capital city were blocked off by armed palace guards in November.

Tonga is made up of 169 islands in the South Pacific, with a predominantly Polynesian population. It was unified as a kingdom under King George Tupou I in 1845. In 1970, Tonga became an independent member of the Commonwealth after 70 years of British influence. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV has reigned since 1945. Tonga gained full membership in the United Nations in 1999. The king appointed his younger son, 41-year-old prince Lavaka 'Ulukalala Ata, as prime minister in January 2000.

The 30-seat parliament serves a three-year term and consists of 12 ministers from the privy council (cabinet), nine nobles selected by and from Tonga's 33 noble families, and nine People's Representatives (commoners) elected by universal suffrage. The government has not responded to the democratic opposition's call for holding direct elections for all 30 parliamentary seats and allowing the parliament, rather than the king, to select the privy council. However, the government has allowed a democratic party to participate in elections and hold political rallies. In August 1992, reform-ori-

ented commoner representatives, led by Akilisi Pohiva, formed the pro-democracy movement and won six commoner seats in the 1993 elections. In 1994, the movement organized the People's Party (PP), Tonga's first political party. In the January 1996 elections, PP candidates took a majority of the commoner seats. The pro-democracy movement organized a convention to discuss a new, more democratic constitution (the current one has remained virtually unchanged since 1875) in January 1999. The government did not endorse the meeting but showed a more relaxed attitude by allowing non-Tongans to attend the meeting and government civil servants to participate in their personal capacity. In the March 1999 elections, pro-democracy candidates, from what had been renamed the Human Rights and Democracy Movement (HRDM), won five of the popularly elected seats. Most candidates promised to support some degree of political change, although there has been no significant challenge thus far to the role and powers of the king. The next general election is scheduled for the first half of 2002.

The government has also been more receptive to the pro-democracy movement's call for greater transparency and accountability. In 1999, former Lands Minister Fakafanua stood trial for charges of bribery, misuse of public funds, abuse of power, and fraud. Prime Minister Lavaka began pushing for reforms of the government and civil service in early 2001, instituting a major cabinet reshuffle and ordering sweeping reviews of government structure and key areas of policy. In July, the government confirmed a plan to gradually reduce the size of the civil service. However, corruption and abuse of authority remained a problem. A senior customs officer was beaten and left for dead after he brought a smuggling scandal involving a prominent businessman to light.

The Tongan economy continued to struggle. Like many other Pacific Islands nations trying to create alternative economic development options, Tonga was implicated in money laundering activities and was blacklisted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In August 2001, however, Tonga was removed from the list after the government made administrative and legislative changes to address the problem. Tonga received military logistics aid worth nearly \$170,000 from China after shifting diplomatic ties from Taiwan to China in 1999. In July 2001, annual discussions between Tonga and New Zealand led to the signing of a bilateral aid agreement, whereby Tonga would receive an allocation of \$2.3 million.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Tongans do not have the means to democratically change their government. The 1875 constitution grants the king and hereditary nobles a perpetual majority in parliament with a total of 21 out of 30 seats. This allows legislation to be passed without the assent of the popularly elected People's Representatives, whose nine seats represent roughly 95 percent of the population. Nevertheless, the commoner representatives have managed, on occasion, to reject legislation when joined by some nobles. The king has broad executive powers, appoints the prime minister, and appoints and heads the privy council. The king and the nobility also hold a preeminent position in society through substantial land holdings.

Criticisms against the king, his family, and the government are not well tolerated. In 1985, Pohiva disclosed that assemblymen granted themselves pay raises, and has faced harassment since. In the early 1990s, he was fined for allegedly defaming the crown prince. In 1998, the supreme court acquitted Pohiva of criminal libel charges for a statement regarding the business dealings of the king's daughter; instead, he was found

guilty of two defamation charges over comments about Police Minister Clive Edwards. In February, the deputy editor of a New Zealand-based Tongan newspaper was arrested following the publication of an article about Edwards, and was charged with criminal defamation. Michael Field, a correspondent for Agence France-Presse, has been denied entry into Tonga since 1993, after writing about Tonga's pro-democracy movement and uncovering a government scheme to sell Tongan passports and citizenship to non-nationals.

The government weekly *Tonga Chronicle* carries some opposition views. There are several private newspapers, including the *Times of Tonga*, *Kele'a*, and an outspoken Roman Catholic Church newsletter. Political coverage on the Tonga Broadcast Commission's Radio Tonga favors the government, and the state owns the country's two television stations. Television Tonga, a new public television station, was officially launched in July 2000. At the beginning of 2001, the HRDM launched a low-key campaign to secure licenses to operate radio and television stations in a bid to sway public opinion.

Religious freedom is respected in this predominantly Christian society. Long-standing ethnic tensions between Tongans and Chinese immigrants worsened throughout 2001, with numerous cases of racially motivated violence being reported. In November, the government announced a tightening of its immigration rules, including the introduction of a "skills test." As a result, roughly 600 foreigners, mainly Chinese, will be forced to leave the country when their work permits expire.

There are no significant restrictions on freedom of assembly. The 1964 Trade Union Act recognizes the right of workers to form independent unions. None has formed because most Tongans engage in subsistence agriculture. The king appoints all judges, and the lower levels of the judiciary are not independent. The supreme court is independent and uses expatriate judges.

Citizens are free to travel domestically and abroad. In July, the Tongan Nationality Act was amended so that children of Tongan women married to foreigners would be entitled to claim automatic Tongan citizenship. Women generally occupy a subordinate role in this male-dominated society. Few women participate in the formal labor force, they cannot own land or hold noble titles, and they are severely underrepresented in politics.

## Trinidad and Tobago

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 3\*  
 Civil Liberties: 3\*  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 1,300,000  
 PPP: \$8,176  
 Life Expectancy: 71



Ethnic Groups: Black (40 percent), East Indian (40 percent), mixed (18 percent), other, including white and Chinese (2 percent)

Capital: Port-of-Spain

**Ratings Change:** Trinidad and Tobago's political rights and civil liberties ratings declined from 2 to 3, and its status changed from Free to Partly Free, due to a virtual breakdown in the parliamentary system as a result of two disputed national elections, growing corruption, and continued problems with the police.

**Overview:** At the end of 2001, Trinidad and Tobago was plunged into a major political crisis after Prime Minister Basdeo Panday of the United National Congress (UNC) was forced to turn power over to his bitter foe, Patrick Manning of the People's National Movement (PNM), following a disputed December 10, 2001, election. Both the UNC and the PNM had captured 18 of parliament's 36 seats, and a post-election truce agreed to by Panday and Manning resulted in President Arthur Robinson, whose post is largely ceremonial, being allowed to decide the winner, a choice both contenders swore to abide by. However, after Robinson chose Manning, Panday accused the president of violating the constitution and backed out of the deal, calling for new elections. Declaring the week-old Manning administration to be illegitimate, Panday refused to agree to a speaker for parliament, thereby preventing the new legislature from going into session.

The announcement of the December general elections, the second such poll in a year, came after three cabinet ministers were sacked for criticizing Panday's handling of alleged corruption at a government agency that runs state hospitals and the state oil company, Petrotrin. Throughout the year, the Panday government never appeared to recover from a 55-day stalemate that brought government to a virtual standstill in the aftermath of the December 2000 elections, an impasse that was finally ended on February 14, 2001, when Robinson agreed to appoint seven defeated UNC candidates to the senate, as demanded by the British-trained Panday. The open conflict of powers between the two men—a confrontation that deepened after Panday's UNC won another term in the elections—was considered by most independent observers to put a great strain on the country's institutional stability. When the oil-rich republic went to the polls in December for a second time in a year, local business leaders expressed concern about the effect the political standoff would have on Trinidad and Tobago's booming economy.

Trinidad and Tobago, a member of the Commonwealth, achieved independence in 1962. The 1976 constitution established the two-island nation as a republic, with a president elected by a majority of both houses of parliament, replacing the former governor-general. Executive authority remains vested in the prime minister. The bicam-

eral parliament consists of a 36-member house of representatives elected for five years and a 31-member senate, with 25 senators appointed by the prime minister and 6 by the opposition.

In the 1986 elections, the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR), a coalition led by Robinson that bridged traditional political differences between black and East Indian communities, soundly defeated the black-based People's National Movement (PNM), which had ruled for 30 years. The coalition unraveled when Panday, the country's most prominent East Indian politician, was expelled; he then formed the East Indian-based UNC.

In July 1991, *Jamaat-al-Muslimeen*, a small radical Muslim group, staged a coup attempt in Port of Spain. The prime minister and eight cabinet members were held hostage for four days, and 23 people died in bombings at the police headquarters, the state television station, and the parliamentary building.

At the beginning of the 1990s, tensions increased between black and East Indian communities, each roughly 40 percent of the population, as the latter edged towards numerical, and thus political, advantage. In December 1991 Patrick Manning led the PNM to victory by taking 21 of 36 parliamentary seats. Manning's government deregulated the economy and floated the currency, but the social costs of these economic reforms caused the PNM's popularity to decline.

Manning called snap elections for November 6, 1995. Voting ran largely along ethnic lines, with East Indians voting overwhelmingly for the UNC and blacks for the PNM. Each party won 17 seats on Trinidad. The NAR retained its two seats on Tobago. The NAR entered into a coalition with the UNC in exchange for a ministerial position for former Prime Minister Robinson and a promise of greater autonomy for Tobago. UNC leader Panday, a lawyer and former trade unionist, became Trinidad's first prime minister of East Indian descent.

In March 1996 Robinson was elected president. In 1997 there were growing accusations about sweetheart contracts and patronage jobs, and Panday responded by assailing the "lies, half truths and innuendoes" of the opposition press.

In 1999, the Panday government brushed aside criticism from international human rights groups and allowed ten of the more than 100 prisoners on death row to be hanged, in part out of concern over the islands' growing drug trade. The local appeal of the move was underscored when the government used the day that the first three men were executed to announce the holding of local elections the following month. Despite the move, the PNM, led by former Prime Minister Manning, made strong gains in the July 12 vote, in a contest marked by appeals along racial lines. On New Year's Eve 1999, the chairman of a regional development corporation, who had criticized corruption in the government's unemployment program, was murdered after complaining to Panday that his local government minister had made threats against him.

During his first five-year term in office, Panday presided over an oil- and gas-rich economy that had become the powerhouse among the smaller nations of the Caribbean basin. However, in the bitterly contested December 2000 elections, that record was clouded by worries about increasing drug crime and the country's growing reputation as a way station for Colombian cartels shipping cocaine northward to the United States. Following a campaign marred by opposition claims of electoral corruption and worries about an upsurge of violent crime, Panday's UNC won 19 parliamentary seats to the PNM's 16, with the NAR winning 1 of the 2 on the island of Tobago. The hard-fought



contest boosted electoral participation by 13 percent—76 percent of the nation's 947,447 eligible voters cast ballots—with a large number of young people turning out to vote. The intractable ethnic divide between the islands' East Indian and African communities also helped to keep the vote close. In the aftermath of his party's defeat, Manning said he was considering charges against two victorious UNC candidates who, he said, had filed false nominating petitions as a result of holding dual citizenship. The PNM also claimed that the UNC had tried to pad voter rolls in highly competitive districts. Panday's swearing-in ceremony was delayed by nine days because of recounts in several constituencies and the threat of legal action by the PNM. On December 31, 2000, President Robinson refused to swear in six nominees to Panday's cabinet who had been defeated in the election, saying such appointments "undermine democracy."

During 2001, Jamaat-al-Muslimeen, one of the most radical Islamic organizations in the Americas, came under increased scrutiny. On September 19, a man with ties to the Trinidadian organization, which authorities say they believe is linked to international terrorist Osama bin Laden, pled guilty in U.S. federal court in Fort Lauderdale to unlawful possession of a machine gun. U.S. officials say that the man, who was detained in a U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms sting operation, had come to Florida to buy as many as sixty AK-47 assault rifles and ten MAC-10 submachine guns with silencers.

In July 2001, Panday lashed out at a Transparency International report that rated Trinidad, for the first time, as a country with high levels of official corruption. The group put Trinidad 31st out of 91 countries on its index of corruption, with a rating of 5.3 out of 10. Panday, who is already engaged in a long-running feud with prominent members of the local press, denied that there was corruption in his administration and claimed that Transparency International was repeating "rumors and propaganda that are being spread about my country."

As a result of the 2000 electoral schism, political wrangling between the two major parties continued throughout 2001. During the short year-end campaign, Manning promised to reduce personal and corporate taxes, increase spending on the elderly, and settle a billion-dollar salary arrearage with more than 40,000 public servants. The UNC pointed to economic growth averaging around four percent since the party came to office in 1995. In the run-up to the December 10 vote, a new political party, Team Unity, headed by a former deputy political director of the UNC, fielded 30 candidates for the parliamentary election.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago can change their government democratically, although the disputed 2000 and 2001 elections were emblematic of the racial tensions that continued to dominate electoral contests. The UNC's narrow win in the 2000 contest led the opposition to accuse it of registering hundreds of voters in districts where they did not live. In response, the government allocated \$1.6 million to clean up the electoral lists.

The judiciary is independent, although subject to some political pressure, and the Privy Council in London serves as the recourse of ultimate appeal. As a result of rising crime rates, the court system is severely backlogged, in some cases for up to five years, with an estimated 20,000 criminal cases awaiting trial. Prisons are grossly overcrowded; the government does permit visits to them by human rights monitors, who in general operate freely. There are more than 100 prisoners on death row.

In May 1999, the government withdrew as a state party from the American Convention on Human Rights, which prohibits countries from extending the death Penalty beyond those crimes for which it was in effect at the time the treaty was ratified. In June three men, including the reputed drug lord Dole Chadee, were hanged for their role in the 1994 murder of a couple and their two children—the first executions in five years—and their executions were followed by seven more within a month. In June 2000, the country withdrew entirely from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Amnesty International, at odds with Prime Minister Basdeo Panday's government over the death Penalty, charged that "as a consequence ... international human rights experts will no longer be able to examine the claims of those aggrieved citizens who may have suffered violations of their most fundamental rights."

Street crime is on the rise, with the consumption and trafficking of illegal drugs considered to be largely responsible for the increase in violent crime. Some estimates suggested that 80 percent of all crimes committed are narcotics related. The increasing frequency with which illicit drugs are used on the islands has been accompanied by significant growth of the drug trade. The islands' close proximity to South America make them ideal staging areas for cocaine traveling both by land and by sea into the United States and Europe. Drug corruption extends to Trinidad and Tobago's business community and a significant amount of money is believed to be laundered through front companies. There have been more than two dozen drug-related killings in recent years on the islands, including the still unsolved murder of former Attorney General Selwyn Richardson. Recently legislation was approved that provides severe Penalties for money laundering and requires that major financial transactions be strictly monitored. The government works closely with U.S. law enforcement agencies to track drug shipments in and out of the country. The Panday government has won some points for its antidrug efforts and has been a principal proponent of a regional witness-protection program. It has also signed several antinarcotics accords with the United States.

Corruption in the police force—often drug-related—is endemic, and law enforcement inefficiency results in the dismissal of some criminal cases. In December 2000, Panday admitted that, despite government efforts to finance reforms, something was "fundamentally wrong" with the police force. The police have won praise, however, for recently establishing a branch of Crime Stoppers, an international organization that promotes community involvement in preventing and informing on crime through a hot line.

The press is privately owned and vigorous and offers pluralistic views; the broadcast media are both private and public. Panday's own relationship with the press, however, has been rocky. In May 1997, the government floated a restrictive journalistic code of conduct that the Media Association of Trinidad and Tobago said led to instances in which reporters and other press workers were physically attacked. In 1998, Panday's refusal to allow the renewal of the work permit of a respected Barbadian broadcaster became a regional cause célèbre. Panday also reiterated his refusal to sign the Inter-American Press Association's Chapultepec Declaration on press freedom until it addressed instances of media dissemination of "lies, half-truths and innuendoes." In April 1999, Information Minister Rupert Griffith reminded the media of the government's power to grant and revoke broadcast licenses and warned that local media operations were being examined "under a microscope." In 2000, a high-court judge ordered Panday to pay newspaper publisher Ken Gordon, an Afro-Trinidadian, \$120,000 for defamation, after Panday had called him a "pseudo-racist."

Domestic violence and other violence against women is extensive and remains a low priority for police and prosecutors. However, in a 1999 landmark ruling, the court of appeals overturned a death sentence and reduced the charge from murder to manslaughter in the case of a woman the court said suffered from battered-wife syndrome. Persons infected with HIV/AIDS are the focus of community ostracism and governmental neglect.

Freedom of association and assembly is respected. Labor unions are well organized, powerful, and politically active, although union membership has declined. Strikes are legal and occur frequently.

## ↓ Tunisia

Polity: Presidential  
(dominant party)

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 9,700,000

PPP: \$5,957

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Arab (98 percent), other (2 percent)

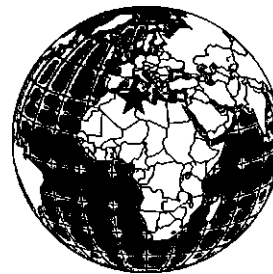
Capital: Tunis

Trend Arrow: Tunisia received a downward trend arrow because of an intensifying campaign of harassment against political opposition.

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 5

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Escalating government suppression of dissent in 2001 met with unprecedented defiance from Tunisian rights groups and opposition politicians. As President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali's ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) prepared to change the constitution to allow him to seek a fourth term, rights activists called for democratic reform and an end to one-party rule.

Following Tunisia's independence from France in 1956, President Habib Bourguiba pursued secular, pro-Western policies while moving toward social liberalization and modernization. In 1987, Prime Minister Ben Ali succeeded Bourguiba, who was deemed medically unfit to govern, and offered brief promise of an open political system. However, his rule became increasingly autocratic and repressive. Intolerant of public criticism, he has allowed almost no credible opposition to exist; opposition parties have been banned or crippled by arrests and harassment. The government has consistently targeted trade unionists, human rights activists, student leaders, and the media, but it treats Islamists most harshly, claiming the need to avoid the kind of unrest seen in neighboring Algeria. Ben Ah has escaped meaningful criticism from Western governments, in part because much of the worst abuse is aimed at Islamic fundamentalists, but also because Tunisia is an important trading partner for several European countries.

The 1959 constitution provides for a president with broad powers, including the right to select the prime minister and to rule by decree during legislative adjournments. Under Ben Ah, the role of prime minister was reduced from leader of the government

to "coordinator" of ministerial activities. The unicameral legislature is elected to five-year terms by universal suffrage. The president appoints a governor to each of Tunisia's 23 provinces, and municipal councils are elected.

Presidential and legislative elections held in October 1999 were widely described as a farce. Despite the prior amendment of electoral laws to relax restrictions on presidential candidacy and to mandate a 20 percent allotment of legislative seats to opposition candidates, Ben Ali won 99.4 percent of the presidential vote and his party, the RCD, won 80 percent of parliamentary seats. Elections in May 2000 for seats in Tunisia's 257 municipalities were equally suspect; the RCD won 94 percent of seats after running unopposed in nearly 75 percent of municipalities. In both elections, opposition candidates openly acknowledged that their role was largely symbolic.

What Amnesty International called "an increasing, relentless campaign" against government critics drew unprecedented protests from Tunisian activists and from the international community. Among the most notable cases, a Tunis court disbanded the leadership of the Tunisian Human Rights League (LTDH) in February 2001 after two RCD-affiliated members of the League brought a suit charging that the League's October 2000 elections were unfair. In June, authorities arrested leading rights activist and journalist Sihem Ben Sedrine and charged her with "spreading false information aimed at undermining the public order." Ben Sedrine was freed in August after a vocal solidarity campaign, but was attacked, along with her family and other rights activists, by police on her way to a celebration for her release. Her right to travel abroad was revoked in September. Journalist Taoufik Ben Brik and his family suffered ongoing harassment and intimidation by authorities for criticizing Tunisian human rights abuses. Reacting to the LTDH case, the European Parliament sent a harsh statement condemning harassment of human rights activists. In March, 272 political activists, intellectuals, professors, and trade unionists published a petition opposing a constitutional amendment allowing Ben Ali to run for reelection in 2004. Despite calls for democratic reform, the amendment is widely seen as a certainty given the RCD's domination of parliament.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Tunisians cannot change their government democratically. The ruling RCD and its predecessor parties have controlled the political system since independence. No political party based on religion or region is permitted, and all parties must be licensed. Despite a slight relaxation of restrictions on opposition candidates in the 1999 presidential elections, the elections were neither open nor competitive. The two opposition leaders who met the stringent conditions placed on potential candidates were little-known figures who received almost no media attention.

The judiciary is subject to political interference by the president and the government. In July, Human Rights Watch quoted from an open letter to Ben Ali from a Tunis civil court judge charging that judges "render verdicts dictated to them by political authorities and enjoy no discretion to exercise any objectivity or critical scrutiny." Despite 1999 legal reforms that broadened the state's definition of torture and reduced the length of incommunicado detention, illegal detention and torture continued in 2001. Suspected Islamist sympathizers face severe repression. Actual or suspected members of the outlawed An-Nahdha movement constitute the majority of an estimated 1,000 political prisoners in Tunisia, according to Human Rights Watch. Many others are in

exile. Former political prisoners and their families are often deprived of their passports, monitored and searched by police, and discriminated against with regard to employment.

In April 2001, parliament amended the press code, eliminating the offense of "defaming public order," and reduced the number of press offenses punishable by prison terms. The government uses newsprint subsidies and control over public advertising revenues to limit dissent and encourage self-censorship. Prepublication submission requirements allow authorities to seize publications at will. Foreign publications are censored. Domestic broadcasting is government controlled and presents only pro-government views. In January, police surrounded the home of journalist Taoufik Ben Brick, where about 100 people had gathered for the launch of a new paper edited by Ben Brick's brother, Jalel Zoghalmi. Officers barred entry to the house, confiscated copies of the paper, and beat a student activist who was present. On February 3, Zoghalmi was assaulted by unidentified individuals, and on February 6, Zoghalmi and seven companions were again beaten by plainclothes police. Ben Brik's sister and brother-in-law were charged in September with "participating in an altercation," "breach of accepted standards of good behavior," and "being insulting" after a neighbor of the couple filed a complaint, according to Reporters Sans Frontieres. On October 27, border authorities confiscated documents, a computer, and an audio tape from Taoufik Ben Brik when the journalist was on his way to Paris to promote a book. The political weekly *ElMawkif* was seized in January, the October issue of *Le Monde Diplomatique* was banned in October, and a London-based Arabic television station was taken to court twice in 2001 for its reporting on the arrest of Sihem Ben Sedrine. Opposition activists broadcast their messages into Tunisia via satellite and Internet.

Permission is required for public gatherings. On February 12, a Tunis court nullified the 2000 election to the leadership of the Tunisian Human Rights League based on a complaint filed by four League members who charged that the vote was unfair. On June 21, an appeals court upheld the ruling and ordered a new election. According to Human Rights Watch, the League continued to operate, but its meetings were sometimes prevented by police. Moncef Marzouki, former spokesman of the National Council of Liberties in Tunisia, saw his 12-month prison sentence, handed down in December 2000, suspended in September 2001. Marzouki continued to live under police surveillance and a travel ban.

Islam is the state religion, and it is practiced under intense government scrutiny. The government controls and subsidizes mosques and pays the salaries of prayer leaders. Proselytizing by non-Muslims is prohibited. Other religions are generally tolerated, with the exception of Baha'i, whose adherents may not practice publicly.

General equality for women has advanced more in Tunisia than elsewhere in the Arab world. Inheritance law is based on *Sharia* (Islamic law) and discriminates against women, although the government enacted legislation in 1998 to improve women's rights in matters of divorce and property ownership. Women are well represented in academia and the professions. Twenty-one seats in the national legislature went to women in October 1999 elections.

Tunisia's sole labor federation, the Tunisian General Federation of Labor, operates under severe government constraints. Workers may bargain collectively and strike.

## ↑ Turkey

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (military-influenced) Political Rights: 4  
Civil Liberties: 5  
Status: Partly Free

Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 66,300,000

PPP: \$6,380

Life Expectancy: 69

Ethnic Groups: Turkish (80 percent), Kurdish (20 percent)

Capital: Ankara

**Trend Arrow:** Turkey received an upward trend arrow for passing a package of constitutional reforms, including limiting the death Penalty, lifting restrictions on public rallies, and allowing broadcasts in Kurdish.



### Overview:

The debate over conditions for accession to the European Union (EU) continued to dominate Turkey's political scene in 2001. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's coalition government weathered several political storms and, after defusing a financial crisis in February, managed to push through a package of key economic measures in the spring. Progress on the political and legal reforms required to promote democracy, the rule of law, and human rights was more unsteady. Turkey's reluctance to undertake these reforms reflects a struggle within the country between those who advocate membership in the EU as the route to modernity and prosperity, and the entrenched interests of those who champion maintaining the status quo as the way to protect the Turkish founding principles of national unity and secularism. However, in October, the Turkish parliament passed a series of 34 amendments to the constitution, which covered a wide range of issues including freedom of expression and association, gender equality, and the role of the military in the political process.

Mustapha Kemal Atatürk, who launched a reform program under which Turkey abandoned much of its Ottoman and Islamic heritage, proclaimed Turkey a republic in 1923. His secular, nationalistic legacy has profoundly influenced Turkish politics ever since, most notably in the post-World War II period. The doctrine of "Kemalism" has been used by the military to justify three coups since 1960. Turkey returned to civilian rule in 1983.

In 1995, the Islamist *Refah* (Welfare) Party took advantage of discontent over corruption, high inflation, and unemployment to win a majority in general elections, and formed Turkey's first Islamist-led coalition government in June 1996. Refah Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan almost immediately found himself at odds with the military, which regards itself as the guardian of Turkish secularism, over such government policies as allowing female civil servants to wear traditional headscarves. Erbakan resigned under intense military pressure in June 1997. Refah was outlawed in January 1998 for "conspiring against the secular order," and Erbakan and five other Refah leaders were banned from politics for five years. Most remaining Refah Members of Parliament launched the Virtue Party in February 1998.

A ruling coalition of the center-right Motherland (ANAP), the social-democratic

Democratic Left (DSP), and the conservative Democratic Turkey parties under ANAP's Mesut Yılmaz collapsed in November 1998 over corruption charges. The DSP's Ecevit then headed an interim government until the April 1999 general elections, when the DSP won 22 percent of the vote. Ecevit assembled an unlikely coalition of the DSP, the far-right National Action Party (MHP), and ANAP, and won a vote of confidence in June 1999.

Despite several challenges to its cohesiveness, the governing coalition has proved remarkably stable. Party leaders unanimously approved the candidacy of Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who was elected president by parliament in May 2000. Sezer was the chief justice of the constitutional court and had been an outspoken advocate of democratic reforms. The first Turkish president who is neither a politician nor a general, he has urged the loosening of antiterror laws and other legislation that restricts free speech, political parties, and the rights of Kurds. The president is far less vulnerable to military pressure than government ministers are, and so he may impart a sense of stability as well as advance his own agenda. Sezer demonstrated his commitment to the rule of law and political reform in August 2000, when he twice vetoed a government decree that would facilitate the removal of public servants suspected of fundamentalist or separatist sympathies. Asserting that laws should be subject to parliamentary approval, Sezer clashed with military leaders who accused him of hindering the fight against radical Islam, and his poll ratings soared.

Since being formally declared a candidate for EU membership in 1999, Turkey has outlined a set of economic and political goals that it must meet in order to fulfill the membership criteria. On the economic side, Turkey has made considerable progress, lifting obstacles to privatization, attracting foreign investment, and tackling corruption. Further work needs to be done to expand growth and to close a significant income gap between Turkey and the EU; the average median income in Turkey is about a third that of Europe. Turkey experienced serious financial and economic crises in November 2000 and February 2001, but a financial collapse was averted when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank provided emergency loans worth \$15 billion. Following countrywide demonstrations in April, the government adopted a major package of economic reforms. Under the stewardship of new Economy Minister Kemal Dervis, a substantial number of laws were pushed through in the spring of 2001, including measures to reform the banking sector and privatize the telecommunications industry. Turkey received an additional \$3 billion loan from the IMF in November 2001.

Political reform, including constitutional reforms and measures to improve human rights, train civil servants, curb the military's role in politics, and prevent terrorism while upholding freedom of expression and Kurdish cultural rights, has presented a greater challenge. The army's insistence upon protecting Turkish society from the twin threats of political Islam and Kurdish separatism continues to impede political progress, although 2001 was marked by a greater willingness by both politicians and the media to openly debate the military's role in the country's political affairs. Nevertheless, Kurdish and Islamist political parties, organizations, and individuals faced severe harassment, arrest, and other restrictions on political and social freedom throughout the year. In June, the constitutional court ordered the dissolution of the Virtue party on the grounds of antiseccular activities. The breakup of Virtue led to the creation of two new parties, the conservative *Saadet* (Happiness) Party and the reformist Justice and Development Party, led by the popular former mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. On Octo-

ber 3, the parliament adopted a package of 34 constitutional amendments by 474 votes to 16, which introduced new provisions on issues such as freedom of thought and expression, the prevention of torture, the strengthening of civilian authority, freedom of association, and gender equality.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Turkish citizens can change their government democratically, though the military wields considerable influence in political matters, especially regarding defense and security. The 1982 constitution provides for a parliament, the Grand National Assembly (currently 550 seats), which is directly elected to five-year terms. The assembly elects the president to one seven-year term. The National Security Council (NSC), a military-dominated body, has a policy-setting role. One amendment passed in October aims to reduce the military's influence in politics by increasing the number of civilian representatives in the NSC from five to nine (there are five military representatives), as well as emphasizing the "advisory" nature of the body.

The European Commission's 2001 report on Turkey's progress toward EU accession stated that "the constitutional amendments adopted by the Turkish Parliament on 3 October 2001 are a significant step towards strengthening guarantees in the fields of human rights and fundamental freedoms." However, it cautioned that "despite these changes, a number of restrictions on the exercise of fundamental freedoms have remained" and noted that the extent to which individuals would enjoy real improvements in their rights would be dependent on the details of implementing legislation as well as the practical application of the law.

The 16-year-old conflict between the Turkish military and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has claimed as many as 37,000 lives, has continued only sporadically since the PKK announced the end of its insurrection in February 2000. (Their leader, Abdullah Ocalan, was captured in 1999 and is currently on death row.) Ocalan himself renounced separatism and called for reconciliation, but a few splinter Kurdish elements have vowed to continue fighting for a separate Kurdish state. In 1999, the Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP) won control of 37 local administrations despite attempts by Turkey's chief prosecutor to ban it. However, four southeastern provinces remain under emergency law. Civil governors throughout the region may authorize military operations, expel citizens suspected of Kurdish sympathies, ban demonstrations, and confiscate publications.

During 2000, the government began a campaign of reconciliation in the impoverished region, sending the army to build roads and houses, teach literacy, and set up youth clubs. Local governors reported that more than 2,000 people had returned to their homes in the southeast under a new "return to village" project. However, many of the hundreds of thousands of Kurds whose homes were razed or burned by the military have been placed in "central villages," which are heavily secured by soldiers in order to prevent villagers from organizing against the state. The army has forcibly depopulated more than half the 5,000 villages and hamlets in the region, and more than 250,000 villagers remain unable to return to their homes.

The judiciary is susceptible to government influence through the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors, which names judges and prosecutors to the high courts and controls appointments and promotions of those in lower courts. The council is appointed by the president, and its decisions are not subject to review. Over the past year, 22



eases involving 38 civilians have been tried by military courts on charges related to the freedom of expression. Those held for state security court (SSC) offenses, which include political violence, narcotics, organized crime, and some nonviolent political offenses, can legally be detained for up to four days without access to family or lawyers. Detentions of up to ten days continue to be permitted in the southeast. Two representatives of HADEP, Serdar Tanis and Ebubekir Deniz, remain missing following their detention at a police station in January 2001. The revised Article 38 of the constitution limits the death Penalty to cases of terrorist crimes and to times of war. Although death sentences continue to be imposed, a de facto moratorium on carrying them out has been maintained since 1984.

Prison conditions are abysmal, characterized by widespread torture, sexual abuse, and denial of medical attention to inmates. The parliamentary human rights committee has published nine reports on torture in Turkey since May 2000, based on inspections of police stations and prisons between 1998 and 2000. However, little has been done to stop the practice, and the conviction and sentencing of offending officials is rare. Prison riots occur frequently because of overcrowding and anger over conditions. In December 2000, security forces stormed more than 20 prisons in an effort to end a hunger strike by inmates protesting plans to move them from large dormitory-based prisons to newly constructed "F-type" prisons, in which prisoners are housed in smaller cells in relative isolation. At least 32 people, including two soldiers, were killed in the unrest, which lasted four days in some areas. Sustained hunger strikes by prisoners and their relatives over the new prison format have led to the deaths of 45 people thus far, while many others have suffered permanent brain damage. In July 2001, Justice Minister Hikmet Sami Turk announced that the controversial "F-type" prisons would no longer be commissioned.

Freedom of expression in Turkey is limited by the criminal code, which forbids insulting state officials and incitement to racial or ethnic hatred, and by the Anti-Terror Law, which prohibits separatist propaganda. In December 2000 a state security court ruled to ban the publication or broadcast of "statements from illegal organizations or information liable to incite hatred, hostility, or crimes." The military, Kurds, and political Islam are highly sensitive subjects and frequently earn journalists criminal Penalties, harassment, detention, or imprisonment. Between January and November 2001, some 80 journalists had been imprisoned for political activities or for allegedly infringing various laws, according to the European Commission's annual report. Some estimates place the total number of people imprisoned in connection with freedom of expression issues at around 9,000. The Supreme Board of Radio and Television (RTUK) temporarily suspended a number of independent broadcasters, and in August banned the BBC World Service and Deutsche Welle on the grounds that they "threatened national security," according to Human Rights Watch. One of the constitutional amendments passed in October allows broadcasts to be made in Kurdish. However, media outlets that attempted to publish or broadcast in Kurdish were suppressed by authorities in November. In a positive development, President Sezer vetoed new legislation in mid-June aimed at increasing government vetting of broadcasting, claiming that it would threaten media freedom.

Authorities may restrict freedom of association and assembly on the grounds of maintaining public order, although official authorization will no longer be required for those wishing to stage public rallies. Pro-Kurdish political parties and nongovernmen-

tal organizations face severe harassment and restrictions on their activities, particularly in the southeast. In September 2001, police raided the Turkish Human Rights Foundation branch in Diyarbakir and seized computers and confidential medical files concerning the victims of torture. Human rights groups that attempted to document the hunger strikes as well as provide support to the prisoners faced persecution throughout the year. Members of the Human Rights Association were beaten and detained, five of their branches were shut down, and 12 members were charged under the Anti-Terror Law in March. The pro-Kurdish political party HADEP frequently faces difficulties from the authorities.

Islamists continued to face official harassment. According to Human Rights Watch, the ban on women's wearing of the headscarf was "applied with increasing severity against students and civil servants." Teachers and doctors were dismissed for wearing the headscarf on duty, and new regulations prohibited students from taking the June university examinations while wearing a headscarf. A Turkish court in February 2000 had upheld a 1999 decision to strip Merve Kavakci, a Virtue Party Member of Parliament, of her Turkish citizenship because she attempted to take her oath of office while wearing a traditional headscarf. The Virtue Party itself was outlawed in June 2001 by the constitutional court, although the prime minister expressed regret at the decision.

Roughly 99 percent of Turks are Sunni Muslim. Religious freedom is restricted by limits on worship at designated sites, constraints on building houses of worship for minority religions, and government crackdowns on political Islam. A 1998 law placed all mosques under government administration, required official authorization for the construction of mosques, and forbade the wearing of uniforms and masks (including headscarves) by demonstrators. Christian churches continue to face difficulties, particularly with regard to both ownership of property and their legal status. However, the European Commission reported that there have been some signs of "increased tolerance towards certain non-Muslim religious communities."

Women's legal rights received a boost in November 2001 with the passage of a new law that recognizes men and women as equals and accords women equal property rights in the event of a divorce. Social norms make it difficult to prosecute rape cases, and the Penalty for rape may be reduced if a woman was not a virgin prior to her attack. Although the justice ministry banned the practice of "virginity examinations" in 1999, the health minister issued a circular in July 2001 that provides for mandatory exams for female medical students and the expulsion of those proven to be sexually active. The issue of domestic violence against women, as well as legislation that allows for the application of reduced sentences to the perpetrators of such crimes, remains an area of concern.

With the exception of public servants and workers engaged in the protection of life or property, workers may form unions, bargain collectively, and strike. The exception category includes workers in the mining and petroleum industries, sanitation, defense, law enforcement, and education. Tens of thousands of workers have lost their jobs in sectors ranging from banking to automobile manufacturing since the onset of the economic crisis in February 2001.

# Turkmenistan

Polity: Presidential      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Statist        Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 5,500,000    Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$3,347  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Turkmen (77 percent), Uzbek (9 percent),  
 Russian (7 percent), Kazakh (2 percent), other (5 percent)  
 Capital: Ashgabat



## Overview:

Despite its geographical proximity to Afghanistan, Turkmenistan's official political neutrality precluded overt cooperation with the U.S.-declared war on terrorism following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. While granting permission for his country to be used as a base for humanitarian aid purposes, President Saparmurat Niyazov steadfastly refused to allow the coalition to use Turkmenistan to conduct military strikes against the Taliban. Niyazov's isolationist and frequently bizarre policies continued throughout 2001, including introducing further restrictions on the activities of foreigners and banning various art forms deemed to be alien or offensive to the country's Turkmen culture.

The southernmost republic of the former Soviet Union, Turkmenistan was conquered by the Mongols in the thirteenth century and seized by Russia in the late 1800s. Having been incorporated into the U.S.S.R. in 1924, Turkmenistan gained formal independence in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Saparmurat Niyazov, the former head of the Turkmenistan Communist Party, ran unopposed in elections to the newly created post of president in October 1990. After the adoption of a new constitution in 1992, Niyazov was reelected as the sole candidate for a five-year term with a reported 99.5 percent of the vote. The main opposition group, *Agzybirlik*, which was formed in 1989 by leading intellectuals, was banned. Niyazov's tenure as president was extended for an additional five years until 2002 by a 1994 referendum, which exempted him from having to run again in 1997 as originally scheduled. In December 1994 parliamentary elections, only Niyazov's Democratic Party of Turkmenistan (DPT), the renamed Communist Party, was permitted to field candidates.

In the December 12, 1999, elections to the National Assembly (*Mejlis*), every candidate was selected by the government and virtually all were members of the DPT. According to government claims, voter turnout was 98.9 percent. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which cited the lack of provisions for nongovernmental parties to participate and the executive branch's control of the nomination of candidates, refused to send even a limited assessment mission. In a further consolidation of Niyazov's extensive powers, parliament unanimously voted in late December to make him president-for-life. With this decision, Turkmenistan became the first Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) country to formally abandon presidential elections. However, in February 2001, Niyazov announced that a presidential poll would be held in 2010, although he claimed that he would not run.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pen-

tagon, Niyazov announced that the United States could not use his country for military strikes against the Taliban, although Turkmenistan would serve as a base for humanitarian aid. Ashgabat cited the country's official political neutrality as a reason for not participating in the U.S.-led campaign. However, Turkmenistan had maintained good relations with the Taliban in recent years in an attempt to secure safe energy export routes through Afghanistan to destinations including India and China.

Already one of the most closed societies in the world, Turkmenistan took steps throughout 2001 to isolate itself further from the international community through restrictive and often bizarre decrees. President Niyazov announced in April that ballet and opera would be banned as art forms alien to Turkmen culture, while books "misrepresenting" Turkmen history have been removed from libraries and destroyed. A presidential decree in June would require foreigners to pay \$50,000 to marry Turkmen citizens, ostensibly to provide financial support to children in the event of divorce and to protect women from abusive relationships. In September, Niyazov reportedly had completed writing the *Rukhname*, a book meant to serve as a spiritual guide for the nation. These moves followed two decrees in 2000 creating a council to monitor all foreign nationals traveling or living in the country and forbidding Turkmen citizens from holding accounts in foreign banks.

Despite the country's wealth of natural resources, there have been few reforms of the Soviet command system, and the majority of citizens live in poverty. The economy suffers from low levels of gross domestic product (GDP) and major industries remain state owned. Turkmenistan has struggled to bring its energy resources to foreign markets in the face of limited export routes and nonpaying customers. Plans to build a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline, which would extend from Turkmenistan through Azerbaijan and Georgia to Turkey, continued to be delayed for various political and economic reasons.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Turkmenistan cannot change their government democratically. President Saparmurat Niyazov enjoys virtually absolute power over all branches and levels of the government. He has established an extensive cult of personality, including the erection of monuments to his leadership throughout the country. In 1994, he renamed himself Turkmenbashi, or leader of the Turkmen. The country has two national legislative bodies: the unicameral National Assembly (*Mejlis*), composed of 50 members elected in single-mandate constituencies for five-year terms, which is the main legislature; and the People's Council (*Khalk Maslakhaty*), consisting of members of the assembly, 50 directly elected representatives, and various regional and other executive and judicial officials, which meets infrequently to address certain major issues. Neither parliamentary body enjoys genuine independence from the executive. The 1994 and 1999 parliamentary elections were neither free nor fair.

Freedom of speech and the press is severely restricted by the government, which controls all radio and television broadcasts and print media. Reports of dissenting political views are banned, as are even mild forms of criticism of the president. Subscriptions to foreign newspapers, other than Russian ones, are severely restricted. Foreign journalists have few opportunities to visit Turkmenistan and are often limited to certain locations. Only the state-owned Turkmentelekom is permitted to provide Internet access.

The government restricts freedom of religion through means including strict registration requirements. Only Sunni Muslims and Russian Orthodox Christians have been

able to meet the criterion of having at least 500 members. Members of religious groups that are not legally registered by the government, including Baptists, Pentecostals, and Baha'is, are frequently harassed or attacked by security forces. In May, a Baptist, Dmitri Melnichenko, was reportedly called up for military service. He was subsequently detained and tortured for refusing to carry arms or to swear an oath of military allegiance on the grounds of being a conscientious objector. Since independence, Turkmenistan, which is overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim, has enjoyed a modest revival of Islam.

While the constitution guarantees peaceful assembly and association, these rights are restricted in practice. Only one political party, the Niyazov-led Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, has been officially registered. Opposition parties have been banned, and virtually all of their leading members face harassment and detention or have fled abroad. Social and cultural organizations are allowed to function, but often have difficulty registering. The government-controlled Colleagues Union is the only central trade union permitted, and there are no legal guarantees for workers to form or join unions or to bargain collectively.

The judicial system is subservient to the president, who appoints and removes judges without legislative review. The authorities frequently deny rights of due process, including public trials and access to defense attorneys. There are no independent lawyers, with the exception of a few retired legal officials, to represent defendants in trials. Police abuse of suspects and prisoners, often to obtain confessions, is reportedly widespread, and prisons are overcrowded and unsanitary. The security services regularly monitor the activities of those critical of the government.

Citizens are required to carry internal passports for identification. Although residence permits are not required, place of residence is registered in passports. Obtaining passports and exit visas for foreign travel is difficult for most nonofficial travelers and allegedly often requires payment of bribes to government officials. Since the October 7 launch of the U.S.-led air strikes against the Taliban, Turkmenistan has increased security along its previously poorly guarded border with Afghanistan, effectively limiting freedom of movement for those who live in the border region.

A continuing Soviet-style command economy and widespread corruption diminish equality of opportunity. As part of Niyazov's alleged anticorruption campaign, officials accused of corruption are publicly berated by the president, dismissed from their positions, or forced to leave the country. As a consequence, the government has undergone a rapid turnover of personnel, including the July dismissal of Foreign Minister Batyr Berdiev for alleged persistent drunkenness, which many observers attribute to Niyazov's fear of the development of political rivals within his government. Traditional social-religious norms mostly limit professional opportunities for women to the roles of home-maker and mother, and anecdotal reports suggest that domestic violence is common.

## Tuvalu

Polity: Parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 10,000  
 PPP: na  
 Life Expectancy: 67  
 Ethnic Groups: Polynesian (96 percent), other (4 percent)  
 Capital: Funafuti

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Status: Free



### Overview:

In December 2000, Prime Minister Ionatana Ionatana suffered a heart attack and died immediately after a speech at a public function. In February 2001, Faimalaga Luka was elected as his successor by the parliament after a period of official mourning. Tuvalu, along with several other Pacific Island nations, received a request in November from Australia to shelter asylum seekers from the Middle East whom Australia refused to accept. In early December, the government collapsed after four members of parliament turned against the prime minister and voted in support of a no-confidence motion. Koloa Talake, one of the floor-crossers, was elected as prime minister by a slim majority on December 13.

Tuvalu, formerly known as the Ellice Islands, is a small, predominantly Polynesian country, consisting of nine atolls stretching over 500,000 miles of the western Pacific Ocean. The islands were proclaimed a British protectorate with the Gilbert Islands (now independent Kiribati) in 1892 and were formally annexed by Britain in 1915-1916, when the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony was established. The Ellice and Gilbert Islands separated in October 1975, and the former were renamed Tuvalu. The country became an independent member of the Commonwealth in 1978. In Tuvalu's first postindependence general election in September 1971, Dr. Tomasi Puapua was elected prime minister. In April 1999, parliament elected Ionatana Ionatana, a former education minister, as the new prime minister. Tuvalu became the 189th member of the United Nations in 2000.

The primarily subsistence economy consists mainly of coconuts, taro, and fishing. Much of the government's revenue comes from the sale of stamps and coins, the sale of fishing licenses to foreign fishing companies, and remittances by some 1,500 Tuvalu citizens working overseas (mostly as merchant seamen or as phosphate miners on Nauru and Kiribati). Interest from the Tuvalu Trust Fund, established in 1987 by major aid donors and totaling \$35 million in 2000, covers one-fourth of the annual budget. Trust Fund earnings have financed the upgrading of schools and fisheries centers, as well as the devolution of power to local communities.

In 2000, the government found another novel way to bring in revenue. A contract to lease the country's Internet domain name (.tv) to a California firm will bring the country at least \$50 million over a 12-year period. Some of the money has already been used to pave roads and build schools. With a relatively healthy financial situation, Tuvalu can afford to be selective about monetary offers. After careful consideration the government in early July rejected an offer of more than \$2 million per year from the Maharishi Spiritual Movement in return for being allowed to establish a small Vatican-like sovereign city-state near the international airport.

As a low-lying island-state, with a maximum height of just 16 feet above sea level, Tuvalu is highly concerned about the effects of global climate change. Tuvalu is one of 16 countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which urges national action and international cooperation to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. In July, Tuvalu appealed to Australia and New Zealand to help resettle its population in the event that the islands are threatened by rising sea levels. In October, New Zealand agreed to accept an annual quota of Tuvaluan citizens as refugees.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Tuvalu can change their government democratically. The 1978 constitution vests executive power in a prime minister and a cabinet of up to four ministers. The 12-member parliament, or *Fale I Fono*, is directly elected for a four-year term. The prime minister appoints and can dismiss the governor-general, who is a Tuvaluan citizen and represents the queen of England, who is head of state, for a four-year term. The governor-general appoints the cabinet members and can name a chief executive or dissolve parliament if its members cannot agree on one. However, his power to veto government measures was abolished under a constitutional amendment in 1986. Each of the country's nine atolls is administered by directly elected, six-person councils, which are influenced by village-based hereditary elders who wield considerable traditional authority. Political parties are legal, but no formal parties have been established, although there is an opposition group within parliament. Most elections hinge on village-based allegiances rather than policy issues. A planned referendum on the future government of Tuvalu has been delayed until early 2002.

The judiciary is independent. Citizens receive fair public trials with procedural safeguards based on English common law and have a right of ultimate appeal under certain circumstances to the Privy Council in London. The 32-member police force is under civilian control.

Freedom of speech and of the press are respected. The government broadcasts over Radio Tuvalu and publishes the fortnightly newspaper *Tuvalu Echoes* in the Tuvaluan language and English, and there is a monthly religious newsletter. Many islanders have satellite dishes in order to receive foreign TV. Although the majority of the population belongs to the Protestant Church of Tuvalu, all religious faiths can practice freely.

The government respects freedom of assembly and association. Workers are free to join independent trade unions, bargain collectively, and stage strikes. Only the Tuvalu Seamen's Union, with about 600 members, has been organized and registered. No strikes have ever occurred, largely because most of the population is engaged outside the wage economy. Civil servants, teachers, and nurses, who total fewer than 1,000 employees, have formed associations, but these do not yet have union status.

Citizens are free to travel within the country and abroad. Traditional social restrictions limit employment opportunities for women, though many are securing jobs in education and health care and are becoming more politically active. Although gender discrimination exists, violence against women appears rare.

## Uganda

Polity: Dominant party  
 (military-influenced)      Political Rights: 6  
    Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist-  
 statist                              Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 24,000,000  
 PPP: \$1,167  
 Life Expectancy: 42  
 Ethnic Groups: Baganda (17 percent), Karamojong (12 percent), Basogo (8 percent), Iteso (8 percent), Langi (6 percent), Rwanda (6 percent), other (43 percent)  
 Capital: Kampala



### Overview:

President Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) continued in power after comfortably winning presidential and legislative elections in 2001. These elections, however, were held under conditions that called into serious question their legitimacy, due to the manipulation of the process by the incumbent NRM and the existence of current restrictions prohibiting political party activity.

Regional tensions stayed high, as Ugandan military forces remained in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. They had been sent to suppress rebels who had been perpetrating attacks across the border into Uganda. Some of the military have returned to Uganda, but the scope and sustained presence of the Ugandan military have raised the possibility that Uganda is seeking to expand its sphere of influence and establish a de facto buffer area in eastern Congo. Ugandan soldiers have also been accused of profiteering, including dealing in diamonds, timber, and gold. In addition, deteriorating relations with Rwanda raised the possibility of further conflict.

A draft nongovernmental organization (NGO) registration bill under consideration by parliament would tighten conditions under which NGOs could register and function. President Museveni has refused to sign legislation passed by parliament in 2001 that would ease restrictions on the freedom of political parties to function.

Uganda has experienced considerable political instability since independence from Britain in 1962. An increasingly authoritarian president, Milton Obote, was overthrown by Idi Amin in 1971. Amin's brutality and buffoonery made world headlines as hundreds of thousands of people were killed. Amin's 1978 invasion of Tanzania finally led to his demise. Tanzanian forces and Ugandan exiles routed Amin's army and prepared for Obote's return to power in the fraudulent 1980 elections. Obote and his backers from northern Uganda savagely repressed his critics, who were primarily from southern Ugandan ethnic groups. Approximately 250,000 people were killed as political opponents were tortured and murdered and soldiers terrorized the countryside. Obote was ousted for a second time in a 1985 army coup. Conditions continued to worsen until Museveni led his National Resistance Army into Kampala in January 1986.

President Museveni's NRM dominates the nation's political life. The press and civil society remain relatively free and active, however, despite some crackdowns. In addition, the parliament has become increasingly assertive, occasionally rejecting appointments or policy initiatives proposed by the executive branch.



Uganda held a referendum in June 2000 on whether to remove a ban on political party activities. The results were mixed. Almost 90 percent of those voting supported continuation of the current de facto single-party system. Opposition parties had called for a boycott, however, and overall voter turnout was just over 50 percent.

Manipulation and exploitation of ethnic divisions pose a serious threat to peace in Uganda. Baganda people in the country's south continue to demand more recognition of their traditional kingdom. Northern ethnic groups complain of government neglect; that region, with the west, is subject to continuing guerilla activities.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Ugandans do not have the right to select their government through democratic political competition. The country's only open multiparty elections were held in 1961 in preparation for the country's independence from Britain. Since 1986, political parties have been prohibited from functioning, and candidates stand as individuals in elections. Arguing that majoritarian democracy exacerbates religious and ethnic tensions in Africa, President Yoweri Museveni substituted an allegedly nonpartisan "Movement" system. The 1995 constitution transformed the administrative restriction on political party activity into a legal ban. Article 269 of the constitution prohibits opening and operating branch offices, holding delegates' conferences, holding rallies, or campaigning for a candidate in an election. Security forces have halted numerous political rallies, some through force, and leading opposition activists have been harassed and sometimes subjected to arbitrary arrest.

Since 1996 when he was first confirmed by an election as president, any distinction between Museveni's system and a single-party state appeared to be academic. A 1999 report by Human Rights Watch concluded that "the NRM has consolidated its monopoly on political power through exclusive access to state funding and machinery, widespread and sometimes compulsory political education programs."

In February 2001, parliament passed the Political Organizations Law with a view to relaxing some of the restrictions placed on political parties, in particular allowing them to operate district offices. However, President Museveni has refused to sign this law, reiterating that party activities are only allowed at the national level. At the end of the year Museveni appointed a special committee to review the issue and report back to him in three months.

Presidential elections in 2001 resulted in Museveni remaining in power. As in 1996, Ugandans voted for their president and members of parliament in elections without open party competition. Reports by human rights groups and donor countries noted that state media and other official resources were mobilized in support of Museveni's successful candidacy, and the ban on formal party activities further hindered the opposition. Most observers believe, however, that Museveni would have won in a multiparty contest and described the actual balloting and vote tabulation processes as largely transparent.

The opposition claimed that the elections were rigged and boycotted subsequent parliamentary polls. A dozen cabinet ministers did lose their parliamentary seats, but most did so to fellow supporters of Museveni, as opposed to being defeated by opposition candidates. Supporters of the opposition parties were allowed to contest on an individual basis, and several were elected. Overall, however, the elections maintained the NRM's hold on the legislature, its comfortable majority buttressed by dozens of presidentially nominated special interest representatives.

Central political power rests firmly in the hands of the NRM. Important policy issues, such as whether to intervene directly in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, are decided without significant public or parliamentary debate or input. Nonetheless, some space is allowed for parliament and civil society to function. Parliament, for example, has occasionally censured government ministers accused of corruption and has forced budgetary amendments. There is no state religion, and freedom of worship is constitutionally protected and respected. Various Christian sects and the country's Muslim minority practice their creeds freely.

With parliamentary approval, the president names a judicial commission that oversees judicial appointments. The judiciary is still influenced by the executive despite increasing autonomy. It is also constrained by inadequate resources and the army's occasional refusal to respect civilian courts. At times, the government liberally applies the charge of treason against nonviolent political dissidents. Local courts are subject to bribery and corruption. Prison conditions are difficult, especially in local jails. More than 500 prisoners die annually as the result of poor diet, sanitation, and medical care. Serious human rights violations by rebel groups and the Uganda People's Defense Forces have been reported.

The Constitutional Review Commission was established by President Museveni in 2001 to examine possible adaptations to the constitution. Issues being discussed include the future of political parties, federalism, the size of parliament, and voter and candidate eligibility. Critics suggest that the commission has a pro-NRM bias, has no powers, and does not reflect the broad spectrum of Ugandan public opinion.

In a display of judicial independence, in August 2000, Uganda's constitutional court voided one of two laws validating the June referendum on political party activities. The court ruled that the act had been passed without a quorum in parliament. A second, related law was also being challenged in the courts by the opposition Democratic Party. Uganda's parliament, which has a huge pro-government majority, however, subsequently amended the constitution to effectively annul these legal challenges.

NGOs currently make a significant contribution to Uganda's social, cultural, and political life. They encourage the expression of different views and, significantly, have been willing to address politically sensitive issues at a time when the Ugandan government continues to restrict ordinary political party activity. Uganda's parliament is considering a draft law proposed by the government that would increase state control over NGOs, whose existence and activities are already subject to stringent legal restrictions. Under existing law, all NGOs in Uganda must be approved and registered by a government-appointed board composed mostly of government officials, including security officials, before they are allowed to operate.

The new draft law proposes additional controls. It would further complicate the registration process, requiring that NGOs also obtain a special permit from the registration board before they can operate. It would also increase the registration board's powers to reject or revoke an NGO's registration; and it would stiffen the penalties for operating without official sanction, thus raising the possibility that legitimate NGO activities may be criminalized.

There is some freedom of expression. The independent print media, which include more than two dozen daily and weekly newspapers, are often highly critical of the government and offer a range of opposition views. Buttressed by legislation limiting press freedoms, however, the government at times selectively arrests or harasses jour-

nalists. A sedition law remains in force and is applied selectively on journalists and other persons who hold views that are at variance with those of the NRM.

Several private radio stations and private television stations report on local political developments. The largest newspapers and broadcasting facilities that reach rural areas remain state owned. Governmental corruption is reported. Opposition positions are also presented, but the coverage is often not balanced. Journalists have asked parliament to enact a freedom-of-information act so that the public is not denied information.

Women experience discrimination based on traditional law, particularly in rural areas, and are treated unequally under inheritance, divorce, and citizenship statutes. A woman cannot obtain a passport without her husband's permission. Domestic violence against women is widespread. Uganda has, by contrast, legislated quotas for women officials in all elected bodies from village councils to the national parliament. Presently, there are 17 women ministers, including the vice president, out of a 62-member cabinet. Almost 20 percent of Uganda's parliament is female. One-third of local council seats must, by law, go to women.

The National Organization of Trade Unions, the country's largest labor federation, is independent of the government and political parties. An array of essential workers is barred from forming unions. Strikes are permitted only after a lengthy reconciliation process.

## ↓ Ukraine

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy  
 Political Rights: 4  
 Civil Liberties: 4  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Status: Partly Free

Population: 49,100,000

PPP: \$3,458

Life Expectancy: 68

Ethnic Groups: Ukrainian (73 percent), Russian (22 percent), other (5 percent)

Capital: Kiev

Trend Arrow: Ukraine received a downward trend arrow due to the inability of the legislative and executive branches of government to represent the interests of voters, the persistence of conditions that threaten the media's independence, and the failure of the rule of law to protect individuals from politically or economically motivated threats, attacks, or imprisonment.



### Overview:

Although Ukraine commemorated a decade of post-Soviet independence in 2001, more than three-quarters of the country's population believed nothing good had come of it.

Less than a quarter of the population considers the country a democracy. In the first half of the year, thousands of Ukrainians protested the ouster of Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko. They also demanded the resignation of President Leonid Kuchma, who has been accused of involvement in the murder in 2000 of journalist Heorhiy Gongadze.

The president worried publicly that the outcry could lead to the "collapse of Ukraine." Also marking the year were a historic visit to the country by Pope John Paul II; President Kuchma's announcement that he will not seek a third term; the Constitutional Court's ruling against Ukraine's long-standing *propiska* (residency permit) requirement; and the signing into law of a new code that will allow the purchase and sale of land beginning in 2005.

In December 1991, Ukraine ended more than 300 years of Russian ascendancy when voters ratified a declaration of independence and elected Leonid Kravchuk president. In 1994, Communists proved victorious in parliamentary elections, and Leonid Kuchma, a former Soviet director of military production, defeated Kravchuk. Since then, Kuchma has struggled against a Communist-led parliament to effect reforms.

In the 1999 presidential election, Kuchma defeated Communist Party leader Petro Symonenko in the second round of voting with 56.21 percent of the vote. Symonenko received only 37.5 percent. Kuchma appointed reformer Viktor Yushchenko, a former head of the Central Bank, to the post of prime minister. He also threatened to dissolve parliament if it refused to support economic reforms.

For much of 2000, the legislative and executive branches of government were deadlocked. When Kuchma called a national referendum on constitutional amendments to increase his powers at parliament's expense, voters overwhelmingly sided with him. Their support remained firm until November, when audiotapes surfaced that, if authenticated, could implicate Kuchma and other senior government officials in the murder of journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. Soon after, thousands of protesters took to the streets to demand a "Ukraine without Kuchma." Demonstrations, ranging in size from a few dozen to several thousand participants, continued well into 2001.

Throughout 2001, President Kuchma denied involvement in the Gongadze murder. Although he has acknowledged that the voice on the tapes is his, he contends that the tapes were edited to create the appearance of guilt. Independent efforts to authenticate the tapes have been inconclusive. In February, prosecutors launched a criminal investigation into the case. In May, the interior minister outraged opposition groups when he announced that Gongadze's death was the result of a random crime and "not of a political nature."

In the same month, the Communist Party rallied support in parliament for a no-confidence vote against Prime Minister Yushchenko. In a strange alliance, centrist parties that have close ties to powerful business interests and the executive administration joined the Communists in ousting Yushchenko. The Communists opposed the prime minister's reformist economic agenda; the centrist parties' oligarchical backers were threatened by the prime minister's anticorruption agenda.

Thousands of Yushchenko's supporters organized rallies to protest the decision and renewed calls for President Kuchma's impeachment. Although the president publicly opposed the no-confidence vote, there was intense speculation that he indeed was involved in Yushchenko's ouster. International lenders reacted by suspending millions of dollars in loans. Parliament replaced Yushchenko with Anatoly Kinakh, a member of the pro-Kuchma National Democratic Party and a former deputy prime minister. Kinakh is said to be independent of the oligarchs, but observers still expect him to follow an agenda that favors big business.

In July, Yushchenko formed an electoral bloc called "Our Ukraine" and announced his intention to participate in the 2002 parliamentary election. He promised to focus on

issues of corruption, poverty, and economic reform. Likewise, ousted Deputy Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko became the head of the Forum for National Salvation, an alliance of center-right, anti-Kuchma parties. Police detained Tymoshenko twice in 2001 on charges of corruption during her tenure in the late 1990s at Unified Energy Systems, but two courts—a district court and then the supreme court—ordered her release. Her supporters decried the arrests as politically motivated. In November, the National Salvation Forum was renamed the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Ukrainian voters can change their government democratically. Citizens aged 18 and older enjoy universal, equal, and direct suffrage. They elect the president and delegates to the *Verkhovna Rada*, the 450-seat unicameral parliament. The president appoints the prime minister and other cabinet members. The next parliamentary and presidential elections will take place in 2002. By law, parliament must amend the constitution to reflect the outcome of the 2000 referendum on increasing the president's powers. To date, it has failed to do so.

The 1997 parliamentary election law outlines a system of proportional-majoritarian representation. In 2001, parliament passed, and the president vetoed, three new parliamentary election laws. Members of parliament advocated a proportional party-list system, but Kuchma argued that such a system would "run counter to the Constitution" and restrict the rights of voters. One draft, for example, called for the election of 75 percent of all parliamentary deputies by party lists and 25 percent in single-mandate constituencies. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe concluded that elections to the *Verkhovna Rada* in 1998 were generally free and fair, but it noted serious irregularities.

The International Foundation for Election Systems concluded that the 1999 presidential election law lends greater transparency and accountability to the process. Nevertheless, observers declared the November 1999 election unfair because of intimidation of independent media, biased coverage by state media, intimidation of candidates and their supporters, and illegal campaigning by state officials. Nineteen candidates successfully registered for the election.

The 1996 constitution guarantees freedoms of speech and expression, but the government frequently disregards these rights, particularly during election seasons. In 2001, organizations such as Reporters Sans Frontieres and the Committee to Protect Journalists brought attention to the murder of journalists like Oleh Breus, the publisher of the newspaper *XXI Century*, and Ihor Aleksandrov, the director of TOR Slavonic Television. Several attacks and death threats against journalists, as well as the conviction of journalist Oleg Liachko for defaming a former prime minister and a military general, were also documented. President Leonid Kuchma called for a full and transparent investigation of Ihor Aleksandrov's murder and asked the government to establish a law enforcement hotline for journalists to contact when their lives are threatened. He also asked for a review of the law on mass media and any relevant presidential decrees.

In July 2001, the *Verkhovna Rada* adopted legislation containing controversial amendments to more than ten mass-media laws, but President Kuchma vetoed the omnibus law. In December, Kuchma also vetoed a bill that would have made television debates mandatory during national elections campaigns. If approved, the bill would have required presidential and parliamentary candidates to attend such debates or risk

being removed from the ballot. Television stations that failed to host debates could have lost their broadcast licenses. Under a criminal law that took effect on September 1, 2001, libel does not carry criminal charges. Also in 2001, the government announced that it would explore turning the Ukrainian National Television Company into a public service company.

The constitution and the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religion define religious rights in Ukraine. There are some restrictions on the activities of foreign religious organizations, and all religious groups must register with the state. Sixty-six percent of respondents to an August 2000 survey conducted by the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies said that there is "complete freedom of conscience and equality of faiths before the law" in Ukraine. More than 50 percent of respondents who described themselves as "believers" agreed that religion is "one of the elements of a democratic society."

In June 2001, Pope John Paul II made a historic trip to Ukraine to celebrate the post-Soviet rebirth of the Greek Catholic Church and to seek reconciliation with the Orthodox Church. The schism between the two churches began in 1054. Although Orthodox leaders opposed the visit and even prayed for the pope to stay away from sacred church sites, tens of thousands of Ukrainians turned out to greet the pontiff. Among his stops during the five-day visit was Babi Yar, where the Nazis killed more than 200,000 people, including 100,000 Jews, during World War II.

Despite strict registration requirements, Ukraine has several thousand nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The constitution guarantees the right to peaceful assembly but requires advance notification to government authorities. In 2001, thousands of protesters marched against President Kuchma's alleged involvement in the murder of journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. Early in the year, authorities broke up a tent city that more than 100 demonstrators had occupied since December 2000. When one rally involving an estimated 18,000 people turned violent, police arrested more than 200 participants. Hardline nationalists and Communists also organized rallies in 2001. In Donetsk, for example, thousands of mainly elderly Communists demonstrated against the executive leadership's reformist agenda and called for closer ties with Russia. Late in the year, a group of NGOs and government officials established a national anticorruption forum.

The judiciary consists of a supreme court, regional courts, and district courts. There is also a constitutional court. The constitution guarantees equality before the law, although the president, members of parliament, and judges are immune from criminal prosecution unless parliament consents. The judiciary is inefficient and subject to corruption. In 2001, for example, the prosecutor-general's office opened a criminal case against Mykola Zamkovenko, one of the judges who ordered the release from prison of former Deputy Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. Zamkovenko concluded that the case and subsequent raids on his home and office were politically motivated and threatened judicial independence. The constitutional court is largely free of political interference.

The government generally respects personal autonomy and privacy. The constitution also guarantees individuals the right to own property, to work, and to engage in entrepreneurial activity; however, crime, corruption, and the slow pace of economic reform have effectively limited these rights. In 2001, the Constitutional Court struck down the country's Soviet-era requirement that individuals must register with the Interior Ministry in their place of residence. Opponents of the provision had long argued that the regulation violated freedom of movement.

## United Arab Emirates

Polity: Federation of traditional monarchies  
 Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Status: Not Free  
 Population: 3,300,000  
 PPP: \$18,162  
 Life Expectancy: 74  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab, Iranian, South Asian  
 Capital: Abu Dhabi



### Overview:

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan celebrated 30 years as president of the United Arab Emirates in December 2001.

Having ruled the federation since its formation in 1971, he is credited with turning a poor backwater into one of the world's richest countries, using oil revenues to fund extensive domestic development. The 2000 United Nations Human Development Report placed the UAE among the world's top performers in terms of quality of life as measured by real income, life expectancy, and educational standards.

The seven emirates that constitute the UAE formed a unified federation after gaining independence from Great Britain in 1971. Under the 1971 provisional constitution, the emirate rulers make up the Federal Supreme Council, the highest legislative and executive body. The council elects a state president and vice president from among its membership, and the president appoints the prime minister and cabinet. A 40-member Federal National Council, composed of delegates appointed by the seven rulers, serves as an advisory body with no legislative authority. While there are separate consultative councils in several emirates, there are no political parties or popular elections.

The UAE boasts a free market economy based on oil and gas production, trade, and services. The economy provides citizens with a high per capita income but is heavily dependent on foreign workers. The government has made strides in diversifying the economy. The Dubai Ports Authority has acquired a string of contracts at major port facilities along the Arab peninsula and the Red Sea, making the UAE a leader in regional shipping. In January 2001, officials officially unveiled the Dubai Media City, a multi-million dollar business park designed to attract global media companies. Still, the UAE is heavily reliant on oil exports and vulnerable to dramatic fluctuations in price. GDP growth in 2000, when oil prices were high, was 17.1 percent. Forecasted growth for 2001 was 2.5 percent.

In February, the government launched a major crackdown on corruption by arresting the Dubai customs chief, who was also head of the Brussels-based World Customs Organization, on charges of graft. He was later sentenced to a 27-year jail term. Fourteen airport officials were arrested on corruption charges later in February. One received 31 years in prison, while five others received sentences ranging from three to seven years. State newspapers published the full names and photos of the officials in a new "name and shame" policy.

The UAE has maintained a generally pro-Western foreign policy since the Persian Gulf War and continues to cooperate militarily with the United States, Britain, and

France. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the UAE cut ties with Afghanistan's ruling Taliban regime after failing to persuade Taliban officials to hand over Saudi-born terrorist-in-exile Osama bin Laden. In November, the UAE ordered financial institutions to freeze the assets of 62 organizations and individuals suspected by the United States of funding terrorist activities.

**Political Rights  
and Civil Liberties:**

Citizens of the UAE cannot change their government democratically. There are no elections at any level, political parties are illegal, and the Federal Supreme Council holds all executive and legislative authority. The seven emirate rulers, their extended families, and their allies wield political control in their respective emirates. Citizens may voice concerns to their leaders through open *majlises* (gatherings) held by the emirate rulers.

The judiciary is not independent; its decisions are subject to review by the political leadership. The judicial system comprises both *Sharia* (Islamic law) and secular courts. There are no jury trials, but due process protections exist in both religious and secular courts. Military courts try only military personnel, and there is no separate state security court system. *Sharia* allows for corporal punishment for such crimes as adultery, prostitution, and drug or alcohol abuse. Drug trafficking has been a capital offense since 1995, though executions are rarely reported. Police may enter homes without warrants or probable cause, but their actions are subject to review and disciplinary action. A Libyan national arrested in August died in custody in September. Amnesty International urged the government to investigate what officials called a suicide, and expressed concern for four other Libyan activists detained between May and August. In June, Sheikh Zayed pardoned 6,000 prisoners, mostly those convicted on drug-related charges or financial crimes. Large amnesties are frequently granted during national or religious holidays.

Journalists routinely censor themselves when reporting on government policy, national security, and religion, and refrain from criticizing the ruling families. The print media are largely privately owned but receive government subsidies. Foreign publications are censored. Broadcast media are government owned and present only government views. Satellite dishes are widely owned and provide foreign broadcasting without censorship. The UAE is the most Internet-connected country in the Arab world, with some 500,000 users. In October, Dubai launched a new Web portal to provide online government services to citizens and visitors. In January 2001, UAE defense minister Sheikh Mohammed said that the new Dubai Media City would offer news media freedom from political restrictions, but warned that this freedom should not be abused.

The government limits freedom of assembly and association. Permits are required for organized public gatherings. Political discussion is generally confined to gatherings in private homes which are tolerated by officials. Private associations must be licensed, but enforcement is inconsistent.

Islam is the official religion of the UAE. About 85 percent of citizens are Sunni Muslim, and 15 percent Shiite. About 95 percent of Sunni mosques are government funded or subsidized. Shia are free to worship and to maintain mosques. The government ensures that religious sermons do not deviate frequently or significantly from approved topics. A limited number of Christians are granted legal recognition. Non-Muslims may practice freely but may not proselytize or distribute religious literature. In April, the *al-Khaleej* newspaper reported that three Americans had been arrested for distributing literature promoting Christianity.



Women are well represented in education, government, and the professions, but face discrimination in job benefits and promotion. There are numerous NGOs that focus on women's issues such as domestic violence. Islamic law discriminates against women in family matters such as divorce and inheritance, and tradition keeps many women from working. A married woman must have her husband's consent to accept employment or to travel abroad. The first all-female shopping mall opened early in 2000 in Abu Dhabi. Its aim is to provide privacy to women who wish to shop without wearing the *abaya*, a head-to-toe covering required in the presence of men by strict Islamic dress codes. In January 2001, *The Economist* reported that the government-funded UAE Marriage Fund warned that marriages between UAE nationals and non-nationals were a threat to social stability, particularly if they involve non-Muslims. In the future, said *The Economist*, a foreign woman under 40 years of age will not receive an entry visa unless she travels with a male relation.

Trade unions, strikes, and collective bargaining are illegal in the UAE and do not occur. Foreign nationals make up about 85 to 90 percent of the workforce, and sometimes fall prey to abuse by managers who take most of their earnings and force them to work long hours in extreme heat or under other dangerous conditions. Labor law offers some protection, but most abuse goes unreported. In January 2001, a Sharia court acquitted a housemaid from the Philippines accused of killing her employer. The court ruled that the woman, who has been jailed for two years, had acted in self-defense when her employer attempted to rape her.

## United Kingdom

Polity: Parliamentary  
democracy

Economy: Mixed  
capitalist

Population: 60,000,000

PPP: \$22,093

Life Expectancy: 77

Ethnic Groups: English (82 percent), Scottish (10 percent),  
Irish (2 percent), Welsh (2 percent), other, including Indian  
and Pakistani (4 percent)

Capital: London

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 2

Status: Free



### Overview:

Despite a series of setbacks in 2000, Tony Blair's governing Labour Party managed to regain its lead in the opinion polls and swept to another victory in general elections held in June 2001, trouncing the opposition Conservative (Tory) Party. Britain was wracked by racial tension between whites and Asians with the eruption of a series of race riots during the summer months. Following the September 11 attacks in the United States, further antiterrorism legislation was passed at the end of the year that was criticized by human rights groups.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland encompasses the two

formerly separate kingdoms of England and Scotland, the ancient principality of Wales, and the six counties of the Irish province of Ulster (see Northern Ireland under Related Territories). The British parliament has an elected House of Commons with 659 members chosen by plurality vote from single-member districts and a House of Lords with 478 hereditary and appointed members. Reforms to make the Lords more representative are ongoing; an initiative by the government in September 2000 allows all United Kingdom, Irish, and Commonwealth citizens over age 21 to nominate themselves for ten new seats. A cabinet of ministers appointed from the majority party exercises executive power on behalf of the mainly ceremonial sovereign. Queen Elizabeth II nominates the party leader with the most support in the House of Commons to form a government.

Blair's "New Labour," so called because of its radical shift from its socialist past, adopted Conservative-style positions on a number of issues and swept general elections in May 1997. The government continues to define itself as it goes along by blending traditional Labour and Tory policies. Since taking office, Labour has abandoned tax-and-spend policies, devolved monetary policy to the Bank of England, and maintained strict spending limits. However, it has also reintroduced the minimum wage and restored rights to trade unions.

Devolution of power to Scotland and Wales took place in May 1999, with each territory establishing its own legislature. The 129-member Scottish parliament and the 60-member Welsh assembly exercise control over transportation, health, education, and housing, while foreign, defense, and economic policies remain under British control. On December 1, 1999, Britain officially handed power to a new 108-member Northern Ireland assembly in Belfast. The shared-power arrangement between the Ulster Unionists and Sinn Fein, the political wing of the Irish Republican Army, arose from the Good Friday Agreement of April 1998, but internal feuding among loyalist paramilitary organizations and disputes over police reform, disarmament, and the British military presence continue to threaten the agreement.

During 2000, Labour achievements such as devolution, House of Lords reform, a stable economy, low unemployment, and improvements in primary education were overshadowed by criticism of the government's failure to deliver on its key promise to revive public services. After years of underinvestment, transportation systems are in disrepair, secondary schools are substandard, and the National Health Service is ill-equipped to handle its workload. In July 2000, Blair introduced a budget, designed to win back disillusioned traditional Labour supporters, which called for spending increases to improve health, education, transport, and policing, and to develop poor areas. Despite a crisis over rising fuel prices in September during which its approval ratings plummeted, the government rebounded to lead in opinion polls held in December. Many attributed this success to the Conservatives' inability to capitalize on the government's setbacks.

In general elections held on June 7, 2001, the Labour Party secured a second term in office with another landslide victory. The United Kingdom's third largest party, the Liberal Democrats, increased its representation, while the far-right British National Party (BNP) won an unprecedented 16 percent of the vote in a constituency in Oldham, Manchester, where there had been race riots in May. The Conservative Party failed to improve on its crushing 1997 defeat and faced a leadership challenge when its leader, William Hague, announced his resignation the morning following the 2001 elections. After a rancorous three-month campaign, the party elected rightist Iain Duncan Smith as Hague's successor in September 2001.

## Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Citizens of the United Kingdom can change their government democratically. Voters are registered by government survey and include both Northern Irish and Commonwealth citizens resident in Britain. British subjects abroad retain voting rights for 20 years after emigration. Welsh and Scottish legislatures have authority over matters of regional importance such as education, health, and some economic matters. The Scottish parliament has limited power to collect taxes. In 1999, the government abolished hereditary peerage in the House of Lords and dismissed more than 600 hereditary peers. Critics expressed concern that the move would allow the government to pack the house with cronies; hereditary peers had constituted more than half the Lords membership, while the balance were government appointees.

The Human Rights Act, effectively Britain's first written charter of rights, came into force in October 2000. Under the law, British citizens who feel their rights have been violated may take their grievances to British courts rather than seek redress in the European Court of Human Rights. British Law Lords will declare whether specific British laws comply with the European Convention. The law represents a significant shift in power to the courts, because although judges will not have the right to strike down legislation, the government will face enormous political pressure to bring laws into line with European standards.

Legal attempts by the government to combat crime and corruption have been widely denounced as dangerous to basic freedoms. The Terrorism Act 2000, permanent legislation to replace emergency laws concerning political violence, became effective on February 19, 2001. Amnesty International released a briefing on the bill, outlining concerns about provisions such as arrest, entry, and search and seizure without warrant; denial of a detainee's access to counsel upon arrest and during interrogation; detention without trial for up to 12 days; and the shifting of the burden of proof from prosecution to defense. Shafiq Ur Rehman, a Muslim cleric accused of supporting terrorism, was ordered to be deported in October after 17 months of deliberations by the Law Lords. In December, the government passed the Anti-terrorism, Crime, and Security Act after just a month of parliamentary and public scrutiny, which allows for indefinite detention of terrorism suspects without charge.

A government report issued in 1999 found London's police force "riven with pernicious and institutionalized racism." The findings stem from complaints of police harassment of blacks and, specifically, the case of Stephen Lawrence, an 18-year-old black student stabbed to death in 1993 by a group of white youths. No one has yet been convicted of the killing despite five arrests and eight separate investigation teams. In 2000, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reported that criticism of police for their handling of the Lawrence case has provoked a police backlash against minorities. The report also noted that blacks make up a disproportionate number of those killed in police custody.

In April, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act was passed, making it illegal for public bodies to discriminate on the basis of race (when the original act came into effect in 1976, the application of the act was optional in the public sector). However, Britain was struck by a series of race riots between whites and Asians (primarily of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent), in Oldham in May, Leeds and Burnley in June, and Bradford and Stoke-on-Trent in July. The rioting was triggered by specific racially motivated incidents as well as the activities of several far-right parties such as the

National Front and the BNP. A report on the Oldham rioting published in December also blamed deep-rooted segregation in the town's communities as a major factor in provoking the unrest.

Government policy provides for freedom of religion, and the Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation. The Church of England (Anglican) and the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) are designated as state religions, although their status has come under increasing scrutiny. According to one nongovernmental organization (NGO), the number of anti-Semitic incidents in 2000 rose to 398 from 270 the previous year, partially as a reaction to increasing violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Though uncensored and mostly private, the British press is subject to strict libel and obscenity laws. Print media are privately owned and independent, though many of the national daily newspapers are aligned with political parties. The BBC runs about half the electronic media in the country and, although funded by the government, is editorially independent. The Human Rights Act provides a statutory right to free expression in Britain for the first time, although the European Convention makes exceptions in the interest of public safety, health, morals, and the reputations and rights of others. Parliament passed freedom-of-information legislation in 2000, granting access to a wide range of information previously denied, including police data. The law, which is expected to come into force in 2002, has been sharply criticized by rights groups for excluding information regarding national security, defense, international resolutions, individual or public safety, commercial interests, and law enforcement.

In October 2000, new regulations gave employers the right to monitor staff phone calls, e-mail, and Internet activity without consent. In July 2000, measures were introduced to allow authorities to intercept e-mail and other electronic communication without a warrant for reasons of national security, prevention of crime, and national "well-being."

Attacks on British refugee asylum policy continued in 2001. Britain has been unable to handle an increasing influx of refugees; currently more than 40,000 people await decisions on asylum applications. The Immigration and Asylum Act, enacted in April 2000, seeks to deter asylum seekers by offering them vouchers redeemable for goods instead of cash welfare benefits. In addition, asylum seekers are to be dispersed among 13 designated sites around Britain instead of being allowed to settle where they choose, and refugees whose applications for asylum are turned down will be allowed only one appeal. Rights activists charged that the new law, which does not allow vendors to give change in cash for vouchers that exceed the value of goods purchased, would both demean and reinforce prejudice against refugees. In August, a Turkish Kurd refugee was killed by a gang of white youths in Hull, and the following week an Iranian asylum seeker was stabbed in a housing development in Glasgow. In April, it was revealed that the government's shift in refugee policy had led to a dramatic increase, from 14 to 78 percent, in the number of applications being refused.

British workers are free to form and join independent trade unions. The Labour Party introduced a national minimum wage in 1999. Legislation introduced in mid-2000 requires employers to offer part-time workers the same benefits, wages, and conditions of employment, such as parental leave and sick pay, as those enjoyed by full-time workers doing the same type of work. With an estimated 44 percent of Britain's female workers in part-time employment, the new regulations help boost women's equality in the workplace.

Britain was the only European state included in a list of countries shamed for sending "child-soldiers" into battle. The Child Soldiers Global Report, released in June, strongly criticized the United Kingdom for recruiting soldiers as young as 16 and for routinely sending 17-year-olds into combat. By the end of June, Britain had still not ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, according to Amnesty International. The trafficking of children to Britain, particularly from Eastern Europe and West Africa, also continues to be a problem. A report published in December by the U.K. branch of End Child Prostitution, Pornography, and Trafficking (Ecpat UK) says that a growing number of foreign children are being forced into prostitution.

## ↓ United States of America

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal) Political Rights: 1 Civil Liberties: 1 Status: Free

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 284,500,000

PPP: \$31,872

Life Expectancy: 77

Ethnic Groups: White (84 percent), black (12 percent), Asian (3 percent), native American (1 percent)

Capital: Washington, D.C.



**Trend Arrow:** The United States of America received a downward trend arrow because of the substantial increase in security measures and an enhanced concern over personal security in the wake of the September 11 terror assault.

### Overview:

On September 11, the United States of America was the target of the most devastating terror attack in the country's history. In a carefully planned and coordinated operation, 19 terrorists, several of whom had received pilot's training, seized four passenger airliners in midair. After taking over the planes, the hijackers altered the flight patterns and used the crafts to attack major symbols of U.S. economic and political power. Two of the planes hurtled into the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center, completely destroying the buildings. A third plane crashed into the Department of Defense in Washington, D.C., while a fourth crashed in rural Pennsylvania after passengers attempted to take back the plane from the hijackers, who may have been on a mission to destroy the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. Approximately 3,000 people were killed in the assaults, including the airline passengers, those working in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and rescue workers killed by the collapse of the twin towers.

Founded in 1776 during a revolution against British colonial rule, the U.S.A. began the first modern movement for freedom and self-government in the world. The current system of government began functioning in 1789, following the ratification of the Constitution. Because the founders of the United States distrusted concentrations of centralized government power, they set up a system in which the federal government has

three competing centers of power (executive, legislative, and judicial branches) and left many powers with the state governments and the citizenry.

The events of September 11 transformed the lives of Americans to a degree not experienced since the beginnings of World War II. A series of security measures were instituted at airports, government offices, private office buildings, sports arenas, and other venues. A campaign to spread the potentially deadly anthrax virus through the mail also shook public confidence. Letters containing anthrax spores were mailed to a number of prominent Americans, including television and print journalists, President George W. Bush, members of the Cabinet, and the Supreme Court. A number of people, mostly postal workers and mail clerks, were infected, and several died from the disease. The terror attacks and their aftermath had important economic consequences as well, contributing to a downturn that had begun before September 11 and exerting a devastating effect on the airlines, tourism, and other sectors.

The September 11 mission was carried out by men from Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries who belonged to the Al Qaeda network of Islamic extremists directed by Osama bin Laden, a Saudi native who made his headquarters in Afghanistan. In the attack's aftermath, President Bush demanded that the Taliban regime that controlled Afghanistan turn bin Laden and his confederates over to the United States. After the Taliban refused to comply, the United States and Great Britain began military operations aimed at overthrowing the Taliban and capturing or killing bin Laden and other terrorists. After a bombing campaign lasting a little more than one month, Taliban resistance quickly collapsed, and the forces of Afghanistan's Northern Alliance, supported by the United States and Great Britain, swept to victory; in the process, many of the Al Qaeda adherents and Islamic extremists from outside Afghanistan were captured or killed.

The war on terrorism resulted in a significant transformation of the country's political landscape. Prior to September 11, the priorities of the Bush administration revolved around various domestic issues, such as education, medical care, and tax reductions. Although the Bush administration had pushed through legislation that brought tax reductions to most citizens, the rest of Bush's legislative package faced an uncertain future and his ratings in opinion polls were showing signs of weakness.

The administration had also come under fire for what critics called its unilateralist foreign policy. The administration rejected a number of international treaties and withdrew from the negotiations over the Kyoto protocols on global warming. The administration suffered a further setback when the Republican party lost control of the Senate, the country's upper legislative chamber, when James Jeffords, a moderate Republican from Vermont, announced that he was aligning himself with the Democrats in the chamber. Jeffords' switch gave the Democrats a 50-49 member margin in the Senate, with Jeffords listing himself as an independent. The Republicans retained control of the lower chamber, the House of Representatives, by a 221-212 margin. Bush also suffered somewhat from a perception that his presidency was not completely legitimate, a perception due to the intense controversy over the 2000 presidential election, in which the vote count in the state of Florida was contested by the Democratic candidate, Al Gore. The controversy raged for more than one month until the Supreme Court finally decided, by a one-vote margin, to stop a recount of the Florida ballots, an action that effectively gave the election to Bush.

All this changed after September 11. Bush focused his entire energy on the war in

Afghanistan, efforts to destroy the terrorist network in the United States and other countries, and measures to shore up domestic security against potential terrorist attacks. As is often the case during wartime, the president enjoyed strong support from the American people. Bush further bolstered his standing by reducing the level of political partisanship and reaching compromises with Democrats on issues where the two parties had differing perspectives. At the same time, the controversy over the Bush-Gore election was largely forgotten as the country concentrated on September 11 and its aftermath.

Although the war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda enjoyed wide support from the American people, several measures put forward by the president and by his attorney general, John Ashcroft, provoked criticism from civil libertarians. One proposal that drew particular criticism called for the creation of military tribunals to hear cases brought against foreign terrorists. Critics said the military courts would represent the abandonment of the United States' historical commitment to a fair trial and were unnecessary since past experience had demonstrated that civilian courts were capable of dealing effectively with terrorist cases. A comprehensive anti-terrorism bill was also passed by Congress and signed by President Bush. The bill increased the criminal Penalties for those who commit terrorist acts or harbor or support terrorists; gave the attorney general the power to detain immigrants without charges for up to seven days; provided expanded power to monitor telephone calls and e-mails of terrorism suspects; and made it easier for federal officials to gain search warrants in terrorism cases.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The United States has a vibrant and highly competitive political system. In electing a president, the United States uses a unique system that combines a popular vote and the ballots cast by an electoral college. The electoral college apportions votes to each state based on population; the electors then cast all the ballots of a particular state for the candidate who won the popular vote in that state, no matter what the margin. The electoral college vote determines the winner of the election. Under this system, it is possible for a candidate to win the presidency even though an opposing candidate may have won a greater number of popular votes nationwide.

The presidential election of 2000 was one of the few elections in which a candidate won a majority of the electoral college votes while losing the popular vote. Further complicating the election was a bitter and highly partisan controversy over the disposition of the ballots in the state of Florida, a crucial issue that ultimately decided the outcome of the election. Both George W. Bush, the Republican nominee, and Al Gore, his Democratic rival, claimed to have won a victory in Florida with razor-thin margins. Much of the controversy revolved around a flawed balloting system that made it difficult to determine which candidate had received the voter's designation on certain ballots. Eventually, the Supreme Court prohibited a recount of the Florida votes, thus effectively declaring Bush the winner.

With a few exceptions, there has been no curtailment in the commitment of the United States to civil liberties since September 11. The press remains free, although complaints have been raised that a few commentators and editorialists who dissented from the prevailing view on the terror acts and the government's response were subjected to harsh criticism and occasionally sanctions from editors or writers. Some also complained that criticism directed at professors who expressed dissenting views

had a "chilling effect" on academic freedom and open discussion generally. There were no restrictions placed on the freedom of assembly, and demonstrations opposed to U.S. policies and the war in Afghanistan were held in a number of cities, though participation was low.

A more serious problem was an upsurge of anti-Muslim sentiment, especially in the immediate aftermath of the terror incidents. There were reports of assaults and several murders of Muslims and Sikhs who were mistaken as Muslims, as well as hate mail and telephone calls with hate messages directed at Muslims. A number of students from Islamic countries withdrew from universities in the United States and returned to their native lands, and some Muslim immigrants who had American citizenship returned to their home lands. Some Arab-American organizations and civil liberties groups were concerned about a federal directive calling for police interviews to be conducted with some 5,000 men who had come recently as immigrants or students from Muslim countries. They also complained of the policy of keeping men arrested after September 11 in detention without releasing their names to the public and of monitoring the conversations between a limited number of terror suspects and their attorneys. At the same time, many political leaders, including President Bush and New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, spoke out strongly against anti-Muslim discrimination, and local officials made special efforts to reassure citizens of Middle Eastern backgrounds.

A side effect of the controversy over the treatment of Muslims was a decrease in tensions over relations between black and white Americans. The degree of racial polarization was suggested by the voting patterns in the 2000 presidential election, in which Gore, the Democratic nominee, won over ninety percent of the black vote while George Bush won a majority of the white vote. Yet contentious issues like affirmative action and racial economic disparities were temporarily put aside after September 11. The terror assaults also changed American attitudes towards what is known as "racial profiling," or the singling out of members of a particular racial or ethnic group for police scrutiny. Previously, the profiling controversy had focused on police treatment of blacks and, to a lesser extent, Hispanics. After September 11, Arab-Americans complained of being the victims of police profiling. At the same time, many Americans indicated more tolerance for profiling policies out of concerns over a renewal of terrorist activities.

Although Americans became less supportive of the liberal immigration policies that the United States had embraced for the past decade, there was no move on the part of the government to shrink the number of immigrants permitted to legally enter the country, nor to restrict the number of foreign students permitted to study at U.S. universities. Additionally, despite some proposals to restrict the immigration of applicants from Muslim countries, no action was taken to limit immigration by any particular group. There was, however, a toughening of the government's attitude towards undocumented immigrants, a number of whom were deported to their homelands. In the fallout from the terror assault was the scuttling, at least temporarily, of a proposal to greatly expand work visas for Mexican citizens who were seeking jobs in the United States.



# Uruguay

Polity: Presidential-  
 parliamentary democracy  
 Economy: Capitalist-  
 statist  
 Population: 3,400,000  
 PPP: \$8,879  
 Life Expectancy: 74  
 Ethnic Groups: White (88 percent), mestizo (8 percent),  
 black (4 percent)  
 Capital: Montevideo

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 1  
 Status: Free



## Overview:

In 2001, the government of President Jorge Batlle wrestled with the effects of economic turmoil caused largely by neighboring Brazil's 1999 currency devaluation and an ongoing financial crisis in Argentina. The two countries account for some 45 percent of Uruguay's exports. Declines in industry and construction led the economic contraction, with unemployment increasing to nearly 16 percent, and an April outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in cattle created an additional headache for a country in which beef shipments make up nearly 20 percent of total exports. In July a 24-hour strike by Uruguay's labor confederation, the third since Batlle took office in March 2000, brought the country's public sector to a standstill in protest against the government's inability to revive the stagnant economy and to cut joblessness. Financial experts credited the government's sound macroeconomic and fiscal policies for enabling the country to weather the storm as well as it had.

After gaining independence from Spain, the Oriental Republic of Uruguay was established in 1830. The Colorado Party dominated a relatively democratic political system throughout the 1960s. The 1967 constitution established a bicameral congress consisting of a 99-member chamber of deputies and a 31-member senate, with every member serving a five-year term. The president is also directly elected for a five-year term.

An economic crisis, social unrest, and the activities of the Tupamaro urban guerrilla movement led to a right-wing military takeover in 1973, even though the Tupamaros had been largely crushed a year earlier. During the period of military rule, Uruguay had the largest number of political prisoners per capita in the world and was known as "the torture chamber of Latin America." Civilian rule was restored through negotiations between the regime and civilian politicians. Julio Sanguinetti won the presidential elections in 1984 with military support. In 1989 Luis Alberto Lacalle was elected president as the candidate of the centrist National Party, Uruguay's other traditional political grouping. His popularity plummeted, however, as he attempted to liberalize one of Latin America's most statist economies.

In the 1994 campaign, Sanguinetti ran as a social democrat. The two other main contenders were the leftist Broad Front's Tabaré Vasquez, a moderate socialist medical doctor, and the National Party's Alberto Volante. The 1994 election was the closest ever. The Colorado Party won 31.4 percent of the vote; the National Party, 30.2 percent; and the Broad Front, 30 percent.

Sanguinetti took office in March 1995 and enjoyed considerable congressional support, in part as a result of the inclusion of numerous National Party members in his cabinet. He won legislative support for an austerity package that partially dismantled the country's welfare state. A series of labor stoppages and a sharp decline in Sanguinetti's popularity followed.

In 1998, the National Party was wracked by mutual accusations of corruption, mostly dating from the time of the Lacalle government. In 1999, public safety and 11 percent unemployment continued to be primary concerns. On October 31, Vasquez, a popular mayor of Montevideo, won 39 percent of the vote against Batlle's 31.7, in the first round of the presidential contest. By establishing itself as the single largest political force in the country—winning 40 of 99 seats in the lower house and 12 of 31 in the senate—the Uruguayan left appeared to seriously challenge the country's traditional, but ailing, two-party system. Just three weeks before the final round of voting, the chief of the Uruguayan army, General Fernando Amado, warned that human rights violations committed during the previous dictatorship were "a closed chapter."

In the second round, the National Party backed Batlle, a 72-year-old senator and five-time presidential candidate whose father and great-uncle had been respected Colorado party presidents. Faced with dismal economic prospects and a choice between presidential candidates representing the moderate right and an eclectic left, in 1999 Uruguayans gave Batlle 52 percent of the vote. Upon taking office, the new president incorporated several National Party members into his cabinet.

Batlle immediately sought an honest accounting of the human rights situation under a former military regime whose widely acknowledged viciousness had turned Uruguay's reputation as the "Switzerland of Latin America" on its head. Within days of his inauguration, Batlle personally helped the Argentine poet Juan Gelman to track down a granddaughter born in captivity and adopted by a Uruguayan military family. However, Batlle faced a delicate balancing act at national reconciliation, with the armed forces and former leftist guerrillas saying that they had nothing to apologize for, and members of his own party deeply offended that Batlle was stirring up the past.

Batlle's help to Gelman, a one-time Montonero guerrilla whose son and daughter-in-law were killed by the Argentine military, was seen as an affront to Batlle's long-time rival Sanguinetti, who had accepted throughout his two terms the Uruguayan military's apparent inability to locate the poet's granddaughter. Sanguinetti's supporters claimed that Batlle's actions were designed to embarrass the former president. In August 2000, the Uruguayan government appointed a peace commission of leading citizens and human rights activists to look into the fate of 164 Uruguayans who had disappeared in Uruguay and neighboring Argentina during the 1973-1984 dictatorship. Both Sanguinetti and Lacalle condemned the action, saying it had been ruled out by a 1986 amnesty that was ratified by a referendum three years later. At the same time, Batlle's honeymoon with the left, based largely on his willingness to seek answers to what had happened during the military regime, was severely tested by the president's equally firm determination to reduce spending and taxes and to privatize previously sacrosanct state monopolies. In 2001, the crisis-ridden rural sector and an increase in violent crime, in what was still one of Latin America's safest countries, dominated much of the public's attention. Metropolitan Montevideo, with about 1.4 million inhabitants, is Uruguay's only large city and contains most of the highest crime areas.

## Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Citizens of Uruguay can change their government democratically. In 1999, for the first time, Uruguayan parties selected a single presidential candidate in open primary elections. Previously, the parties had fielded a number of candidates, and the candidates with the most votes then accumulated the votes cast for the others. Constitutional guarantees regarding free expression, freedom of religion, and the right to form political parties, labor unions, and civic organizations are generally respected. The former Tupamaro guerrillas now participate in the system as part of the Broad Front. Uruguayans of all political tendencies pride themselves on their refusal to make a public issue of the private lives of public officials.

The judiciary is relatively independent, but has become increasingly inefficient in the face of escalating crime, particularly street violence and organized crime, which continued to be a major issue in 2001. The court system is severely backlogged, and suspects under arrest often spend more time in jail than they would were they to be convicted and serve the maximum sentence for their alleged crime. Allegations of police mistreatment, particularly of youthful offenders, have increased; however, prosecutions of such acts are also occurring more frequently. Prison conditions do not meet international standards.

Uruguay, long a haven for anonymous foreign bank deposits as a result of its strict bank secrecy laws, has also taken measures to regulate financial activities in order to reduce the potential for money laundering. October 1998 saw the passage of antidrug legislation that made narcotics-related money laundering a crime. A Financial Investigations Unit (FTU) has been established in order to present more complete evidence in narcotics-related prosecutions. Upon the request of the Central Bank, financial institutions must provide certain information, and banks (including offshore banks), currency exchange houses and stockbrokers are required to report transactions of more than \$10,000. The FIU also requires all entities under its jurisdiction to report suspicious financial transactions to a financial information analysis unit. Since President Jorge Battle took office in March 2000, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the U.S. government have provided the Central Bank with computers and software with which to maintain a database and analyze patterns of transactions. Foreign analysts say that financial investigations, which are not routine and must be court-ordered, have been effective in identifying inappropriate accounts on some occasions. The Uruguayan Coast Guard recently improved its computerized network and database in order to record persons and vessels passing through Uruguayan territorial waters.

In 2001, there was some concern that Middle Eastern terrorists might be using Uruguay as a transit country, a worry heightened by two terrorist outrages committed in Buenos Aires in the mid-1990s and by the detention of three suspected members of the terrorist organization Islamic Group in 1998. The activities of a small but virulent number of neo-Nazi activists and skinheads were also closely monitored. In 1999, a neo-Nazi group set off three bombs in vacant lots in Montevideo's poorer neighborhoods.

The Transparency Law (*Ley Cristal*) entered into force in January 1999. It criminalizes a broad range of potential abuses of power by government officeholders, including the laundering of funds related to public corruption cases. It also requires financial disclosure statements to be filed by high-ranking officials. Public officials who know of a drug-related crime or incident and do nothing about it may be charged with

a "crime of omission" under the Citizen Security Law. Uruguay ranks near the top of public transparency ratings for Latin America issued annually by Transparency International, and on an "opacity index" created by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), a major U.S. accounting firm.

In 1991, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the OAS ruled that the 1985 law granting the military amnesty from rights violations during the years of dictatorship violated key provisions of the American Convention on Human Rights. (During Julio Sanguinetti's first government, from 1985 to 1990, a military commission he appointed cleared the armed forces of responsibility for hundreds of brutal detentions and the disappearances of more than 150 Uruguayans at home or in neighboring countries.) Sanguinetti remained steadfast in refusing to accede to further investigations of the issue, a policy that was reversed by Batlle.

The press is privately owned, and broadcasting is both commercial and public. Numerous daily newspapers publish, many associated with political parties; there are also a number of weeklies. In 1996 a number of publications ceased production because of a government suspension of tax exemptions on the import of newsprint. In addition, a June 1996 decree requires government authorization to import newsprint.

Civic organizations have proliferated since the return of civilian rule. Numerous women's rights groups focus on violence against women, societal discrimination, and other problems. The small black minority continues to face discrimination. Uruguay's continuing economic crisis has forced thousands of formerly middle-class citizens to join rural migrants in the shantytowns ringing Montevideo.

Workers exercise their right to join unions, bargain collectively, and hold strikes. Unions are well organized and politically powerful. Strikes are sometimes marked by violent clashes and sabotage.

## Uzbekistan

Polity: Presidential (dominant party)	Political Rights: 7
Economy: Statist	Civil Liberties: 6
Population: 25,100,000	Status: Not Free
PPP: \$2,251	
Life Expectancy: 70	
Ethnic Groups: Uzbek (80 percent), Russian (6 percent), Tajik (5 percent), Kazakh (3 percent), other (6 percent)	
Capital: Tashkent	



### Overview:

After the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center, the Central Asian country of Uzbekistan became a key strategic ally of the United States for its military operations in Afghanistan. Tashkent's decision to permit the deployment of U.S. troops on its territory was widely seen as an effort to obtain various concessions from the West, including economic assistance, security guarantees, and reduced criticism of its poor human rights record. At the end of December, President Islam Karimov announced

that he had set no deadline for the withdrawal of the estimated 1,500 U.S. forces from Khanahad air base in southern Uzbekistan.

Located along the ancient trade route of the famous Silk Road, Uzbekistan was incorporated into Russia by the late 1800s. The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic was established in 1924, and its eastern region was detached and made a separate Tajik Soviet republic five years later.

On December 29, 1991, the country's independence was endorsed in a popular referendum by more than 98 percent of the electorate. In a parallel vote, Islam Karimov, former Communist Party leader and chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the successor to the Communist Party, was elected president with a reported 88 percent of the vote over the only independent candidate to challenge him, *Erk* (Freedom) Party leader Mohammed Solih, who charged election fraud. The largest opposition group, *Birlik* (Unity), was barred from contesting the election and later refused legal registration as a political party, while the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) and other religion-based groups were banned entirely. Only pro-government parties were allowed to compete in elections to the first post-Soviet legislature in December 1994 and January 1995. A February 1995 national referendum to extend Karimov's first five-year term in office until the year 2000 was allegedly approved by 99 percent of the country's voters.

Throughout the 1990s, the government increased its repression of opposition movements, including moderate political and religious groups, often under the pretext of fighting violent Islamist organizations. The growing crackdowns, coupled with widespread poverty, in turn fueled Islamist extremist activities and contributed to the radicalization of some former advocates of peaceful change. In 1997, several police officers were murdered in the Ferghana Valley, an area regarded as a center of militant Islam. The authorities reportedly detained hundreds of suspects, including many solely for their supposed affiliation with various Muslim groups not officially sanctioned by the state. The Uzbek government blamed a series of deadly car bombings in Tashkent in February 1999 on the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), which seeks the violent overthrow of Uzbekistan's secular government and its replacement with an Islamic state. The authorities used the attacks, which they described as an assassination attempt on President Karimov, to justify further arrests and trials of both the religious and secular opposition. As a result of these crackdowns, many Uzbeks, including both peaceful Muslims and members of the IMU, fled to neighboring countries. In August, IMU militants attempted to enter Uzbekistan by crossing from Tajikistan into the neighboring Kyrgyz Republic, where they held several villages hostage until early October.

Of the five parties that competed in December's parliamentary election, which was strongly criticized by international election observers, all supported the president and differed little in their political platforms. The January 9, 2000, presidential poll resulted in an expected victory for Karimov, who defeated his only opponent, Marxist history professor Abdulhasiz Dzhahalov, with 92 percent of the vote. Karimov's former party, the PDP, from which he resigned in 1996, had nominated Dzhahalov, its first secretary, with Karimov's consent. Karimov ran as a candidate of the recently established *Fidokorlar* party. Uzbekistan's government refused to register genuinely independent opposition parties and to permit their members to stand as candidates. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe did not send observers, on the grounds that the election could not be considered competitive as the voters had no genuine choice.

In August, the IMU engaged in armed clashes with government troops in south-

eastern Uzbekistan. While Tashkent alleged that the guerillas had entered Uzbek territory from bases in neighboring Tajikistan, Dushanbe denied the charge. Uzbekistan also accused Afghanistan's ruling Taliban of harboring many members of the IMU, which the U.S. government placed on its list of international terrorist organizations in September for its ties to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network and Afghanistan's ruling Taliban. In November, Uzbekistan's supreme court found 12 men guilty of treason and terrorist attacks, including the February 1999 Tashkent bombings. Erk leader Mohammed Solih, who was living in asylum in Norway, was found guilty of organizing the bombings along with prominent IMU leaders Juma Namangani and Tokhir Yuldash and was sentenced in absentia to 15 and a half years in prison. The proceedings, which Human Rights Watch termed a political show trial, were viewed by many observers as an attempt by the government to discredit the secular democratic opposition by linking it to militant Islamists.

Just days after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Uzbekistan became the first Central Asian country to indicate its willingness to assist possible U.S. action against the Taliban. However, the exact nature of this cooperation was not immediately clear, and conflicting reports about U.S. troops having arrived on Uzbek territory surfaced during the next few weeks. Following meetings with the U.S. defense secretary, Karimov announced on October 5 that U.S.-led forces would be permitted to use one air base for humanitarian and search-and-rescue missions, but not to stage military strikes against Afghanistan. Tashkent's tentative response led to speculation that Karimov's government feared retaliation by the Taliban and was waiting for security or other guarantees from Washington before committing publicly to further cooperative measures. By the end of the year, an estimated 1,500 U.S. troops were reported to be stationed at the Khanabad air base in the south of the country, and President Karimov announced that no deadline had been set for their withdrawal.

Tashkent's new role as an important ally of the U.S.-led campaign represented an escalation of the country's existing ties with Washington. For several years, the United States and Uzbekistan had conducted joint operations against the Taliban and its terrorist allies, including the sharing of intelligence information and U.S. training of Uzbek guards stationed along the border with Afghanistan. The growing cooperation between the two countries brought with it clear advantages for Tashkent, including the hope of U.S. assistance in destroying the IMU and in obtaining new loans from international financial institutions to boost Uzbekistan's stagnating economy. At the same time, human rights groups warned that the country's new alliance with the United States could lead to a softening of Western criticism of Tashkent's poor human rights record and allow Karimov's government to justify further crackdowns on opponents of its regime as part of the global war on terrorism. In November, unconfirmed reports surfaced that IMU military leader Namangani had been killed during intense fighting in Afghanistan.

On November 28, Mohammad Solih was arrested on an Interpol warrant when he arrived at the airport in Prague, Czech Republic, on an invitation from Radio Free Europe. The warrant had been issued by Uzbekistan in connection with his conviction the previous year on charges of organizing the February 1999 Tashkent bombings. On December 14, Prague's municipal court ruled not to extradite him to Uzbekistan, where human rights groups had argued he might face torture or death upon his return.

Uzbekistan's relations with its Central Asian neighbors remained strained throughout the year over various economic and political issues. Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic continued to use threats to vital water and natural gas deliveries to influence

competing territorial claims, particularly in the rich agricultural land of the Ferghana Valley. As part of its declared effort to prevent renewed invasions by the IMU, Uzbekistan mined portions of its border with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, leading to protests by both governments and reports of the accidental deaths of civilians in the region. While Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan finally signed an agreement in November delineating 96 percent of their 1,200-mile border, the status of the remaining ethnically mixed border areas remains unresolved. Karimov's support of the U.S. military operation against the Taliban has led to fears among the other Central Asian nations that Uzbekistan could exploit its new relationship with Washington to further its territorial ambitions in the region.

### Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Citizens of Uzbekistan cannot change their government democratically. President Islam Karimov and the executive branch dominate the legislature and judiciary, and the government severely represses all political opposition. The primary purpose of the 250-member rubber-stamp national legislature is to confirm decisions made by the executive branch. The 1994-1995 and 1999 parliamentary elections and the 2000 presidential poll, in which only pro-government candidates could participate, were neither free nor fair.

The state imposes strict limits on freedom of speech and the press, particularly with regard to reports on the government and President Karimov. The country's private broadcast and print media outlets generally avoid political issues, are largely regional in scope, and suffer from administrative and financial constraints. Self-censorship is widespread, while the few journalists who dare to produce probing or critical reports of the authorities face harassment, physical violence, or closure of their media outlets. In July, the authorities fired the editor of the Russian-language paper *Tashkent Pravda*, Alo Hodjaev, who had been widely regarded as the only remaining newspaper editor capable of resisting government pressure. His dismissal followed the paper's decision a few weeks earlier to create a display of all of its articles that had been rejected by government censors. In early August, journalist and artist Shukhrat Babadjanov fled the country to avoid arrest on politically motivated charges of having forged his application for membership in the country's Union of Artists in 1991. Babadjanov had been the director of the private ALC television station, which was closed by the authorities in late 1999. The country's media provided minimal, highly censored coverage of the events surrounding the September 11 attacks in the United States, forcing citizens to rely on their limited access to foreign television broadcasts or newspapers for up-to-date reports. All Internet service providers must route their connections through a government-run server, allowing the state to prevent the transmission of material it deems objectionable.

The government permits followers of mainstream religions, including approved Muslim and Jewish communities, as well as the Russian Orthodox Church and some other Christian denominations, to worship relatively freely. However, the activities of other congregations are restricted through legislation that requires all religious groups to register with the state through burdensome registration criteria. In addition, the 1998 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations prohibits proselytizing, the teaching of religious subjects without official permission, and the wearing of religious garments in public by anyone other than clerics. Revisions to the criminal code in May 1998 and May 1999 increased Penalties for violating the law and other statutes on

religious activities. The government-controlled Spiritual Directorate for Muslims dictates the content of imam's sermons and of published Islamic materials.

The government continued to be suspicious and intolerant of followers of Muslim organizations not sanctioned by the state. During the last several years, many of them have been arrested or imprisoned on charges of anti-constitutional activities, often under the pretext of the government's fight against militant Islamists. Authorities have targeted members of the banned and highly secretive *Hizb-ut-Tahrir* (Islamic Party of Liberation), an international movement calling for the creation of an Islamic caliphate throughout the Muslim world. Suspected members have been forced to give confessions under torture and their family members have been subjected to interrogation, arrest, and extortion. According to an International Crisis Group report, while Hizb-ut-Tahrir officially rejects the use of violence, some members reportedly do not exclude support for armed resistance or for the IMU.

Permits for public demonstrations, which must be approved by the government, are not routinely granted, and fear of police persecution makes such rallies uncommon occurrences. Throughout 2001, several public protests were conducted by women demanding the release from prison of their husbands and sons, who had been detained on suspicion of belonging to illegal Islamic groups. Police reportedly beat and arrested many of the demonstrators. No genuine political opposition groups function legally or participate in the government. A 1997 law prohibits parties based on ethnic or religious lines and those advocating subversion of the constitutional order. Members of unregistered opposition groups, including Birlik and Erk, are subject to discrimination and some have gone into voluntary exile abroad. The Council of the Federation of Trade Unions is dependent on the state, and no genuinely alternative union structures exist.

The country's two principal human rights groups, the Human Rights Society of Uzbekistan (HRSU) and the Independent Human Rights Organization of Uzbekistan (NOPCHU), have been denied registration repeatedly and have faced ongoing harassment by the authorities. In July, the body of HRSU member Shovrukh Ruzimuradov was returned to his family several weeks after he had been arrested for allegedly possessing weapons, drugs, and banned religious leaflets. According to human rights activists, the evidence had been planted by police and Ruzimuradov appeared to have died as the result of ill-treatment while in custody. Emin Usmon, a prominent writer, died in February while in detention on charges of distributing materials of a banned Islamic group. Although his death was officially ruled a suicide, his supporters maintain that it resulted from torture at the hands of law enforcement officials. On July 3, NOPCHU member Ismail Adylov was released from prison under a presidential amnesty. He had served two years of a seven-year prison term on fabricated charges of anti-state activities and participation in an extremist religious group.

The judiciary is subservient to the president, who appoints all judges and can remove them from office at any time. Police routinely physically abuse suspects to extract confessions, while arbitrary arrest and detention are common. Law enforcement authorities reportedly often plant narcotics, weapons, and banned religious literature on suspected members of Islamic groups or political opponents to justify their arrest. Prisons suffer from severe overcrowding and shortages of food and medicine. In August, President Karimov announced an amnesty for various categories of prisoners. However, the presidential pardon excluded those convicted of anti-state activities, a crime under which many of the country's estimated 7,000 political prisoners have been



charged. A new death Penalty law went into effect in October 2001 that reduces the number of capital offenses from eight to four—genocide, terrorism, premeditated aggravated murder, and acts of aggression against the state. However, critics charge that the categories are broad enough to allow the authorities to use them to suppress political and religious dissent.

Widespread corruption, bureaucratic regulations, and the government's tight control over the economy limit most citizens' equality of opportunity. Women's educational and professional prospects are restricted by traditional cultural and religious norms and by ongoing economic difficulties throughout the country. Victims of domestic violence are discouraged from pressing charges against their perpetrators, who rarely face criminal prosecution.

## Vanuatu

Polity: Parliamentary democracy

Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 200,000

PPP: \$2,880

Life Expectancy: 65

Ethnic Groups: Melanesian (94 percent), French (4 percent) other (2 percent)

Capital: Port Vila

Political Rights: 1

Civil Liberties: 3

Status: Free



### Overview:

In April, a minor member of the governing coalition withdrew its support for Prime Minister Barak Tame Sope. After several attempts by the parliamentary speaker to block a no-confidence motion, the acting chief justice ordered parliament to resolve the impasse, and Sope was ousted in a vote shortly thereafter. Opposition leader Edward Natapei was then voted in as the new prime minister. The new government initiated an inquiry into Sope's dealings with a controversial Indian businessman who was given letters of credit worth hundreds of millions of dollars, and in November, Sope was charged with two counts of forgery.

Located in the southwestern Pacific, this predominantly Melanesian archipelago, formerly the New Hebrides, was an Anglo-French condominium until it became independent in 1980. The condominium agreement divided the islands into English- and French-speaking communities, creating rifts that continue today. In 1999, Prime Minister Donald Kalpokas called on all government ministries to use both English and French, the country's two official languages, in their work.

Politics in the islands are also divided between the English- and French-speaking communities, and factional rivalries contribute to frequent changes of government. The first postindependence government, led by Prime Minister Father Walter Lini's anglophone Vanua'aku Pati (VP) party, largely excluded francophones from key posts. In 1991, a divided VP ousted Lini, who left to form the National United Party (NUP).

This split the anglophone vote and allowed the francophone Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) to win a plurality in the December 1991 elections and form a government under Maxime Carlot. Numerous coalition governments have held power in the past five years. In November 1999, Sope, of the Melanesian Progressive Party was chosen prime minister after winning 28 votes in the 52-seat parliament. The new government promised to reduce the power of department heads, to review the recruitment of foreign advisers, and to reconsider the value-added tax.

In 1999, the government introduced the Comprehensive Reform Program after the exposure of alleged corruption and abuses by senior government officials, including reports that several high-ranking politicians were involved in selling passports to foreign nationals. Underwritten by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Comprehensive Reform Program includes an overhaul of state administration and increased private sector development. The government would also reduce the country's public service sector by about ten percent and enact a strict leadership code of conduct. In August, the ADB announced a program to assist Vanuatu's legal sector in order to increase the efficiency of the State Law Office.

To reduce reliance on overseas aid, the country has also been working to develop alternative income sources. The sale of fishing licenses to foreign fishing companies is now an important source of income for the government. Vanuatu was accused by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development of involvement in money laundering activities in its bid to set up an offshore banking industry. It joined seven other Pacific Islands to sign the "Pacific Islands Prudential Regulation and Supervision Initiative" to end illicit financial operations in the region. In late October, Vanuatu completed negotiations to join the World Trade Organization.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens of Vanuatu can change their government democratically. The constitution vests executive power in a prime minister. The unicameral, 52-member parliament is directly elected for a four-year term. A largely ceremonial president is elected for a five-year term by an electoral college consisting of the 49 members of parliament and the 6 provincial council presidents. The 1998 national elections, in which 216 candidates contested 52 seats, were regarded as generally free and fair.

Although the judicial system is generally independent, the government has, at times, attempted to pressure the largely expatriate judiciary in politically sensitive cases. During a four-week nationwide state of emergency in 1998, the police arrested more than 500 suspected rioters in January 1998, and there were credible reports that police assaulted or otherwise poorly treated prisoners. Eighteen police and military officers were charged with intentional assault, but were cleared in 1999 because of a lack of evidence. In 1999, the Ombudsman's Office reported that the country's jails fail to meet the minimum international standards and the constitutional rights of inmates are often violated. In May, an Australian tourist serving a six-month sentence went on a hunger strike to protest prison conditions in Port Vila.

In this multiparty state, there is considerable freedom for the media. There are independent newspapers as well as political party newsletters. In April 1999, the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation decided to allow pay-television to commence service. In June 2000, the enactment of the Freedom Telecommunications Law ended the monopoly of Telecommunications Vanuatu Limited, and a new bilingual paper, *Port*

*Vila Presse*, was launched in November. Nonetheless, the government owns most of the country's media outlets, including a television station serving the capital, two radio stations, and the *Vanuatu Weekly* newspaper. In January 2001, following the publication of a series of reports on government dealings with overseas businessmen, the prime minister attempted to deport the U.K.-born editor of the *Trading Post* newspaper, Marc Neil-Jones. However, the deportation order was cancelled by the supreme court.

Religious freedom is respected in this predominantly Christian country. Freedom of assembly and association is upheld. There are five active, independent trade unions operating under the umbrella of the Vanuatu Council of Trade Unions, although more than 80 percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture and fishing. Unions can exercise their right to organize and bargain collectively.

The country's small ethnic-minority communities are discriminated against in land ownership. Women have limited opportunities in education and politics, and recent high-profile court cases involving violence against women strengthened the call for more public education on the issue and for an increase in the number of women in the judicial system. Women's groups also demanded stricter sentences for sex offenders.

## ↓ Venezuela

Polity: Presidential-parliamentary democracy Political Rights: 3  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 24,600,000  
 PPP: \$5,495  
 Life Expectancy: 73  
 Ethnic Groups: Mestizo (67 percent), white (21 percent), black (10 percent), Indian (2 percent)  
 Capital: Caracas



Trend Arrow: Venezuela received a downward trend arrow due to government harassment of organized labor and the business community and to significant increases in violent crime.

### Overview:

The government of President Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías faced a significant test in 2001 as a result of a dramatic rise in street crime that threatened the working class and poor Venezuelans who make up the core of his constituency, as well as frightening those belonging to the country's beleaguered middle class. The crime wave was centered in Caracas and made even wealthy neighborhoods in the capital city subject to serious public safety threats. Venezuela's continued economic woes and natural disasters, together with weapons and narcotics trafficking, added to the heightened sense of insecurity. A recent study ranked Venezuela as second of the ten most violent nations in the Americas and Europe; the police appeared unable to halt the carnage, in which nearly one Venezuelan was killed nearly every hour.

Chávez's penchant for breaking bread with the leaders of rogue nations and even international terrorists was reaffirmed in 2001, with a visit to Libya, Venezuela's part-

ner in the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC), as well as a well-publicized effort to cozy up to Carlos the Jackal, a Venezuelan-bom terrorist imprisoned for the murder of two French policemen. In August, Cuban dictator Fidel Castro received military honors in Caracas, as the world's longest-ruling leader celebrated his 75th birthday, and a month later Chávez said Cuba and Venezuela were united as "one team" in fighting free market capitalism. On November 1, the Bush administration temporarily recalled U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela, Donna Hrinak, after Chávez held up pictures of dead Afghan children on Venezuelan television, describing the U.S.-led fighting in Afghanistan as a "slaughter of innocents."

The Republic of Venezuela was established in 1830, nine years after independence from Spain. Long periods of instability and military rule ended with the establishment in 1961 of civilian rule. Under the constitution approved that year, the president and a bicameral congress are elected for five years. The senate has at least two members from each of the 21 states and the federal district of Caracas. The chamber of deputies has 189 seats.

Until 1993, the social-democratic Democratic Action (AD) Party and the Social Christian Party (COPEI) dominated politics. Former President Carlos Andres Pérez (1989-93) of the AD was nearly overthrown by Chávez and other nationalist military officers in two 1992 coup attempts in which dozens were killed. In 1993 Pérez was charged with corruption and removed from office by congress.

Rafael Caldera, a former president (1969-1974) of COPEI and a populist, was elected president in late 1993 as the head of the 16-party National Convergence, which included Communists, other leftists, and right-wing groups. Caldera's term was marked by a national banking collapse (in 1994), the suspension of a number of civil liberties, mounting violent crime and social unrest, and rumors of a military coup. With crime soaring, public corruption unabated, oil wealth drying up, and the country in the worst economic crisis in 50 years, popular disillusionment with politics deepened.

In the 1998 presidential contest, Chávez's antiestablishment, anticorruption populism played well in a country whose corrupt political establishment was famous for its interlocking system of privilege and graft and whose elites considered politics their private preserve. As his victory appeared more likely, Chávez abandoned his incendiary rhetoric in which he criticized the free market and promised to "fry" opposition leaders. Last-minute efforts to find a consensus candidate against Chávez were largely unsuccessful, and the Yale-educated businessman Henrique Salas, the other leading presidential contender, also steered away from association with the old political order. Salas, a respected two-term former state governor, won just 40 percent of the vote, to Chávez's 57 percent. In February 1999, Chávez took control of the world's number three oil-exporting country.

Chávez promptly dismantled Venezuela's political system of checks and balances, ostensibly to destroy a discredited two-party system that for four decades had presided over several oil booms but had left four out of five Venezuelans impoverished. He gutted the power of the opposition-controlled congress and placed the judiciary under executive branch tutelage.

Critics charged Chávez with militarizing politics and politicizing the military, with Chávez's army colleagues given a far bigger say in the day-to-day running of the country. Tens of thousands of soldiers were dispatched to build public works, dozens of senior military officers were promoted without congressional approval, and regional

army commands were given oversight powers of local elected officials. Generals were appointed to senior posts, such as presidential chief of staff, head of the secret police, and head of the internal revenue service. In 2001, Chávez appointed the first civilian defense minister in Venezuela's history—a move hailed by the president's supporters as ensuring the continued ideological suasion by the *chavistas* over the armed forces.

A constituent assembly dominated by Chávez followers drafted a new constitution that would make censorship of the press easier, allow a newly strengthened chief executive the right to dissolve congress, and make it possible for Chávez to retain power until 2013. Congress and the supreme court were dismissed after Venezuelans approved the new constitution in a national referendum on December 15, 2000.

Despite Chávez's 21-point lead in the presidential contest, the July 2000 election marked a resurgence of a political opposition that had been hamstrung in its efforts to contest his stripping of congress and the judiciary of their independence and power. Opposition parties won most of the country's governorships, about half the mayoralties, and a significant share of power in the new congress. In addition, Chávez found a number of key civilian and military allies deserting him, many of whom joined forces with the opposition, including his erstwhile friend and colleague Lt. Col. Francisco Arias

Cárdenas, who had run second in the presidential race. In response, in November, Chávez's congressional allies granted him special fast-track powers that allowed him to decree a wide range of laws without parliamentary debate. Chávez's foreign policy forays also won him significant suspicion among Venezuela's traditional allies, particularly after suspected ties to Ecuador's unsuccessful military coup leaders were revealed. Despite promises that Venezuela's unicameral congress would transform society, the national assembly passed only six minor laws, rather than the 100 Chávez's supporters were predicting, before the legislative body adjourned in late August 2001, the victim of inexperience, infighting, and inattention to legal detail. In October, landowners' groups loudly criticized Chávez's announcement that he planned to issue legislation, apparently inspired in part by Cuba's radical agrarian reform, that would set limits on land ownership and include provisions for possible expropriation by the state. In early November, Chávez underlined his intention to sign into law legislation that would guarantee government control of the country's strategic, lucrative oil sector by creating a minimum 51 percent state interest in all new projects.

Spillover effects from the civil war in neighboring Colombia continued to create problems in the Venezuelan border states of Apure, Amazonas, Tachira, and Zulia. Ranchers from the region faced the constant threat of kidnapping or extortion by Colombian leftist guerrillas who cross the border and who are often joined in the illegal activities by common criminals and gangs from that country. In July 2001, hundreds of protestors converged on Caracas to draw attention to the upsurge in abductions and road robberies, particularly along the border. Earlier, ranchers from the border area had demanded that they be allowed to form private militias for self-defense, claiming that the military troops stationed in the area were ineffective in protecting them. The proposal led Chávez to suspend issuance of new gun licenses and to threaten to jail the would-be militiamen.

In 1999, Chávez sparked a controversy when he sent a letter addressed to a "dear compatriot"—Venezuelan-born revolutionary Carlos the Jackal, whose real name is Mich Ramirez Sanchez. Carlos, once hunted by Western security services as one of the world's most wanted terrorist masterminds, is currently serving a life sentence in France

for the 1975 murder of two French secret agents. In early October 2001, during a visit to Paris, Chávez provoked another firestorm of criticism by demanding Carlos's human rights be respected. Several senior Venezuelan officials added fuel to the fire by appearing to question whether Carlos—believed to be responsible for some 80 killings carried out in support of the Palestinian and other revolutionary causes—was a "terrorist." In an interview with Caracas's *El Universal* newspaper, Carlos said he supported Osama bin Laden's "revolutionary, anti-imperialist" war and felt "solidarity" towards Chávez's self-styled "Bolivarian revolution."

On December 10, 2001, political opponents and business and labor leaders staged a widely supported national protest strike against Chávez's rule. Bowing to political pressure, Chávez fired army commander Gen. Victor Cruz Weffer, one of his most prominent supporters in the military and the target of widespread allegations of corruption. At year's end, amid growing rumors of an impending coup, the increasingly unpopular Chávez tried to rally support for his government from Venezuela's armed forces, whose officers had been placed in key positions throughout his regime.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Citizens can change their government democratically, although Chávez supporters appear at times on the verge of mob rule, particularly as constitutional checks and balances have been removed. The July 2000 elections were considered by international observers to be free and fair. However, government critics claim that democratic rule has been damaged significantly since independent institutions have lost their autonomy and the concentration of political power has put Chávez at the top of a pyramid of executive branch power unprecedented in Venezuela in modern times.

Until Chávez took power, the judicial system was headed by a nominally independent supreme court, although the court was highly politicized, was undermined by the chronic corruption (including the growing influence of narcotics traffickers) that permeates the entire political system, and was unresponsive to charges of rights abuses. Chávez, by sacking scores of judges, has successfully subordinated the legal system to his presidency. An unwieldy new judicial code has hampered some law enforcement efforts, resulting in low rates of conviction and shorter jail terms even for convicted murderers, while police salaries are woefully inadequate.

Citizen security in general remains threatened by a narcotics-fueled crime wave that has resulted in hundreds of killings monthly in major cities and vigilante mob killings of alleged criminals. In 2000 the murder rate reached 21 per day, double what it was two years ago; during the Christmas weekend alone, 144 homicides were logged, with 60 percent of the killings either reportedly score-settling with criminal gangs or in shootouts with the police.

Widespread arbitrary detention and torture of suspects, as well as dozens of extrajudicial killings by military security forces and the police, have increased as crime continues to soar. By mid-2000, an estimated 500 people had been killed by the police, a sign that, some observers say, is evidence of a growing vigilante mentality among law enforcement personnel. Since the 1992 coup attempts, weakened civilian governments have had less authority over the military and the police and overall rights abuses are committed with impunity. A separate system of armed forces courts retains jurisdiction over members of the military accused of rights violations and common criminal crimes, and decisions cannot be appealed in civilian court. Chávez's decision to pre-

side over all military promotions and transfers has concentrated enormous patronage within the armed forces into his own hands. His meddling in all aspects of military affairs caused something of a backlash in 2000, as 42 of 93 retiring officers who were to receive one of the armed forces' highest honors preferred to stay away from the July ceremony rather than receive the recognition from Chávez's hands. In a disturbing trend, in October 2000, Chávez named two serving generals to head the world's second-largest state oil company and its U.S. refining and market branch.

Venezuela's 32 prisons, the most violent in the world, hold some 23,000 inmates—of whom less than one-third have been convicted of a crime—even though they were designed to hold no more than 14,000. Deadly prison riots are common, and inmate gangs have a striking degree of control over the Penal system. Chávez's government has announced an emergency program to modernize the country's prisons, including plans to build five or six new penitentiaries.

The press is mostly privately owned, although the practice of journalism is supervised by an association of broadcasters under government control. Since 1994, the media in general have faced a pattern of intimidation. International media monitors have condemned a constitutional article approved by the constituent assembly that would require journalists to publish or broadcast "truthful information," a move that they say opens the door to government censorship. In 2001, the Inter-American Press Association accused the government of using the judiciary for its own political purposes and of intimidating the media.

Few Indians hold title to their land, and indigenous communities trying to defend their legal land rights are subject to abuses, including killing, by gold miners and corrupt rural police. In 1999, the constituent assembly voted to include a chapter in the new constitution that sets forth the legal rights of indigenous peoples and communities, in accordance with standards set by the International Labor Organization. Chapter VII would guarantee "the right to exist as indigenous peoples and communities with their own social and economic organization, their cultures and traditions, and their language and religion." In the July 2000 national elections, three indigenous candidates were elected to the national assembly, eight were elected to regional legislative congresses, and four Indians won mayoralties.

Labor unions are well organized, but highly politicized and prone to corruption. Chávez supporters have sought to break what they term a "stranglehold" of corrupt labor leaders on the job market, a move labor activists say tramples on the rights of private organizations. The referendum approved in December 2000 allows Chávez to dissolve the Venezuelan Worker's Confederation and to organize new state-supervised elections of union representatives, a move that opposition and labor leaders say is the first step towards establishing a government-controlled labor union. Throughout 2001, the government continued to interfere in union elections, although international observers said they saw no evidence of election fraud. Security forces frequently break up strikes and arrest trade unionists.

## Vietnam

Polity: One party                      Political Rights: 7  
Economy: Statist                      Civil Liberties: 6  
Population: 78,700,000              Status: Not Free  
PPP: \$1,860  
Life Expectancy: 66  
Ethnic Groups: Vietnamese (85-90 percent), other,  
including Chinese, Muong, Thai, Meo, Khmer, Man,  
Cham (10-15 percent)  
Capital: Hanoi



### Overview:

Signaling its intent to continue carrying out modest but contentious economic reforms, Vietnam's ruling Communist Party (VCP) in March 2001 chose as its leader Nong Duc Manh, a veteran politician with a reputation for stressing pragmatism over ideology. Manh, 60, takes over Vietnam's top leadership post at a time when the party is deeply divided over how far and fast to pursue privatization of large state firms and other market-oriented measures. Moderates seek faster reforms in the hopes of modernizing the impoverished Southeast Asian country and producing enough jobs to stave off social unrest. Party hardliners fear that loosening the state's control over the economy will undermine the VCP's tight grip on power. Meanwhile, authorities responded to unprecedented antigovernment rallies by ethnic minorities in the central highlands by arresting and sentencing some two dozen suspected protest leaders.

Vietnam gained independence from France in 1954 following a century of colonial rule and occupation by the Japanese during World War II. At independence, the country was divided into the French-supported Republic of South Vietnam and the Communist-ruled Democratic Republic of Vietnam in the north. Following a decade-long war that killed tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians, North Vietnam defeated the U.S.-backed South in 1975 and reunited the country in 1976.

Victorious on the battlefield, the Communist government proved unable to feed its people. The centralized economy grew at anemic rates, and Vietnam had to import rice. The government responded in 1986 by dismantling collectivized agriculture and encouraging small-scale private enterprise.

Spurred by the reforms, Vietnam's economy grew by 7.6 percent per year on average, and gross domestic product (GDP) doubled between 1991 and 2000, according to World Bank figures. The leadership, however, remained ambivalent about the pace and extent of liberalization because the reforms could undermine the government's tight political control. Farmers, now working for themselves, and private sector workers cannot be monitored as easily as those who depend on the state for their livelihood. Moreover, while the government has sold off thousands of small firms, privatization of large companies would likely throw millions out of work, possibly leading to a backlash against the regime. At the same time, the government faces long-term problems if it fails to modernize the economy and create enough new jobs for the 1.4 million Vietnamese who join the workforce each year.

Manh, the new party leader, is widely viewed as having the ability to forge consensus



between the party's conservative old guard and younger, reform-minded cadres. His elevation to the top post came at the VCP's ninth party congress, which nominally set out government policy for the next five years. Manh, who previously headed the national assembly, replaced Le Kha Phieu, 69, a staunch conservative who had blocked many economic reforms sought by younger officials. In choosing Manh, a northerner, and retaining Premier Phan Van Khai and state President Tran Due Luong, the VCP also preserved the leadership troika's traditional balance between northern, central, and southern Vietnam.

The International Monetary Fund agreed in April to provide Hanoi with a three-year, \$368 million loan package aimed at helping the country restructure 1,800 state-owned enterprises, reform its debt-ridden state-owned banks, and free up trade and capital flows. Amid reduced demand for Vietnamese exports in Japan, the United States, and other key markets, economic growth slowed to 4.8 percent in 2001, according to preliminary World Bank estimates, from 5.5 percent in 2000. Exports make up 46 percent of Vietnam's GDP.

As it grappled with tough economic choices, the government also used soldiers, riot police, and water cannon to disperse an estimated 5,000 protesters from Protestant ethnic-minority groups known collectively as Montagnards, in central Daklak, Gia Lai, and Kontum provinces in early February. The protesters reportedly called for religious freedom, political autonomy for the highlands, and the return of ancestral lands confiscated for coffee plantations. Authorities arrested and in some cases tortured alleged protest leaders and banned gatherings of more than four people in some highland areas, according to the New York-based Human Rights Watch. By November, courts had sentenced at least 24 people to prison terms of up to 12 years on charges of disrupting security. Hill tribespeople routinely complain that many lowland Vietnamese have in recent years migrated to the hills and cleared land and forests to make way for plantations for coffee and other cash crops.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Ruled by the Vietnam Communist Party (VCP) as a single-party state, Vietnam is one of the most tightly controlled societies in the world. Authorities jail or harass most dissidents, control all media, sharply restrict organized religion, and prevent Vietnamese from setting up independent political, labor, or religious groups. The regime, however, has in recent years tolerated some grassroots protests over nominally nonpolitical issues and has loosened its control over the day-to-day lives of ordinary Vietnamese.

Party leader Nong Due Manh, Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, and state President Tran Due Luong are Vietnam's three most powerful leaders, although relatively little is known about how policy is actually decided. The VCP's 150-member central committee is theoretically the country's peak decision-making body, while the politburo's five-member standing committee oversees day-to-day political affairs. In addition, the party-controlled Fatherland Front, a supervisory body, helps shape state policy. The 1992 constitution formally gave the VCP a leading role in running the country.

The 450-member national assembly generally does not initiate legislation or reject government bills. Delegates, however, have in recent years vigorously debated economic, legal, and social matters, aired local and provincial grievances, and criticized government corruption and inefficiency. Legislators also sharply question ministers in televised sessions. The Fatherland Front vets all national assembly candidates and allows only VCP members and some independents to run. Some 85 percent of delegates in the current national assembly are VCP members.

While sharply restricting political rights, the government has increasingly tried to address grassroots complaints under a 1998 decree directing local authorities to consult more with the public. In many provinces, however, complaints get bogged down in bureaucratic shuffling, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* of Hong Kong reported in May. Hanoi issued the decree in the wake of protests by several thousand farmers in northern Thai Binh province in 1997 over high taxes and embezzlement by local officials.

Hanoi has also increasingly tolerated small protests and other informal complaints over local grievances, which most often concern land compensation. Farmers and other groups have in recent years staged small protests outside the national assembly building and government and party offices. Thousands of Vietnamese also register grievances each year by letter or in person. In addition to land matters, citizens complain about government inefficiency, official corruption, economic policy, and opaque bureaucratic procedures.

Vietnam's judiciary is characterized by a "lack of independence," according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Vietnam's human rights record in 2000. Reports suggest that "party officials, including top leaders, instruct courts how to rule on politically important cases," the report said. Bolstering the party's control, judges serve only limited terms that are subject to review, and party-run councils select the courts' lay assessors. The assessors help decide cases but have no legal training.

In ordinary criminal cases, authorities often ignore legal safeguards in the criminal procedure code and hold many detainees for up to one year without trial, the U.S. State Department report said. The report also noted that judges often ignore the constitutional rule that defendants are innocent until proven guilty. Moreover, Vietnam's shortage of lawyers prevents many criminal suspects from obtaining legal counsel.

Police routinely arrest and detain suspects without written warrants and at times shackle, beat, or torture detainees and inmates, according to Human Rights Watch. Prison conditions are harsh, though not life threatening, according to the U.S. State Department report. It noted that many prisons are overcrowded, have poor sanitation, and do not give prisoners enough food.

The government holds some political prisoners, including religious dissidents, although there are no accurate figures on their number. Amnesty International believes that Vietnamese jails hold more than 20 political prisoners. The government denies holding any prisoners on political grounds.

In addition to jailing dissidents, authorities force some dissidents to live and work only in designated places, the U.S. State Department report said. They do this under a broad 1997 decree authorizing "administrative detention" without trial for Vietnamese whose offenses do not amount to criminal acts. There are no figures on the number of people subject to administrative detention, which can last up to two years.

To monitor the population, the government relies on a household registration system and on block wardens, who use informants to track individual activity. Authorities, however, have largely scaled back their surveillance of ordinary Vietnamese, focusing instead mainly on political and religious dissidents, according to the U.S. State Department report.

The party and government tightly control all media, and authorities have punished journalists and newspapers for violating official guidelines on permissible coverage. To this end, officials have jailed reporters or placed them under house arrest, taken away their press cards, and closed down newspapers, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in March. Faced with the threat of punishment, journalists practice self-

ensorship on sensitive political matters. Newspapers criticize state policies but not the VCP and its monopoly on power nor individual government leaders.

Vietnam's constitution and criminal code both contain broad national security and anti-defamation provisions that restrict free speech, further hampering the press. Moreover, a media decree took effect in July that authorized fines for several offenses including republishing previously banned stories, intentionally providing false information to the media, and publishing articles containing pornography or "superstitious attitudes," Human Rights Watch said. The media are also constrained by a 1999 law that requires journalists to pay damages to individuals or groups who are harmed by reportage, even if the reports are true. The Haiphong Agricultural Materials and Transport Company sued Hanoi's *Capital Youth* newspaper in 2000 for harming the company's prestige with a series of investigative articles; the case is pending. In a practice that raises questions about the credibility of Vietnam's media, government agencies and private firms often give journalists cash in order to encourage positive reporting, the March *Review* article noted.

Vietnamese freely use the Internet. The government, however, blocks some politically sensitive sites and authorizes the state-owned Vietnam Data Communications company, the sole Internet access provider, to monitor sites accessed by subscribers. An August decree authorized fines for illegal Internet use while legalizing private Internet service providers. Vietnam has 82,000 Internet subscribers and an increasing number of public access cybercafes in major cities, according to 2000 government figures.

The regime sharply restricts religious freedom by tightly regulating religious organizations and clergy and cracking down on dissident religious groups and their leaders. The government requires all religious groups to register and get permission to hold training seminars, conventions, and special celebrations; build or remodel places of worship; carry out charitable activities or run religious schools; and train, ordain, promote, or transfer clergy, the U.S. State Department report said. If they comply, registered groups are allowed to operate openly and their followers can worship freely.

Similarly, all clergy must join a party-controlled umbrella group, one of which exists for each religion the state recognizes: Buddhism; Roman Catholicism; Protestantism; Islam; Cao Daim, a synthesis of several religions; and the Hoa Hao faith, a reformist Buddhist church. The government restricts the number of Buddhist monks and Catholic seminarians, prohibits ordination into the Cao Dai priesthood, and prevents Protestants from running a seminary or ordaining new clergy, according to the U.S. State Department report.

For years, the government has tried to undermine the independent Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV). Officials released several prominent UBCV monks in 1998 but continue to harass group members. Since 1981, the government has held Thich Huyen Quang, the UBCV's supreme patriarch, under limited detention at his pagoda in Quang Nai Province. Buddhists make up three-quarters of Vietnam's population.

Authorities reportedly also sometimes beat, detain, or otherwise harass members of independent Protestant house churches, according to the U.S. State Department report. They also enforce closure orders, in effect since 1975, on Hoa Hao places of worship, the report added. Hoa Hao followers fought the Communist forces during the Vietnam War.

Domestic violence against women reportedly is relatively common, but authorities do not vigorously enforce relevant laws, the U.S. State Department report said. Despite some government initiatives, trafficking of women for the purpose of forced prostitu-

tion, both within Vietnam and to China and Cambodia, continues to be a serious problem, the report added. Women are increasingly active in business but they continue to face discrimination in employment and wages, according to the report. They are also underrepresented in government and politics.

Ethnic minorities face discrimination in mainstream society, and local officials reportedly sometimes restrict minority access to schooling and jobs, the U.S. State Department report said. Minorities also can rarely take part in planning development projects that affect them, the *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported in January.

In the workplace, the government bars independent trade unions and weakly enforces child labor and other labor laws, according to the U.S. State Department report. Union leaders do have input on some health, safety, and minimum wage decisions, but focus mainly on increasing worker productivity, resolving disputes without strikes, and setting up social activities. In any case, with 70 percent of the workforce engaged in agriculture, most Vietnamese workers are not unionized.

Workers have staged dozens of strikes in recent years, generally against foreign and private companies. In most cases, workers did not follow a legally mandated conciliation and arbitration process with management. At the same time, the government prohibits strikes in 54 occupational sectors and businesses.

Some 40,000 children between the ages of 8 and 14 work illegally either part-time or full-time, according to government estimates. Officials routinely require inmates to produce food and other goods for use in prisons for little or no pay, the U.S. State Department report said.

For many Vietnamese, particularly those in the private sector, the government's economic reforms have improved living standards and reduced official intrusions into their daily lives. However, only 1 million to 1.5 million of Vietnam's 40 million workers are in the private sector, a World Bank official told a June government-business forum.

## Yemen

Polity: Dominant party  
(military-influenced)  
(traditional chiefs)

Political Rights: 6\*  
Civil Liberties: 6  
Status: Not Free

Economy: Capitalist-statist

Population: 18,000,000

PPP: \$806

Life Expectancy: 59

Ethnic Groups: Predominandy Arab, some Afro-Arab,

South Asian

Capital: Sanaa

**Ratings Change:** Yemen's political rights rating declined from 5 to 6 because of successful efforts by President Saleh to increase his powers and extend his presidential term.



### Overview:

On February 20, 2001, 73 percent of Yemenis voted in favor of a referendum to extend the term of President Ali Abdullah Saleh from five to seven years, to extend parliamentary terms

from four to six years, and to create a 111-member, presidentially appointed council of advisors with legislative power. Critics denounced what they called a move by Saleh to consolidate his hold on power, and expressed fear that the new council will undermine Yemen's parliament.

The referendum coincided with Yemen's first local elections since unification 11 years ago. Saleh's ruling General People's Congress (GPC) party took 61 percent of about 7,000 municipal council seats, while the Islamist Islah Party won 23 percent, and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) split the remaining seats with independents and smaller parties. At least 40 people were killed in election-related violence, and voting was delayed in some areas because of ballot disputes. The opposition protested what it called irregularities and vote rigging.

Yemeni and U.S. law enforcement officials continued during 2001 to gather evidence against suspects in the suicide bombing that killed 17 U.S. sailors on the *Cole*, a naval destroyer, in the Port of Aden in October 2000. The investigation took on greater urgency in the wake of the September 11 attacks in the United States by suspected members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist network. Amid rumors that Yemen could soon be a target in the U.S.-led war on terrorism, Yemeni officials showed eagerness to cooperate with the United States and arrested dozens of Islamists, including suspected followers of bin Laden. Officials from both countries believe that bin Laden was also behind the *Cole* attack.

After hundreds of years of rule by autocratic religious leaders, the northern Yemen Arab Republic came under military control in 1962. Field Marshall Saleh was elected president by a constituent assembly in 1978. The British controlled the southern People's Republic of Yemen from 1839 to 1967. Hardline Marxist nationals seized power in the southern capital of Aden following the British withdrawal. North and south were unified into the Republic of Yemen in 1990, with the GPC's Saleh as president and southern YSP leader Ali Salim al-Biedh as vice president.

In April 1993 parliamentary elections, Saleh and the GPC won the most seats and formed a coalition with Islah and the YSP. Parliament formally elected Saleh and al-Biedh president and vice president, respectively. However, al-Biedh boycotted the new government and called for demilitarization of the former north-south border, decentralization of authority, and investigation into dozens of preelection killings of YSP activists. The south attempted to secede in April 1994, sparking a 70-day civil war. Northern troops prevailed, and al-Biedh and other secessionist leaders fled the country.

Constitutional amendments in 1994 gave the chief executive broad powers and provided for direct presidential elections in 1999. Islah and the GPC formed a governing coalition in October 1994, and 13 opposition groups, led by the YSP, formed the Democratic Opposition Coalition in 1995. April 1997 elections to the 301-seat parliament were generally free and fair, though opposition members denounced the results as a government attempt to legitimize the "unfair" outcome of the civil war.

Bitterness prevails among many southerners who continue to regard unity as northern domination. Despite attempts at economic reform, the south remains largely undeveloped and poor after decades of Communist rule. Southern Yemenis are also dissatisfied with official corruption, cronyism, and restrictions on political and civic participation. The GPC dominates the government and parliament, limiting or barring representation by the YSP, the main party of former South Yemen. A minor oil producer, Yemen is one of the Arab world's poorest nations. Unemployment is estimated at around

35 percent, while some 30 percent of Yemenis live in poverty. Observers agree that Saleh's greatest challenge is the need for comprehensive political and economic reform to combat Yemen's vast social problems and the mistrust between north and south. With the help of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Saleh has pursued an economic restructuring plan since 1995. It has made progress on reducing inflation and budget expenditures, but still needs to reform the civil service, eliminate corruption, and encourage private investment.

One barrier to economic development is Yemen's precarious security situation. The central government's influence is limited; in governorates outside the larger cities, heavily armed tribal leaders resist central control. Violence is a problem, as illicit guns outnumber Yemenis by three to one. Tribal land disputes occasionally flare up into violent clashes; in October, 10 people died and 32 were injured in one such dispute in Marib. Military and police officers are reluctant to intervene. Disgruntled tribesmen frequently take foreign tourists or oil workers hostage in order to press the government to grant development projects or to release imprisoned fellow tribesmen. These hostages are generally released unharmed and report having been well treated by their captors.

Islamic militancy surfaces occasionally, and Yemen has gained a reputation as a conduit for terrorism. The country has been identified as a source and transit point for terrorists, weapons, and funding for Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization. Authorities began hunting down suspected al-Qaeda members after September 11, but have had problems with sympathetic tribespeople sheltering suspects. In one operation in December, security forces raided a Marib village in which terrorists were believed to be hiding. A fight with tribesmen ensued, and 17 people were killed. Three senior al-Qaeda members reportedly escaped. The United States praised the effort.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The right of citizens to change their government is limited by the concentration of political power in the hands of a few leaders, particularly the president. The parliament is not an effective lawmaking body; it does little more than debate issues, and its power is limited by the president's authority to rule by decree. Presidential elections in 1999 were seen as "poor stage management," in the words of one YSP official. The major opposition candidate was barred by parliament from running, and President Saleh's only opponent was a little-known GPC member whose campaign was financed by the government. The YSP led a coalition of opposition groups urging Yemenis to boycott the polls.

Local elections in February 2001 were marred by violence and charges of vote rigging. About 20 percent of polling stations never officially announced final results because of disputes over ballot counting. The Yemeni Civic Democratic Initiatives Support Foundation reported that enough irregularities occurred to cast doubt on the fairness of the vote. The YSP and four smaller parties demanded a new vote. Opposition groups denounced the approval, also in February, of measures to extend presidential and parliamentary terms and to allow Saleh to appoint a 111-member consultative council with legislative authority. Some observers noted that the term extension will allow Saleh to retire just as his son turns 40—the minimum age for presidential candidates in Yemen.

The judiciary is not independent. Judges are susceptible to bribery and governmental influence, and many are poorly trained. Judicial independence is further hampered by the government's frequent reluctance to carry out sentences. Authorities set up a spe-

cial court in 1999 to handle cases of kidnapping, which was made a capital offense after the ill-fated kidnapping of 16 Western tourists by Islamic militants in late 1998. All courts are governed by *Sharia* (Islamic law), and there are no jury trials. The law lists 13 capital offenses, including some cases of adultery. Since 1999, the government has dismissed judges accused of corruption or incompetence, and has allowed the World Bank to implement programs to help train judges. These reforms will require time to produce results. Local tribal leaders adjudicate land disputes and criminal cases in areas under their authority.

Various branches of the security forces carry out arbitrary arrest and detention on political grounds, and regularly flout due process rights. In its 2001 report, Human Rights Watch asserted that Yemeni security forces continued to commit "abuses, including arbitrary arrest, torture, and killing of civilians with virtual impunity." The criminal code allows for a maximum of six months' detention without trial; at least six suspects held in the *Cole* attack were detained throughout 2001 without charge. In July, security officers in the city of Ibb detained more than 30 people, searched homes without warrants, and demolished the home of Abdallah Salih al-Maitami, an unsuccessful independent candidate in the local election. Maitami was also arrested and reportedly beaten by officials, according to Human Rights Watch. The government has failed to investigate hundreds of disappearances since the late 1960s in both north and south Yemen. In a December 2001 report on prisons, the *Yemen Times* detailed mistreatment of detainees, including poor sanitary conditions, overcrowding, inadequate food, and torture. Mistreatment occurs in private prisons as well as in official facilities.

A press law requires that newspapers reapply annually for licenses and that they show continuing evidence of about \$5,000 in operating capital. The press is allowed a certain degree of freedom to criticize government officials and policies, yet the government restricts this freedom through legal harassment, detention, and prosecution. In September, a *Yemen Times* journalist was arrested and held incommunicado after writing about the kidnapping of a German diplomat in July. Also in September, an Aden criminal court sentenced the editor of the weekly *al-Haqiqah* to three months in prison and fined him for falsely reporting the resignation of the governor of Aden. In November, authorities deported a French journalist who tried to interview relatives of Osama bin Laden. In April, the first issue of a monthly human rights publication was banned for allegedly violating the press law. In June, prosecutors implemented a 1997 sentence against the opposition weekly *al-Shura* for defamation and suspended the publication for six months. Broadcast media are government owned and present only government views—a significant limitation on access to information, given Yemen's 60 percent illiteracy rate.

Permits are required for public gatherings, which are monitored by government informers. A new law on associations came into effect in February 2001. The law gives the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs powers to supervise nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), stipulates a minimum of 41 members to establish an association, and requires ministry approval for foreign-funded activities. The independent Yemeni Human Rights Organization operates openly, and international human rights observers are allowed broad access. Members of the YSP face harassment and detention by authorities.

Islam is the state religion; about 75 percent of Yemenis belong to the Shafai order of Sunni Islam, and 25 percent to the Zaydi order of Shia Islam. Followers of other religions may worship freely, but the government forbids proselytizing by non-Mus-

lims, conversions, and the construction of new places of worship without permits. Yemeni Jews, who number about 500, face traditional restrictions on places of residence and employment. In January, militant Islamists were suspected in the bombing of Christ Church, an Anglican church in Aden.

Women face substantial legal and traditional discrimination, and approximately 80 percent of Yemeni women are illiterate, compared with 35 percent of men. Women convicted of "moral offenses" are arbitrarily detained for indefinite periods under the

Penal code. In 1999, authorities reduced the minimum marriage age (15) for women, replacing it with the onset of puberty (age nine, according to conservatives). "Honor killings" occur in Yemen, although the number of such killings is difficult to determine because of the failure to report or investigate them. In April 2001, Wahiba Fare, a university professor, took over the human rights portfolio to become Yemen's first female cabinet minister.

Workers may form unions, but the government regularly places its own personnel in influential positions inside unions and syndicates. Foreign, agricultural, and domestic workers receive limited protection under labor laws. The Yemeni Confederation of Labor Unions is the sole labor federation. The right to bargain collectively and to strike is limited; collective agreements may be invalidated if judged to "damage the economic interests of the country," and permission to strike must be obtained from the union federation.

## Yugoslavia (Serbia & Montenegro)

Polity: Parliamentary democracy Political Rights: 3\*  
Civil Liberties: 3\*

Economy: Mixed statist (transitional) Status: Partly Free

Population: 10,700,000

PPP: na

Life Expectancy: 72

Ethnic Groups: Serb (63 percent), Albanian (17 percent), Montenegrin (5 percent), Hungarian (3 percent), other (12 percent)

Capital: Belgrade

Ratings Change: Yugoslavia's political rights and civil liberties ratings improved from 4 to 3 because of the dismantling of many of the most repressive features of the former regime, increased cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the negotiation of a ceasefire to the Presevo Valley conflict.



### Overview:

Year One of the anti-Milosevic Serbian revolution showed both progress and disappointment. Although considerable success had been achieved in reintegrating the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) into the international community, fighting between rival political factions within the anti-Milosevic coalition, together with the still-unresolved issue of Montenegro, has significantly stymied constitutional, political, and economic reforms.

In April 1992, Serbia and Montenegro jointly proclaimed the formation of the FRY



after the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) disintegrated in 1991. Throughout the 1990s, Slobodan Milosevic's Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) ruled the country by virtue of its control over the country's security forces, financial and monetary institutions, and the state-owned media. During the 1990s, however, Milosevic's control over the country slowly withered. The Serbian opposition's victory in municipal elections in the fall of 1996 resulted in the SPS losing control of the main urban areas in the country. In 1997, an anti-Milosevic coalition of political forces came to power in Montenegro. In 1999, NATO occupied one of the FRY's two autonomous provinces, Kosovo, after a 78-day bombing campaign devastated much of the FRY's industrial and transportation infrastructure. The final end for the Milosevic regime came on October 5, 2000, when a botched attempt to steal the presidential elections resulted in hundreds of thousands of people converging on Belgrade to overthrow the Milosevic regime.

The Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) coalition of 18 political parties and one independent trade union took power after October 5. The two primary figures in the DOS were Yugoslav federal President Vojislav Kostunica, leader of the Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), and Serbian premier Zoran Djindjic, leader of the Democratic Party (DS).

After Milosevic's overthrow in October 2000, international pressure on the new authorities in Belgrade to extradite Milosevic for alleged war crimes committed during the Kosovo conflict was intense. Disagreements within the DOS coalition, however, and opposition from DOS's Montenegrin allies prevented the extradition. Finally, however, with the success of a donor's conference for the FRY hanging in the balance, the government of Serbian premier Zoran Djindjic turned Milosevic over to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia on June 28. A few days later, the donor's conference raised approximately \$1.3 billion for the FRY.

The Yugoslav federal government fell as a result of the handling of the Milosevic case, and tensions within the DOS coalition also threatened to break the coalition apart. Further problems arose in August when a former police official was assassinated soon after leaving Kostunica's office. Rumors quickly spread that the assassinated official had been delivering information on high-level government figures involved in organized crime. Although Kostunica threatened to quit the DOS if the government did not deal with the issue of high-level corruption more seriously, such a move would have only benefited extremist parties, so the option of breaking up the DOS coalition was quickly dropped.

During the course of 2001, a fundamental philosophical disagreement was fought out over the best way to reform the Yugoslav state and society after the Milosevic era. Djindjic argued for a revolutionary break with the past, believing that radical purges of security and civil services, as well as of old-regime cadres in important economic institutions and enterprises, would be the best way for the FRY to move forward. Kostunica, on the other hand, believed that for the mistakes of the Communist era to be avoided, and for the rule of law to firmly take root, change must come through strict adherence to legal and constitutional norms.

Another impediment to quicker reform in 2001 was the Montenegrin problem. Despite Milosevic's overthrow, Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic accelerated his bid to secede from the FRY in 2001. Montenegrin hopes for independence suffered a blow in April, however, when parliamentary elections in that republic showed that pro-independence parties lacked the critical numbers needed to pass an independence

referendum. Montenegrin hopes for independence suffered another blow in November when the European Union sent an unambiguous message that it supported "a democratic Montenegro in a democratic Yugoslavia." Djukanovic himself suffered a considerable blow to his reputation when evidence of his extensive ties to organized crime and cigarette smugglers throughout the Balkans were exposed. Despite these setbacks, however, the Montenegrin leadership's unwillingness to hold serious discussions with Serbian leaders in Belgrade over the future of the Yugoslav federation—an important consideration for potential foreign investors—was another stumbling block to quicker political and economic reform in the country. A referendum on independence is likely sometime in the first half of 2002.

A significant problem in the FRY remains the fate of some 400,000 refugees and 200,000 internally displaced persons—proportionately, the largest refugee population in Europe.

On the international front, the FRY made significant progress in improving relations with its neighbors and the world. In February, agreement was reached delineating the boundary between the FRY and Macedonia; in June, long negotiations with the other former Yugoslav republics over succession issues were successfully completed; and in November, the Paris Club of government lenders to Yugoslavia wrote off 66 percent of the country's debt (reducing the FRY's foreign debt by approximately \$4.5 billion). Yugoslav officials also received high marks from the international community for their handling of the incipient Albanian rebellion in southern Serbia's Presevo Valley, adjoining NATO-occupied Kosovo. In May, an agreement was reached in which the insurgents agreed to lay down their weapons in return for an amnesty. The FRY government in turn pledged to implement a series of political, social, and economic measures to improve relations with the local Albanian population. The restraint shown by FRY security forces in the region encouraged NATO to allow the Yugoslavian military back into the buffer zone between Kosovo and Serbia proper so as to deny the Albanian insurgents use of the buffer zone as a staging ground.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Throughout the 1990s, the regime of Slobodan Milosevic used a variety of means to manipulate and falsify election results. For most of the 1990s, opposition parties were routinely denied access to the main electronic media in the country, and the tabulation of votes was extremely suspect.

The DOS victory considerably changed the situation in the FRY with regard to the electoral system. Foreign and domestic observers claimed that Serbia's December 2000 parliamentary elections were the freest and fairest the country had ever had. Nevertheless, the media in the country did show a significant bias in favor of the DOS during the election campaign.

Cultural and ethnic minorities have their own political parties, access to media in their mother tongue, and other types of associations. An important constitutional and political challenge facing the FRY is to satisfy increasing demands from regions with large ethnic minorities, such as Kosovo, Sandzak, and Vojvodina. In May, the FRY acceded to the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. An amnesty issued early in the year led to the release of 143 Kosovo Albanians being held for alleged crimes committed before and during the Kosovo war, although international agencies believe some 200 Kosovo Albanians remain in Serbian prisons.

According to the FRY constitution, all citizens enjoy freedoms of religious belief and association. Ethnic and religious identities are closely intertwined in the region, however; consequently, increases in interethnic tensions often take on the appearance of religious intolerance. Restitution of church property nationalized by the Communists remains a point of dispute between church and state. A government decision in 2001 reinstating voluntary religious instruction in schools was supported by the largest religious institutions in the country, but drew criticism from smaller churches and some secular groups for blurring the boundary between church and state.

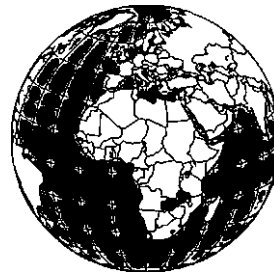
FRY citizens enjoy freedom of association and assembly. Numerous political parties exist and compete for power in elections. New laws are currently being drafted to codify relations between trade unions and the government.

Significant legal and judicial reform is underway. Government institutions are currently working on reform of the Federal Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as on laws to promote a multi-ethnic police force, antidiscrimination laws, laws on local self-government, and the creation of human rights institutions. A particular problem from the standpoint of establishing judicial independence is to improve the salaries of judges, who currently receive less than \$70 per month.

There are no legal restrictions on the participation of women in politics; however, they are, in general, vastly underrepresented in higher levels of government. Although women are legally entitled to equal pay for equal work, traditional patriarchal attitudes prevalent throughout the Balkans often limit women's roles in the economy. Domestic violence remains a serious problem, and some towns in southern Serbia have become an important part of the network trafficking women from parts of the former Soviet Union through Kosovo and Albania to Western Europe.

## Zambia

Polity: Dominant party    Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Mixed statist    Civil Liberties: 4  
 Population: 9,800,000    Status: Partly Free  
 PPP: \$756  
 Life Expectancy: 37  
 Ethnic Groups: African (98 percent), European  
 and other (2 percent)  
 Capital: Lusaka



### Overview:

Zambia's political environment in 2001 was dominated by presidential and parliamentary elections held on December 27. After incumbent President Frederick Chiluba's attempt to amend the constitution to allow himself a third term was defeated, Levy Mwanawasa, the candidate of the ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), narrowly won the presidential election against a divided opposition. Mwanawasa's victory with only 29 percent of the vote led to charges of pro-MMD electoral fraud. The MMD lost its overall majority in the parliamentary polls.

Zambia was ruled by President Kenneth Kaunda and the United National Indepen-

dence Party (UNIP) from independence from Britain in 1964 until the transition to a multiparty system in 1991. Kaunda's regime grew increasingly repressive and corrupt as it faced security and economic difficulties during the long guerrilla wars against white rule in neighboring Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Portuguese-controlled Mozambique. UNIP's socialist policies, combined with a crash in the price of copper, Zambia's main export, precipitated an economic decline unchecked for two decades.

In the face of domestic unrest and international pressure, Kaunda permitted free elections in 1991. Former labor leader Chiluba and his MMD won convincingly. By contrast, the next national elections, in 1996, lacked legitimacy largely because of a series of repressive measures instituted by the government. Economic liberalization and privatization have earned Zambia substantial external aid, but rampant corruption has distorted the economy and blocked sustainable growth. The country is among those suffering most from the AIDS pandemic; it is estimated Zambia will need to care for well over 600,000 AIDS orphans within a few years. President Chiluba stated in 2000 that the HIV-infection rate among adults in this southern African nation at about 20 percent of the adult population.

Development is burdened by high levels of corruption and inflation. Sixty-six cabinet members, deputy ministers, and members of parliament were investigated by the government-sponsored Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) from 1999 to 2000. Few of those investigated, however, have been arrested. A public sector reform program also had little effect. Privatization of state enterprises continued slowly. There was limited progress on the sale of immense state-owned copper mines. New business formation is slowed by the country's weak financial structures.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Zambia's president and parliament are elected to serve concurrent five-year terms by universal adult suffrage. The ability of Zambians to change their government democratically, however, is not yet consolidated. While Zambians' constitutional right to change their government freely was honored in the 1991 elections, both the 1996 and 2001 elections won by the ruling MMD were the subject of intense controversy.

Early in 2001, outgoing President Chiluba had supported a move within his party to change the constitution so that he could run for a third term. Dissension within his party, the opposition, and civil society forced him to back off from that plan. Instead, the MMD nominated Levy Mwanawasa, widely viewed as being the Chiluba's hand-picked candidate. Both domestic and international election monitors cited serious irregularities with the presidential campaign and election. Opposition parties filed complaints with the judicial authorities, which ruled that the inauguration of Mwanawasa as president should go ahead. Mwanawasa began his presidency inauspiciously, having won less than 30 percent of the popular vote amidst numerous allegations of pro-MMD electoral fraud, and without a majority in parliament.

The November 1996 presidential and parliamentary polls were neither free nor fair. State resources and state media were mobilized extensively to support Chiluba and the ruling MMD. Serious irregularities plagued election preparations. Voter lists were incomplete or otherwise suspect; independent monitors estimated that more than two million people were effectively disenfranchised. Candidate eligibility requirements were changed, which resulted in the exclusion of Kaunda, the most credible opposition candidate.

Most opposition parties boycotted the 1996 polls, in which the MMD renewed its

parliamentary dominance. International observer groups that did monitor the polls, along with independent domestic monitors and opposition parties, declared the process and the results to be fraudulent.

Some of Zambia's jurists retain a stubborn independence, while others are subservient to the MMD. The court system is severely overburdened. Pretrial detainees are sometimes held for years under harsh conditions before their cases reach trial. The Magistrates and Judges Association identified congestion in prisons and delayed trials as extremely serious problems. Malnourishment and poor health care in Zambia's prisons cause many deaths. Many civil matters are decided by customary courts of variable quality and consistency whose decisions often conflict with both national law and constitutional protections. More than 200 people are on death row in Zambia awaiting execution in 2001, according to Amnesty International. In 1997 eight people were executed, and between 1998 and 2000, at least 97 people were sentenced to death.

Wiretapping, both legal and illegal, is reportedly routine. The government dominates broadcasting, although an independent radio station, Radio Phoenix, presents nongovernmental views. The Public Order Act is among many statutes that has been used to harass and intimidate journalists. Security forces maintain surveillance of independent media and frequently arrest journalists. Other tools of harassment have included criminal libel suits and defamation suits brought by MMD leaders in response to stories on corruption. For example, in 2001 criminal charges were brought against two Zambian journalists and two political figures on charges of defaming President Frederick Chiluba in an article accusing the president of misappropriating \$4 million the government had earmarked for emergency food imports several years ago.

Journalists have also been targeted for criticizing other officials, and President Chiluba's government tightened control of state-funded media in 2001. The Minister of Information and Broadcasting dissolved in May the boards of the state-funded *Zambia Daily Mail*, the *Times of Zambia*, the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, and the Zambia Printing Company.

Constitutionally protected religious freedom has been respected in practice. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in human rights promotion, such as the Zambian Independent Monitoring Team, the Zambian Civic Education Association, and the Law Association of Zambia, operate openly. In 1999, however, the government drafted a policy that would closely regulate NGOs. The government human rights commission investigated frequent complaints about police brutality and denounced the torture of coup suspects, but had no power to bring charges against alleged perpetrators.

Societal discrimination remains a serious obstacle to women's rights. A 1998 regional human development report noted that Zambia was one of the lowest-performing countries in southern Africa in terms of women's empowerment. Women are denied full economic participation and are discriminated against in rural lands allocation. A married woman must have her husband's permission to obtain contraceptives. Discrimination against women is especially prevalent in traditional tribunals that are the courts of first instance in most rural areas. Spousal abuse and other violence against women are reportedly common. A new political party, the Social Democratic Party, was founded in 2000 by Gwendoline Konie, a former diplomat, to focus on children's and women's issues.

Zambia's trade unions remain among Africa's strongest, and union rights are constitutionally guaranteed. The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, an umbrella for

Zambia's 19 largest unions, operates democratically without government interference. Collective bargaining rights are protected by the 1993 Industrial and Labor Relations Act, and unions negotiate directly with employers. About two-thirds of the country's 300,000 formal sector employees are union members.

## Zimbabwe

Polity: Dominant party      Political Rights: 6  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist      Civil Liberties: 6\*  
 Population: 11,400,000      Status: Not Free  
 PPP: \$2,876  
 Life Expectancy: 40

Ethnic Groups: Shona (71 percent), Ndebele (16 percent), other African (11 percent), white (1 percent), mixed and Asian (1 percent)

Capital: Harare

**Ratings Change:** Zimbabwe's civil liberties rating declined from 5 to 6, and its status changed from Partly Free to Not Free, due to numerous and repeated actions taken by the government to limit the ability of citizens to organize and to express themselves according to democratic norms.



### Overview:

Zimbabwe experienced considerable civil strife in 2001. The government took numerous actions restricting civil liberties and political rights, including proposing draconian curbs on press freedom. War veterans and government supporters continued to illegally occupy and disrupt opposition strongholds and white-owned land holdings, with the overt or complicit backing of the government. The independence of the judiciary came under attack with the pressured resignation and/or replacement of several senior judges and subsequent reverses injudicial rulings. Since 2000 human rights activists estimate that more than 200,000 people have been displaced. Zimbabwe faces a crucial presidential election in 2002, which pits long-time Zimbabwe leader Robert Mugabe against Morgan Tsvangirai, a popular trade union leader.

Parliamentary by-elections and municipal polls in 2001 emphasized growing political polarization. Economic decline, especially rising food costs, fueled growing opposition to Mugabe's rule. Zimbabwean armed forces remained engaged in an open-ended, expensive, and unpopular war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa), which nonetheless provides commercial and economic benefits for many of Mugabe's elite.

A September agreement in Abuja, Nigeria, between the government and international donors resulted in a commitment by donors to provide funding for land reform in exchange for actions by the government to ensure the safe and legal resolution of land occupation by squatters. It was unclear, however, whether the government would fulfill its obligations under the accord.

Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 after a violent guerrilla war against a white minority regime that had declared unilateral independence from Britain in 1965 in what

was then Northern Rhodesia. For a number of years Zimbabwe was relatively stable, although from 1983 to 1987, the government suppressed resistance on the part of the country's largest minority group, the Ndebele, to dominance by Mugabe's majority ethnic-Shona group. Severe human rights abuses accompanied the struggle, which ended with an accord that brought Ndebele leaders into the government.

In recent years, Mugabe has turned against student groups, labor unions, homosexuals, and white landowners. Zimbabwe is now facing its worse crisis since achieving independence in 1980. The grip of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) on parliament has been weakened, but the party remains the predominant power through its control over the security forces and much of the economy. The party has dominated Zimbabwe since independence, enacting numerous laws and constitutional amendments to strengthen its hold on power. Mugabe, however, can no longer exercise unfettered power. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has experienced rapid growth under Tsvangirai. Trade unions have been at the forefront of opposition to Mugabe. A small group of independent media and civic groups struggle to promote transparency.

Corruption is rampant, and living standards are dropping precipitously. The government has imposed price controls and nationalized certain commercial enterprises. Despite the price controls, inflation raged at over 100 percent in 2001. The economy shrank by about five percent in 2000 and continued to worsen in 2001 given declines in revenues from agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. Recent flooding and droughts in the region have also had an adverse impact on the economy, especially on the livelihoods of the rural population. In addition, the country may be facing a food deficit in the coming year. Zimbabwe is currently in arrears to internal and external creditors, which has led to suspension of disbursements and credit lines by some creditors. This has aggravated the foreign exchange shortage within the country, making key imports such as fuel and electricity in short supply.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Zimbabweans do not yet have the right, in practice, to change their government democratically. President Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF enjoy a wide set of incumbency advantages that reflect their ability and willingness to manipulate the political landscape as needed to ensure continued control. Since 1987, for example, there have been at least 15 amendments to the constitution by ZANU-PF, which have made the constitution less democratic and given the government, and particularly members of the executive, more power. These include the scrapping of the post of prime minister in favor of an executive president in 1987 and the abolishment of the upper chamber of parliament, the senate.

The upcoming presidential elections are proving highly controversial. The government has passed legislation limiting election observers. Opposition leader Tsvangirai and his followers have been physically attacked by pro ZANU-PF supporters at attempted campaign appearances. Legislation passed by parliament in the pre-election period includes the Public Order and Security Bill, which forbids criticism of the president, limits public assembly, and allows police to impose arbitrary curfews. Intelligence agencies are included among law enforcement agencies empowered to disperse "illegal" assemblies or arrest participants. Other legislation disenfranchised thousands of citizens living outside of the country.

The 2000 parliamentary elections, in which 57 members of the opposition MDC

were elected out of a total of 150 seats, were deemed by observers to be fundamentally flawed prior to balloting. The MDC did not win a majority because of violence and intimidation against opposition candidates and their supporters, and a constitutional provision empowering President Mugabe and allied traditional leaders to appoint one-fifth of parliament's members. Voter registration and identification procedures and tabulation of results were judged by independent observers in some constituencies to have been highly irregular. The heavily state-controlled or state-influenced media offered limited coverage of opposition viewpoints, and ZANU-PF used state resources heavily in its campaigning.

Mugabe issued pardons for thousands of people, most from ZANU-PF, for crimes committed during the election campaign. They included individuals guilty of assault, arson, kidnapping, torture, and attempted murder. According to the Human Rights Forum, more than 18,000 people had their rights violated, and more than 90 percent of the perpetrators were ZANU-PF supporters or government officials.

Judicial changes cast the previously clear independence of the judiciary in doubt. The government forced the resignation of and/or replaced five supreme or high court judges, including Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay. In the past the courts had repeatedly struck down or disputed government actions, most notably regarding illegal occupation of farms. In early December, however, the reconstituted Supreme Court ruled that the government's land-reform program was legal.

Security forces, particularly the Central Intelligence Organization, often ignore basic rights regarding detention, search, and seizure. Judicial rulings have at times been ignored by the government. In addition, the right of free assembly has been circumscribed in recent legislation. President Mugabe has also, on several occasions, invoked the Presidential Powers Act, which enabled him to bypass normal governmental review and oversight procedures.

There is an active although small nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector. Several groups, including the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Organization (Zimrights), and the Legal Relief Fund focus on human rights. Prison conditions are harsh. Amnesty International has reported, for example, that Zimbabwean prisoners on death row sleep shackled and naked. The report argued that the dreadful conditions and psychological torment endured by death row inmates violated the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment.

The government directly controls all broadcasting and several newspapers, including all dailies; it indirectly controls most others. The Public Order and Security bill provides for jail terms and fines for anyone who "undermines the authority of the president" or "engenders hostility" towards him. Additional draft legislation was under consideration which would have any journalist who "spreads rumors, falsehoods or causes alarm and despondency" face fines or two years in prison. All journalists must be Zimbabwean citizens. They would be "regulated" by a government commission, and if they cause offence, they could be banned. A small independent press is overshadowed by state-run media. The Parliamentary Privileges and Immunities Act has been used to force journalists to reveal their sources regarding reports on corruption before the courts and parliament.

In October 2000, the police raided the new independent Capitol Radio station and shut it down. The government has appointed a seven-member Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ), which is responsible for planning and administering the broad-



casting spectrum of Zimbabwe, including registering independent broadcast outlets, but it has yet to do so.

Women's rights enjoy extensive legal protection, but de facto societal discrimination persists. Women have few legal rights outside formal marriage. The supreme court issued a ruling relegating African women to the status of "junior males" within the family, declaring that African women who marry under customary law leave their original families behind and therefore cannot inherit property. Married women still cannot hold property jointly with their husbands. Especially in rural areas, access to education and employment for women is difficult. Domestic violence against women is common; a 1997 survey by a women's organization found that more than 80 percent of women had been subjected to some form of physical abuse. Zimbabwe has signed international human rights treaties, such as the Women's Convention.

## Armenia/Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh

Polity: Presidential                      Political Rights: 5  
 Economy: Mixed statist                  Civil Liberties: 6  
 Population: 150,000                      Status: Not Free  
 Ethnic Groups: Armenian (95 percent), other, including  
 Assyrian, Greek (5 percent)



### Overview:

While internationally mediated efforts to find a lasting settlement to the protracted Nagorno-Karabakh dispute showed signs of progress in early 2001, the negotiations quickly lost momentum by midyear. Initially promising discussions in Key West, Florida, in April failed to lead to a comprehensive agreement at year's end. Despite criticism from the Council of Europe that municipal elections scheduled for September could further undermine peace efforts, the republic held the local vote as planned, in which the ruling Democratic Union Artsakh (ZhAM) party captured most of the local government body posts.

The region of Nagorno-Karabakh, whose population was overwhelmingly ethnic Armenian, was transferred from Armenian to Azerbaijani jurisdiction in 1923, and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region was subsequently created. In 1930, Moscow permitted Azerbaijan to establish and resettle the border areas between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia.

In 1988, Nagorno-Karabakh's Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution calling for union with Armenia. The announcement, as well as February demonstrations in the Armenian capital of Yerevan in support of Nagorno-Karabakh, triggered violent attacks against Armenians in the Azerbaijan city of Sumgait shortly thereafter, and in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, in January 1990. During the late 1980s, skirmishes broke out along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Following multiparty elections for a new legislature, Nagorno-Karabakh's parliament adopted a declaration of independence at its inaugural session in January 1992. From 1991 to 1992, Azerbaijan besieged Stepanakert, the territory's capital, and occupied most of Nagorno-Karabakh. A series of counteroffensives in 1993 and 1994 by Karabakh Armenians, assisted by Armenia, resulted in the capture of essentially the entire territory, as well as six Azerbaijani districts surrounding the enclave. By the time a Russian-brokered ceasefire was finally signed in May 1994, the war had resulted in thousands of casualties and nearly one million refugees.

In December 1994, the head of the territory's state defense committee, Robert Kocharian, was selected by parliament for the newly established post of president. Elections to the 33-member parliament were held in April and May 1995, and Kocharian defeated two other candidates in a popular vote for president in November of the following year. In September 1997, Foreign Minister Arkady Ghukasian was elected president with 89 percent of the vote to replace Kocharian, who had been named prime minister of Armenia in March of that year.

In June 1999, Ghukasian dismissed Prime Minister Zhirayr Pogosian amid allegations that a surveillance device discovered in the president's office had been planted

by Pogosian, possibly on the order of powerful Defense Minister Samvel Babayan. Some analysts speculated that Pogosian's dismissal indirectly targeted Babayan, with whom Ghukasian had become increasingly involved in a power struggle; Babayan was removed as defense minister the same month. Anushavan Danielian, a former deputy parliamentary speaker in Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea, was named the new prime minister.

In the territory's June 2000 parliamentary vote, 123 candidates representing five parties competed in single-mandate constituencies for the national assembly's 33 seats. The ruling ZhAM party, which supports Ghukasian, enjoyed a slim victory, winning 13 seats. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaktsutiun won 9 seats, the center-right Armenakan Party captured 1 seat, and formally independent candidates, most of whom support Ghukasian, won 10. Approximately 50 election monitors from several countries observed the poll, including representatives from the British Helsinki Human Rights Group. International observers described the electoral campaign and voting process as calm and largely transparent, although problems were noted with the accuracy of some voter lists.

On March 22, 2000, Ghukasian was seriously wounded by two gunmen during a failed assassination attempt. Police quickly arrested dozens of suspects, including Babayan and a number of his inner circle. While some welcomed the detention of Babayan, who had been accused of corruption and reportedly wielded considerable political and economic power in the territory, his supporters insisted that the arrest was politically motivated. Along with 15 other defendants, Babayan, who was charged with organizing the attack in order to seize power in the republic, was put on trial in mid-September in Stepanakert. In February 2001, Babayan was found guilty and sentenced to 14 years in prison, while the other defendants received various prison terms or short suspended sentences. The presiding judge announced that the verdict had been based on pretrial testimony in which Babayan confessed to the charges, even though he later retracted his admission of guilt, claiming that it had been obtained under duress. In a separate case, Babayan's brother, former Nagorno-Karabakh interior minister and Stepanakert Mayor Garen Babayan, was convicted in November of corruption, abuse of power, and illegal arms possession and was sentenced to five and a half years in prison.

Nearly 2,000 candidates contested legislative and executive posts in 223 municipalities during Nagorno-Karabakh's local elections on September 5. Voter turnout was estimated at 60 percent. Members of ZhAM were elected to head local government bodies in at least 140 towns and villages. ZhAM candidate Hamik Avanesian, who had been Stepanakert's municipal head during the Soviet period, defeated five challengers with 53 percent of the vote to become mayor of the territory's capital city. While no major irregularities were reported during the elections, Avanesian reportedly received significant support from the republic's authorities, including in the dominant state-run media. The Council of Europe warned that the elections were not legitimate and could undermine peace process efforts, and Azerbaijan called the poll illegal.

Despite some early promises of a breakthrough for a political settlement on Nagorno-Karabakh's status, a resolution of the long-standing dispute remained elusive at year's end. In February, Azerbaijan released details of peace plans drafted by the main international mediator for the conflict, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group. Their publication provoked heated debate in Baku's parliament, which labeled the proposals unacceptable, and led some government mem-

bers to voice support for a military solution to the conflict. However, during four days of meetings in April in Key West, Florida, Armenian President Kocharian and Azerbaijan President Heydar Aliev reportedly made substantial progress toward a settlement of the conflict. This momentum largely evaporated the following month, when subsequent peace talks scheduled for June in Geneva were postponed indefinitely, reportedly because public opinion on both sides was not yet prepared for the difficult compromises necessary for a lasting peace. While Yerevan insists that Nagorno-Karabakh should be left outside Azeri jurisdiction, Baku maintains that the territory may be granted broad autonomy while remaining a constituent part of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan also has refused to negotiate with Ghukasian, who has demanded direct representation in the peace process.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** A self-declared republic, Nagorno-Karabakh has enjoyed de facto independence from Azerbaijan since 1994 while retaining close political, economic, and military ties with Armenia. Residents of Nagorno-Karabakh technically have the means to change their government democratically. Parliamentary elections in 1995 and 2000 were regarded as generally free and fair, as were the 1996 and 1997 presidential votes. However, the elections were considered invalid by most of the international community, which does not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh's independence. Nagorno-Karabakh's electoral law calls for a single-mandate system to be used in parliamentary elections; lawmakers rejected the opposition's demands for the inclusion of party-based lists.

The government controls many of the broadcast media outlets, and most journalists practice self-censorship, particularly on subjects dealing with policies related to Azerbaijan and the peace process. Some observers maintain that the government used the attempted murder of President Arkady Ghukasian as a pretext to intensify attacks against its critics. According to one report, the telephone lines of several opposition journalists were cut two days after the shootings.

With Christian Armenians constituting more than 95 percent of the territory's population, the Armenian Apostolic Church is the predominant religion. Years of conflict have constrained the religious rights of the few Muslims remaining in the region. Freedom of assembly and association is limited, although political parties and unions are allowed to organize.

The judiciary, which is not independent in practice, is influenced by the executive branch and powerful political and clan forces. Former Defense Minister Samvel Babayan alleged that he had been physically assaulted during his interrogation and detention as a suspect in the failed assassination attempt against President Ghukasian. The majority of those who fled the war continue to live in squalid conditions in refugee camps in Azerbaijan, while international aid organizations are reducing direct assistance to the refugees. One-fifth of Azerbaijan's territory captured during the war remains occupied by Armenia. Sniper attacks and land mine explosions continue to result in casualties each year.

The territory's fragile seven-year peace has failed to bring significant improvement to the economy. Industrial capacity remains limited, with high unemployment forcing many residents to leave for neighboring countries in search of work. Widespread corruption, a lack of substantive economic reforms, and the control of most economic activity by powerful elites limit equality of opportunity for most residents. In May 2001, President Ghukasian signed into law legislation providing various financial incentives for new small- and medium-sized businesses.

## China Hong Kong

Polity: Appointed governor and partly-elected legislature  
 Political Rights: 5  
 Civil Liberties: 3  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Status: Partly Free  
 Population: 7,000,000  
 Ethnic Groups: Chinese (95 percent), other (5 percent)



### Overview:

Rising unemployment, depressed property and stock prices, and a sluggish economy cast gloom over Hong Kong in 2001.

Many in this Chinese territory said that Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, a shipping magnate, seemed to be out of touch with the concerns of ordinary residents, although at year's end he was almost certain to win a second five-year term in March 2002. Because he continues to enjoy Beijing's public support, Tung will probably be the sole candidate when an 800-member committee that chooses Hong Kong's top official meets to vote.

Located at the mouth of the Pearl River on the south China coast, Hong Kong consists of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon Peninsula, both ceded in perpetuity to Britain by China in the mid-1800s, and the mainland New Territories, which Britain "leased" for 99 years in 1898. Under the 1984 Joint Declaration, Britain agreed to return Hong Kong to China in 1997. Beijing pledged to maintain the capitalist enclave's political, legal, and economic autonomy for 50 years. London and Beijing agreed in 1990 that Britain would hold the territory's first-ever direct elections, for 18 Legislative Council (Legco) seats, in 1991; followed by direct elections for 20 seats in 1995, 24 in 1999, and 30 in 2003. China codified these plans into a post-1997 constitution for Hong Kong called the Basic Law.

Hong Kong's last colonial governor, Christopher Patten, introduced a raft of reforms for the 1995 Legco elections that gave ordinary residents greater say in choosing the body's 40 indirectly elected seats. China claimed the reforms violated the Basic Law and pledged to dissolve Legco after the handover. Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp won 16 of Legco's 20 directly elected seats in the 1995 vote.

Following the handover on July 1, 1997, China replaced Legco with an appointed provisional legislature. Over the next ten months, that body repealed or tightened several of Hong Kong's civil liberties laws. In the May 1998 elections for a new Legco, pro-democracy candidates again won 16 of the 20 directly elected seats, though only 20 of 60 seats overall.

Since coming to office, Tung, 64, has seen his popularity wane amid continuing fallout from the regional financial crisis that began in 1997. Tung was chosen for the top job in late 1996 by a Beijing-organized committee. Hong Kong's economy emerged from two years of recession in early 2000, but many middle-class residents continue to be concerned with job security and falling housing prices.

The pro-democracy camp, however, largely failed to capitalize on the public's mood at the September 10, 2000, Legco elections. Under a relatively low 43.6 percent turnout, pro-democracy candidates won only 16 of Legco's now 24 directly elected seats and 21 of 60 overall. Among pro-democracy parties, the main opposition Democratic

Party, led by lawyer Martin Lee, won 9 directly elected seats and 12 overall. The conservative Democratic Alliance, meanwhile, won 11 seats, up from 10 in 1998. A pro-democracy candidate won a December 2000 by-election.

For his part, Tung would probably face a tough time getting reelected in a direct vote. Polls in late 2001 showed that more than half of respondents would be unlikely to vote for him if they were given the chance. Many of the doubts regarding Tung reflected concerns about jobs and other bread-and-butter issues. Unemployment rose to 5.8 percent in the September-November period, up from 5.5 percent between August and October, the government's three-month moving averages showed. These figures are well above the 2 percent that was the norm before the regional financial crisis began in 1997.

Dragged down by slowing exports, Hong Kong's economy was expected to post flat or slightly negative growth for 2001 after growing by 10.5 percent in 2000. Thanks to re-exports of goods from mainland China, the ratio of Hong Kong's total exports of goods and services to gross domestic product (GDP) was 1.5 in 2000. This high trade dependence means that Hong Kong's hopes for an economic recovery in 2002 hinge in part on solid growth in the United States and Europe.

Making matters worse, depressed property prices have dampened spending by Hong Kong consumers, many of whom see housing prices as the main gauge of their financial health. Property prices have plummeted by around 50 percent from their 1997 peaks. At the same time, they are still too high for the majority of Hong Kong residents, who cannot afford to buy homes. Property makes up about half of Hong Kong's GDP.

In addition to economic concerns, Tung has been dogged by accusations that his administration is too cozy with business leaders. These concerns were heightened in January after Anson Chan, Hong Kong's top civil servant, announced her retirement. The respected Chan was a forceful advocate of civil liberties and transparency in business. Her departure led to speculation in the press that government decisions increasingly will be made on the basis of personal ties rather than merit. Tung soothed some of these fears by naming as Chan's successor Donald Tsang, Hong Kong's well-regarded financial secretary.

Tung has also been criticized for not taking steps towards holding a direct election for the chief executive and increasing the number of directly elected Legco seats. Under the Basic Law, both moves are possible after 2007.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Hong Kong residents enjoy most basic rights, but they cannot change their government through elections. Under the Basic Law, Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa was appointed by a 400-member selection committee, itself appointed by Beijing. The 800-member committee that will choose the next chief executive in March 2002 consists of Legco's 60 members; Hong Kong's 36 delegates to China's National People's Congress (NPC); 40 representatives from religious groups; and 664 people chosen in July 2000 by a narrow electorate of just 180,000 voters.

Those 180,000 voters, representing business, the professions, and labor, also chose the 30 "functional constituency" seats in the 2000 Legco elections. In addition, 6 Legco seats were chosen in 2000 by an even smaller group—the same 800 people who will elect the chief executive in 2002. Democracy advocates say it is undemocratic for Legco to have 36 seats chosen by such a small number of people and only 24 directly elected members.

The Basic Law allows Hong Kong to hold direct elections for all Legco seats and the chief executive after 2007. Any changes, however, would have to be approved by China's rubber-stamp NPC, Hong Kong's chief executive, and Legco. That body would have to approve the changes by a two-thirds majority at a time when only half of its members would be directly elected.

The Basic Law also restricts Legco's law-making powers. It prohibits legislators from introducing bills affecting public spending, Hong Kong's political structure, or governmental operations. Legco members can introduce bills concerning governmental policy, but only with the chief executive's prior approval. The Basic Law also requires, for passage of individual member's bills, separate majorities among the members elected from the geographical and functional constituencies. Together, Legco's makeup and limited powers hamper the body's ability to act as a check on the chief executive's authority.

Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp denounced legislation passed in July that included a clause clarifying that China could sack the territory's chief executive. The Basic Law does not explicitly grant Beijing this power without Hong Kong's courts or Legco beginning the move.

Outside observers such as the U.S. State Department say that Hong Kong's judiciary is independent. Local human rights activists generally agree, but many argue that the Tung administration has undermined the territory's rule of law with a series of controversial legal moves and its allegedly preferential treatment of well-connected business leaders. Critics point in particular to the government's intervention in 1999 in an immigration case that resulted in China's NPC overturning a ruling by Hong Kong's Court of Final Appeal. The government defended its appeal to the NPC on the grounds that the Court's ruling would have allowed Hong Kong to be swamped by mainlanders. Critics, however, said that the move raised doubts over whether any Court of Final Appeal decision is truly final.

The Basic Law requires Hong Kong courts, though not the government, to seek from the NPC an interpretation of the Basic Law on issues that are Beijing's responsibility or that concern the relationship between Beijing and Hong Kong. The court must follow the NPC's interpretation. The controversy arose when the administration asked the NPC to interpret the Basic Law's provisions on the so-called right of abode after the Court of Final Appeal issued a ruling that would have made it easier for mainland-born Chinese and their children to gain Hong Kong residency. The NPC's strict interpretation effectively overturned the Court of Final Appeal's liberal ruling.

Activists also criticized Tung's administration in 1998 for not bringing legal charges in two sensitive cases. In separate decisions, authorities declined to prosecute the China-run Xinhua news agency, for allegedly missing a deadline to respond to a freedom-of-information request, and Sally Aw, the politically connected owner of the *Hong Kong Standard*, accused of fraud.

Moreover, many ordinary Hong Kong residents and outside observers have criticized what they see as collusion between the administration and a small number of powerful businessmen who control an outsize share of the economy. They point, for example, to the government's decision in 2000 to award a contract to develop the Cyberport industrial park to Richard Li, a son of Li Ka-shing, Hong Kong's wealthiest businessman, without the routine bidding process.

Amid these concerns over the resiliency of the rule of law, pro-democracy groups

and the media raised an outcry in early 2001 after some pro-Beijing politicians in Hong Kong called on the government to enact a law against subversion. Rebuffing the pro-Beijing camp, the Tung administration continued to delay introducing what it says will be comprehensive legislation covering subversion, as well as treason, secession, and sedition. The Basic Law requires Hong Kong to have laws on all four areas.

Despite their concerns, even the government's staunchest critics generally acknowledge that ordinary residents enjoy the same basic rights they had enjoyed before the handover. Yet many of these rights are now on less solid legal footings. The provisional legislature that served immediately after the handover watered down Hong Kong's 1991 bill of rights and rolled back some laws on workers' rights. It also amended laws to give authorities the power to cite national security in denying registration to nongovernmental groups (NGOs), de-registering existing groups, or barring public protests.

In practice, Hong Kong NGOs continue to be vibrant and report few problems with the registration process. Thousands of protests, meanwhile, have been staged since the handover, and none have been barred on national security grounds. Some protest organizers, however, say that officials often confine demonstrators to "designated areas" where the rallies receive little public attention.

Hong Kong's dozens of newspapers and magazines are generally lively but practice some self-censorship when reporting on Chinese politics, powerful local business interests, and calls for Taiwanese or Tibetan independence. The press faces no direct pressure, but some publishers and editors believe that advertising revenues or their business interests in China could suffer if they appear to be too hostile to China or powerful local interests, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Hong Kong's human rights record in 2000. President Jiang Zemin and other Chinese officials, moreover, have criticized and tried to jawbone Hong Kong's press. The state-run Radio Television Hong Kong takes an independent editorial line. It shares the broadcast field with several private television and radio stations. While academic freedom is respected, a Hong Kong University professor charged in 2000 that a Tung aide tried to pressure the university into stopping polls that measured Tung's approval ratings.

Raising concerns about protection of privacy, a September 1999 press report said that the government eavesdropped each day on private telephone conversations of more than 100 Hong Kong residents. The law allows the government to use wiretaps and intercept private mail, but only with high-level approval. In practice, the chief executive's office approves all wiretaps, but the government refuses to say how often Chief Executive Tung actually uses this power. It is not clear whether or how often the colonial government used wiretaps.

Women have equal access to schooling and are entering medicine and other professions in increasingly greater numbers. They continue, however, to face private sector discrimination in employment, salaries, and promotions, the 2001 U.S. State Department report said. Women are also underrepresented in Legco, the judiciary, and senior civil service posts. The government funds programs to curb domestic violence and prosecutes violators, but violence against women remains a problem and sentences generally are lenient, according to the State Department report. The report also said that local, foreign, and mainland Chinese prostitutes reportedly sometimes work for criminal gangs under harsh conditions in exchange for protection or other help. There are also credible reports of employers forcing their foreign household help to accept less than the minimum wage and poor living conditions, the report added.



In another concern, the U.S. State Department report said that there are regular allegations that Hong Kong residents of Indian descent and other minorities face discrimination in landing private sector jobs, competing for public school and university slots, getting treatment in public hospitals, and being admitted to restaurants. Minorities make up around five percent of Hong Kong's population.

Hong Kong's trade unions are independent, but the law restricts some basic labor rights and does not provide for others. The provisional legislature in 1997 repealed laws protecting workers against summary dismissal for union activity and setting out the legal basis for collective bargaining. It also banned the use of union funds for political purposes and restricted the appointment to a union executive committee for a person from outside the enterprise or sector. More than 20 percent of Hong Kong workers in the formal sector are unionized.

## Macao

Polity: Appointed  
governor and partially  
elected legislature  
Economy: Capitalist-statist  
Population: 450,000  
Ethnic Groups: Chinese, Macanese [mixed Portuguese and  
Asian ancestry], Portuguese

Political Rights: 6  
Civil Liberties: 4  
Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

Pro-Beijing and business candidates won the majority of directly elected seats in Macao's September 2001 legislative elections, the first since China regained sovereignty over this former Portuguese colony in 1999. The pro-democracy Association for New Democratic Macao party, however, scored a minor upset by winning the most votes and taking 2 of the 10 directly elected seats in the 27-member body. Macao's legislature, though, has little influence under a political setup that puts most power in the hands of Chief Executive Edmund Ho. In a move that will open up the enclave's vital \$1.99 billion casino industry to competition for the first time in four decades, Ho's government was expected to announce in January 2002 the winners of an international tender for three new gaming licenses.

During its 443 years of Portuguese rule, Macao was the first European outpost in the Far East in 1557, the leading gateway for European trade with China until the 1770s, and a hideaway for buccaneers and Chinese criminal gangs until becoming, more recently, a bawdy city of casinos and prostitution. China and Portugal agreed in 1987 that Beijing would regain control over Macao in 1999 and that the enclave would maintain its legal system and capitalist economy for 50 years.

Macao lacks the vibrant banking, real estate, and trading industries found in Hong Kong, just 40 miles to the east along the south China coast. Its economic fortunes have in recent years been tied largely to tourism and the casino industry as well as to textile

and garment exports. Macao's economy slid into recession in 1995, partly because a surge in gang-related violence, including killings and attacks on several local civil servants and Portuguese officers, hurt tourism, which makes up 40 percent of gross domestic product. Economists say that the regional financial crisis that began in 1997 prolonged the recession, which ended in 2000. In the lead-up to the handover, which took place in December 1999, the violence tailed off significantly. China reportedly helped Macao crack down on the triads, or organized crime groups, and the outgoing Portuguese jailed a major crime boss. The violence pitted rival triads in battles for control of loan-sharking, prostitution, and protection rackets.

Despite concerns before the handover that China would renege on its pledges to respect Macao's autonomy, there have been few overt signs that Beijing has tried to pressure Ho's administration. These fears had been heightened by the fact that Macao lacks the vibrant press and civic groups found in Hong Kong. Moreover, under the 1987 Sino-Portuguese deal, Macao's chief executive, like Hong Kong's, is appointed by an elite committee rather than by direct election. Ho, a Canadian-educated banker, was the committee's consensus choice. The committee's 199 members were themselves appointed by a Beijing-selected committee.

The pro-democracy camp's solid showing in the September 23, 2001, legislative elections may have allayed some concerns about Beijing's influence in the territory. Led by Ng Kuok-cheong, 43, the Association gained 21 percent of the vote, which gave it two seats, after winning just one in the 1996 elections. Pro-business candidates won four seats and the pro-China camp won another four. Turnout was reportedly 52.3 percent. Ten other seats, chosen by special interest groups, were uncontested. Ho appointed the remaining seven seats.

The government's moves to open the gambling industry will end the monopoly held since 1962 by businessman Stanley Ho. Observers, however, say that Ho, 78, and his company, Sociedade de Turismo e Diversoes de Macao, are likely to win one of the three licenses at stake. A total of 21 firms, including some of the world's largest gambling operators, such as the U.S.-based MGM Mirage and Aspinalls, based in Britain, have placed bids. The gambling industry accounts for about half of the government's annual revenues.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Residents of Macao cannot change their government through elections although they do enjoy many basic rights and freedoms. Observers question, however, whether the enclave's legal system is robust enough to protect fundamental liberties should they be threatened. The judiciary's development and future independence may be hampered by the need to translate laws and judgments into Chinese from Portuguese, and from a severe shortage of local bilingual lawyers and magistrates, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Macao's human rights record in 2000. Only about 5 of the 100 lawyers in private practice can read and write Chinese, the report said. Moreover, Macao's mini-constitution, the Basic Law, is "riddled with ambiguities," fails to guarantee several basic rights, and grants Beijing vaguely defined emergency powers, Amnesty International said in 1999. Under the Basic Law, the chief executive appoints judges on the recommendation of an "independent commission composed of local judges, lawyers and eminent persons." The chief executive himself, however, appoints the commission.

Like the Portuguese governors who served in the waning years of colonial rule, Macao's chief executive is appointed and holds broad executive powers with few checks on his authority. The Basic Law, moreover, bars legislators from introducing bills relating to public spending, Macao's political structure, or the operation of its government. Bills relating to government policies must receive the chief executive's written approval before they are submitted. The legislature elected in 2005 will have two additional seats, both of them directly elected. After 2009, the Basic Law allows the assembly, by a two-thirds vote and subject to the chief executive's approval, to draw up a new mix of directly and indirectly elected seats.

Outside of a handful of opposition politicians like Ng Kuok-cheong, Macao has few outspoken voices for greater political freedom or transparency in government and business affairs. Most of the enclave's ten daily newspapers, including the top-selling *Macao Daily*, are pro-Beijing. None take an independent political line. The press also offers little coverage of people, groups, or activities that challenge Macao's conservative political and business establishment or that call for greater democracy. Meanwhile, human rights groups operate freely but generally have little impact on the territory's political life.

Practitioners of the Falun Gong, the movement combining spirituality and meditation, whose followers have been suppressed ruthlessly in mainland China, routinely perform their exercises in Macao's parks. However, the Hong Kong-based Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy in April accused Macao police of spying on more than ten Falun Gong practitioners in the enclave. Officials denied the allegations, which could not be confirmed independently.

Critics say that Macao's dominant labor confederation, the General Association of Workers, is more of a political front for Chinese interests than an advocate for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. Several small private sector unions and two of Macao's four public sector unions are independent. Legislation protecting striking workers from dismissal is inadequate, and government enforcement of labor laws is lax, according to the U.S. State Department report. The report also said that foreign workers often work for less than half the wages paid to Macao residents, live in controlled dormitories, and owe huge sums to the companies that bring them to the enclave. Macao workers complain that their bargaining power is eroded by employers' frequent use of foreign laborers, who make up around 16 percent of the workforce.

Women are becoming more active in business and increasingly hold senior government posts. They are, however, still underrepresented in politics and the civil service. Traffickers continue to bring women from abroad into Macao for forced prostitution, although there are no accurate figures on the scale of the problem, the U.S. State Department report said.

## Tibet

Polity: One party      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Statist      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 4,590,000\*      Status: Not Free  
 Ethnic Groups: Tibetan, Han Chinese

\* This figure from China's 1990 census includes 2.096 million Tibetans living in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and 2.494 million Tibetans living in areas of Eastern Tibet which, beginning in 1950, were incorporated into four Chinese provinces. Independent observers estimate that there are at least 6 million Tibetans under Chinese rule.



### Overview:

China continued its tight control over Tibet in 2001, jailing dissidents, managing daily life in Buddhist monasteries, and pressuring monks and nuns to renounce their allegiance

to the Dalai Lama.

Tibetan national history dates back more than 2,000 years. Beijing's modern-day claim to the region is based solely on Mongolian and Manchurian imperial influence over Tibet in the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, respectively. China invaded Tibet in late 1949 and in 1951 formally annexed the country. In an apparent effort to marginalize Tibetan national identity, Beijing incorporated roughly half of Tibet into four southwestern Chinese provinces beginning in 1950. As a result, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), which Beijing created in 1965, covers only half the territory of pre-invasion Tibet.

In what is perhaps the defining event of Beijing's occupation, Chinese troops suppressed a local uprising in 1959 by killing an estimated 87,000 Tibetans in the Lhasa region alone. The massacre forced the Tibetan spiritual and temporal leader, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, to flee to Dharamsala, India, with 80,000 supporters. The International Commission of Jurists in 1960 called the Chinese occupation genocidal and ruled that between 1911 and 1949, the year China invaded, Tibet had possessed all the attributes of statehood as defined under international law. During the Cultural Revolution, China jailed thousands of monks and nuns, destroyed nearly all of Tibet's 6,200 monasteries, and burned numerous sacred texts. By the late 1970s, an estimated 1.2 million Tibetans had died as a result of the occupation.

As resistance to Beijing's rule continued, Chinese soldiers forcibly broke up peaceful demonstrations throughout Tibet between 1987 and 1990. Beijing imposed martial law on Lhasa and surrounding areas in March 1989 following three days of anti-Chinese riots during which police killed at least 50 Tibetans. Authorities lifted martial law in May 1990.

China has in recent years attempted to control religious affairs and undermine the exiled Dalai Lama's authority. Foreign observers have reported a slight easing of repression since late 2000, when Beijing named as the region's Communist Party secretary the relatively moderate Guo Jinlong. He replaced Chen Kuiyan, the architect of recent crackdowns. The 53-year old Guo, who served on several party committees in Sichuan Province and the TAR, pledged to continue Chen's policies.

One reason for the change in Tibet's top political post may have been Beijing's anger over the escape to India in late 1999 of the teenager recognized by the Dalai Lama, and accepted by Beijing, as the seventeenth Karmapa. The Karmapa is the highest-ranking figure in Tibetan Buddhism's Karma Kargyu school. Beijing had interfered in the Karmapa's selection and education as part of its efforts to influence the next generation of Tibetan religious leaders. The most flagrant case of interference in the Buddhist religious hierarchy occurred in 1995, when Chinese authorities rejected and detained the Dalai Lama's selection of six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the eleventh reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama is Tibetan Buddhism's second-highest religious figure. Authorities stage-managed the selection of another six-year-old boy as the Panchen Lama. Since the Panchen Lama identifies the reincarnated Dalai Lama, Beijing potentially can control the identification of the fifteenth Dalai Lama.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Tibetans lack the right of self-determination, cannot change their government through elections, and enjoy few basic rights. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) rules the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and neighboring areas that historically were part of Tibet through compliant government officials whose ranks include some Tibetans in largely ceremonial posts. While ethnic Tibetans have served as TAR governor, none has ever held the peak post of TAR party secretary. Most of China's policies affecting Tibetans apply both to those living in the TAR and to Tibetans living in parts of pre-invasion Tibet that Beijing has incorporated into China's Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan Provinces.

China's blanket repression denies Tibetans nearly all basic rights. Some of the worst abuses are against political dissidents. Security forces routinely and arbitrarily arrest, imprison, and torture dissidents to punish nonviolent protest, according to the U.S. State Department, the London-based Tibet Information Network (TIN), and other sources. The offenses include displaying Tibetan flags or other symbols of cultural identity, holding peaceful demonstrations, possessing photographs of the Dalai Lama, forming prisoner lists, putting up posters, and distributing leaflets.

The CCP controls the judiciary, which routinely hands down lengthy prison terms to Tibetans convicted of political offenses. The number of Tibetan political prisoners fell to 266 in January 2001 from 538 in January 2000, TIN said in February. The reason for the decrease is not clear. At least 37 Tibetan political prisoners, or about 1 in 50, have died since 1987 as a result of prison abuse, the rights group said. The average sentence being served by political prisoners is just over eight and a half years, with monks and nuns making up 74 percent of these inmates, TIN added. In addition to using the judiciary to stifle dissent, authorities also frequently use administrative regulations to detain political prisoners for up to four years without charge or trial.

Throughout Tibet, security forces routinely beat, torture, or otherwise abuse detainees and inmates in prisons, detention centers, and other places of incarceration, according to the U.S. State Department, TIN, and other sources. In one of the most serious cases of abuse in recent years, authorities responded to protests at Lhasa's Drapchi prison in May 1998 with tortures and beatings that led to the deaths of at least nine prisoners, including five nuns and three monks. There have also been reports of officials sexually abusing female prisoners. In addition, authorities frequently force detainees and prisoners to work on demanding agricultural and lumbering projects, of-

ten for no pay, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on human rights in Tibet in 2000.

While authorities permit some religious practices, they have since 1996 strengthened their control over Tibetan monasteries under a "patriotic education campaign" that is aimed largely at undermining the Dalai Lama's influence as a religious and political leader. Under the campaign, government-run "work teams" have conducted political indoctrination sessions in hundreds of monasteries, the U.S. State Department report said. The teams seek to coerce monks and nuns into opposing Tibetan independence, recognizing the Beijing-appointed Panchen Lama as the true Panchen Lama, and denouncing the Dalai Lama. The intensity of the campaign varies from year to year and by region, but throughout Tibet authorities have in recent years arrested dozens of monks and nuns for refusing to renounce their beliefs and have expelled hundreds more from their religious institutions, according to the U.S. State Department report and the New York-based Human Rights Watch. As part of the campaign, Beijing in 1996 banned from monasteries all photographs of the Dalai Lama. Evidence from TIN in 2000 suggested that authorities are increasingly extending the patriotic education campaign to Tibetan areas outside the TAR.

In addition to trying to coerce changes in political and religious beliefs through the patriotic education campaign, the government continues to oversee day-to-day affairs in major monasteries and nunneries. Authorities control daily affairs through state-organized "democratic management committees" that run each establishment. The government also strictly limits the numbers of monks and nuns permitted in major monasteries, although these restrictions are not always enforced, and it has interfered with the choice of monastic leaders. The boy the Dalai Lama identified as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama is believed to be under house arrest in Beijing, along with his family. Moreover, authorities have limited the building of new monasteries and nunneries, closed numerous religious institutions, and demolished several others.

While hundreds of religious figures hold nominal positions in local "people's congresses," authorities have banned religious practice among Tibetan members of the CCP and Tibetan government workers. Reporting on what appeared to be fresh efforts to enforce these restrictions, TIN said in August 2000 that authorities had recently ordered party cadres and government workers to withdraw their children from monasteries and nunneries in Lhasa. Officials also warned them that if they took part in religious practices, they could be fined and their children expelled from their schools. TIN also reported that authorities had begun searching the homes of party members in Lhasa and some outlying areas for religious shrines and pictures of the Dalai Lama. Since 1994, authorities have banned the sale of the Dalai Lama's photograph and displays of his photograph in state offices.

Authorities also imposed several other restrictions on lay religious activity in 2000 that targeted not only party cadres and government workers but also students and pensioners. The TAR government threatened civil servants with dismissal, schoolchildren with expulsion, and retired workers with loss of pensions if they publicly marked the Buddhist Sagadawa festival in Lhasa, according to TIN. Authorities also warned Lhasa students in July that they could be thrown out of their schools if they visited monasteries or temples during the summer holidays.

As one of China's 55 recognized ethnic minority groups, Tibetans receive some preferential treatment in university admissions and government employment. Tibet-

ans, however, need to learn Mandarin Chinese in order to take advantage of these preferences. Many Tibetans want to learn Chinese in order to compete for educational slots and jobs but at the same time fear that an increased use of Chinese threatens the survival of the Tibetan language. Already the language of instruction in middle schools, Chinese is reportedly being used to teach several subjects in a number of Lhasa primary schools, TIN said in November. In the private sector, employers routinely give Han Chinese preference in hiring and greater pay for the same work, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report. Tibetans also find it more difficult than do Han Chinese to get permits and loans to open businesses, the report added. As in the rest of China, authorities reportedly subject farmers and herders to arbitrary taxes.

Beijing's draconian family planning policy is nominally more lenient towards Tibetans and other minorities. Authorities permit urban Tibetans to have two children, while farmers and herders often have three or more children. Officials, however, frequently enforce the nationwide one-child rule in Tibet for government workers and CCP members and in some cases reportedly use threats of fines to coerce women into undergoing abortions and sterilizations, the U.S. State Department report said. Authorities, moreover, are reportedly applying a two-child limit to farmers and nomads in several counties, TIN said in 2000.

Seeking to escape religious and political persecution, some 3,000 Tibetans flee to Nepal as refugees each year, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. In yet another sign of Beijing's tight grip on the region, Chinese authorities control all print and broadcast media in Tibet, except for about 20 or so clandestine publications that appear sporadically, the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres said in 2000.

Beijing's development policies in Tibet have encouraged and facilitated the resettlement of Han Chinese into traditional Tibetan areas. This has altered the region's demographic composition, displaced Tibetan businesses, reduced employment opportunities for Tibetans, and further marginalized Tibetan cultural identity. Possibly because of these rapid social and economic changes and dislocations, prostitution is a "growing problem" in Tibet, particularly in Lhasa, the U.S. State Department report said.

Thanks in part to heavy subsidies from Beijing and favorable economic and tax policies, Tibet's economy has grown by more than ten percent, on average, each year over the past decade, according to the U.S. State Department's 2001 report. The report added, however, that while Beijing's development policies have raised the living standards of many ethnic Tibetans, Han Chinese have been the main beneficiaries of many of the benefits of development and the growing private sector. This is seen most starkly in parts of Lhasa, where Han Chinese run almost all small businesses.

## Georgia

### Abkhazia

Polity: Presidential  
 Economy: Mixed statist  
 Population: 280,000 (2000 est)  
 Ethnic Groups: 1992 est.—Georgian (45 percent), Abkhaz (17 percent), Russian (16 percent), other (22 percent). Since 1993, most ethnic Georgians have fled or been expelled from the territory.

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 5

Status: Not Free



#### Overview:

In a serious escalation of violence, a group reportedly consisting of Chechen rebels and Georgian partisans clashed with Abkhazian troops following a deadly raid on a village in October. The subsequent downing of a United Nations helicopter and the bombing of several Abkhazian villages by aircraft, alleged to be Russian, intensified the conflict, making a final settlement to the protracted conflict in Abkhazia more elusive than ever. While officials in Tbilisi and Sukhumi continued to disagree on the fundamental issue of the territory's political status, widespread criminality and lawlessness were a constant threat to the fragile peace process.

Annexed by Russia in 1864, Abkhazia became an autonomous republic of Soviet Georgia in the 1930s. The year following the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, Abkhazia declared its independence from Tbilisi, igniting a war between Abkhaz secessionists and Georgian troops that lasted nearly 14 months. In September 1993, Abkhaz forces, with covert assistance from Russia, seized control of the city of Sukhumi, ultimately defeating the Georgian army and winning de facto independence for the territory. As a result of the conflict, more than 200,000 residents, mostly ethnic Georgians, fled Abkhazia, while casualty figures were estimated in the thousands. An internationally brokered ceasefire was signed in Moscow in 1994, although a final decision on the territory's status remained unresolved.

In June 1999, the Georgian leadership lobbied for international condemnation of alleged ethnic cleansing in Abkhazia as a result of the 1992-1993 war. The unsuccessful effort effectively ended Georgian hopes that the UN would sanction the use of force against the breakaway territory.

In the October 1999 elections for president of Abkhazia, the incumbent, Vladislav Ardzinba, was the only candidate running for office; his inauguration ceremony was held in the capital, Sukhumi, in December. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations refused to recognize the vote as legitimate. In a concurrent referendum on independence, the results of which were not recognized by any state, a reported 98 percent of voters supported independence for Abkhazia. Georgia denounced the polls as illegal and as an attempt to sabotage peace talks.

In July 2000, Georgia and Abkhazia signed a stabilization protocol in which both sides agreed to deploy no more than 600 troops and police on each side of the conflict zone and not to resort to force in attempting to resolve disputes connected with the



conflict. However, ongoing peace negotiations have yet to find solutions acceptable to both parties on the main issues of the return of displaced persons and the region's final political status. While Tbilisi maintains that Abkhazia must remain a constituent part of Georgia, Sukhumi continues to insist on the territory's independence from Georgia, a status that has not been recognized by the international community.

During a November 1999 OSCE meeting in Istanbul, Moscow agreed to close two of its four military bases in Georgia by mid-2001, including its Gudauta base in Abkhazia. The plan was opposed by many of the territory's leadership and population, who regard Russia as an important ally against Georgian claims on the breakaway republic. Protestors repeatedly blockaded the base to prevent the withdrawal of Russian troops, which was delayed until late October 2001.

A series of violent incidents late in 2001 underscored the precariousness of the region's fragile peace and Georgia's continued strained relations with Russia. Several hundred Georgian and Chechen fighters reportedly seized a village in Abkhazia on October 3, resulting in at least five casualties. On October 8, five UN military observers and one translator were killed when their helicopter was shot down while making a routine inspection flight over the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia. Abkhaz officials blamed ethnic-Chechen and Georgian fighters for that attack, as well as for a raid the following day on an Abkhaz village in which 14 residents were killed. Just hours later, unidentified aircraft launched bombing raids on three other villages that Abkhazian authorities accused Georgia of conducting. Georgian officials denied any involvement, countering that they had evidence that the aircraft had come from Russia, a claim the Kremlin refuted.

Following the attacks, renewed fighting broke out in and around the Kodori Gorge region. The Abkhazian government ordered a partial military mobilization of its forces; Georgia moved troops to its border with Abkhazia; and the Russian military deployed more forces to its southern border with the republic. The Kremlin has long accused Georgia of harboring Chechen rebels, especially in the Pankisi Gorge area in eastern Georgia that borders Chechnya. According to some reports, Georgian security ministry officials had arranged to move the Chechen fighters from the Pankisi Gorge to the Abkhazian border following Russian threats to flush them out; the Chechen rebels then reportedly hoped to make their way back into Chechnya through Abkhazia.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Residents of Abkhazia can elect government officials, but some 200,000 displaced Georgians could not vote in the 1999 presidential elections or in parliamentary and local elections in previous years. Local elections held in March 2001 were condemned as illegitimate by the OSCE, which denounced local officials for failing to assure the voting rights of those ethnic Georgians who had fled the republic in the mid-1990s. Although the November 1994 constitution established a presidential-parliamentary system of government, the president exercises almost complete control of the region. The ethnic-Georgian Abkhazian Supreme Council has been a government in exile in Tbilisi since being expelled from Abkhazia in 1993.

While several independent newspapers are published, the Abkhazian press generally publishes mostly negative information on events in Georgia. Electronic media are controlled by the state and generally reflect government positions.

Freedom of religion is respected for Muslims, but Christian Georgians and Arme-

nians face harassment and persecution. President Vladislav Ardzinba issued a decree in 1995 banning Jehovah's Witnesses. Most nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Abkhazia rely on funding from outside of the territory. Trade unions are former affiliates of the Georgian Confederation of Trade Unions. Freedom of assembly is restricted.

The constitution formally established an independent judiciary, but the system continues many Soviet-era practices. Most judges are nominated by the president and appointed with parliamentary approval.

Personal security in the conflict zone deteriorated throughout 2001. The unarmed, 106-member UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) remains stationed in the country to monitor the ceasefire and attempt to resolve violations, and a Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping force, dominated by Russian troops, patrols the region. However, the 1994 ceasefire has been tenuous, with a series of hostage-takings and killings, including the deaths of civilians, occurring throughout the year. In early July, six people were killed and two taken hostage in Abkhazia's Kodori Valley, while two civilians and two soldiers were killed by unknown gunmen in the Gali district along the Abkhazian-Georgian border. According to a UN report, there were 21 killings, 10 abductions, and 45 robberies during one three-month period alone in midyear. Citing the eroding security situation, the UN Security Council voted in July 2001 to extend the UNOMIG mission until January 2002. The October shooting down of a UN helicopter and a subsequent deadly raid on an Abkhazian village, both of which attracted considerable international attention, heightened the overall sense of insecurity throughout the republic.

Close to 200,000 displaced persons who fled Abkhazia during the early 1990s are living in western Georgia, most in the Zugdidi district bordering Abkhazia. Gali remains the last Georgian enclave in Abkhazia.

Agriculture, including the cultivation of tobacco, tea, and fruit, constitutes the main economic activity in the region. Large segments of the economy, many of which have been devastated by the war, are controlled by criminal organizations, and smuggling and corruption are widespread.

## India

### Kashmir

Polity: Indian-administered

Economy: Capitalist-statist

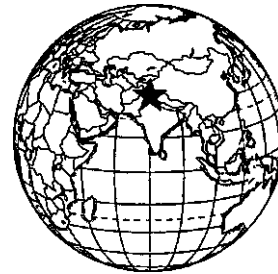
Population: 8,500,000

Ethnic Groups: Muslim majority, Hindu minority

Political Rights: 6

Civil Liberties: 6

Status: Not Free



### Overview:

Faced with a continuing insurgency in Kashmir that has killed some 34,000 civilians, soldiers, and militants since 1989, India entered into a unilateral ceasefire in late 2000, which was

extended several times before being abandoned in May 2001. In addition, the government offered unconditional peace talks to militant groups in early April. In July, Indian and Pakistani leaders held an eagerly anticipated summit at Agra, but were unable to issue a joint statement on the Kashmir dispute. Militants had rejected the ceasefire and continued to attack Indian forces throughout the year; on October 1, a particularly violent suicide car bomb at the gates of the state assembly building in Srinagar killed 38 people and wounded many more. Following the September 11 attacks on the United States, tensions in the region remained high. Incidents of cross-border firing between Indian and Pakistani troops have been reported, as well as an escalation of militant activity.

After centuries of rule in Kashmir by Afghan, Sikh, and local strongmen, the British seized control of the Himalayan land in 1846 and sold it to the Hindu maharajah of the neighboring principality of Jammu. The maharajah later incorporated Ladakh and other surrounding areas into what became the new princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. At the partition of British India in 1947, Maharajah Hari Singh attempted to preserve Jammu and Kashmir's independence. However, after Pakistani tribesmen invaded, the maharajah agreed to Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India in return for promises of autonomy and eventual self-determination.

Within months of gaining their independence, India and Pakistan went to war in Kashmir. A United Nations-brokered ceasefire in January 1949 established the present-day boundaries, which a UN Military Observer Group monitors. The boundaries gave Pakistan control of roughly one-third of Jammu and Kashmir, including the far northern and western areas. India retained most of the Kashmir Valley along with predominantly Hindu Jammu and Buddhist-majority Ladakh.

Under Article 370 of India's 1950 constitution and a 1952 accord, the territory received substantial autonomy. However, New Delhi began annulling the autonomy guarantees in 1953, and in 1957 formally annexed the two-thirds of Jammu and Kashmir under its control. Seeking strategic roads and passes, China seized a portion of Jammu and Kashmir in 1959. India and Pakistan fought a second, inconclusive war over the territory in 1965. Under the 1972 Simla accord, New Delhi and Islamabad agreed to respect the "Line of Control" and to resolve Kashmir's status through negotiation.

The insurgency began in 1989, two years after the pro-India National Conference Party won state elections that were marred by widespread fraud, and authorities began arresting members of a new, Muslim-based opposition party. Muslim-based militant groups assassinated several National Conference politicians and attacked government targets in the Kashmir Valley. The militant groups included the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and other pro-independence groups consisting largely of indigenous Kashmiris, as well as Pakistani-backed Islamist groups that want to bring Kashmir under Islamabad's control. Muslims make up two-thirds of the state's population but are concentrated in the Kashmir Valley, which is barely one-fifth of the state's total area.

As the violence escalated, New Delhi placed Jammu and Kashmir under federal rule in January 1990. By the mid-1990s, the Indian army had greatly weakened the JKLF and other indigenous groups and had secured most large Kashmir Valley towns and villages. The JKLF abandoned its armed struggle in 1994. The insurgency has since been controlled by Pakistani-backed fundamentalist groups, which include in their ranks many non-Kashmiri fighters from elsewhere in the Islamic world. While militants have continued to carry out assassinations and bombings in Srinagar and other Kashmir Valley towns, much of the heavy fighting has shifted to Doda and other southern districts.

The October 1996 state elections returned Jammu and Kashmir to local rule for the first time since 1990. The National Conference, the only Kashmiri-based party to contest the elections, won 57 of the 87 assembly seats and formed a government under party leader Farooq Abdullah. His administration is widely believed to be corrupt and incompetent.

As a sign of the difficulty in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict, talks between India and the largest armed group in Kashmir, Hizbul Mujahideen, broke down just days after they began in August 2000. In holding the meeting, New Delhi had dropped its long-standing precondition for talks, that the militants accept Indian sovereignty over its only Muslim-majority state. However, the initiative foundered when the Hizbul Mujahideen called off a unilateral ceasefire, which had enabled the talks to take place, after India refused to include Pakistan in the dialogue.

India's insistence that Pakistan be excluded from talks had hardened after the two countries fought weeks of border battles beginning in May 1999, when India began air and ground attacks to dislodge hundreds of Pakistani troops and Pakistani-backed fighters who had seized strategic heights in the Kargil-Dras region on the Indian side of the 450-mile Line of Control, which demarcates the Indian- and Pakistani-held parts of Kashmir. Pakistan withdrew in early July 1999, but separatist violence later escalated.

In November 2000, New Delhi for the first time suspended counterinsurgency operations against Kashmiri militant groups during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Although Pakistan responded by saying it would exercise "maximum restraint" along the Line of Control, most militant groups rejected the ceasefire and continued to attack security forces. Nevertheless, India extended the ceasefire in several increments before finally abandoning it in May 2001.

At a summit held in July, Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf failed to resolve the two countries' differences over the Kashmir dispute. Militants stepped up their attacks in the aftermath of the summit, with an increasing focus on targeting Hindu civilians in the southern districts of the state. In response, at the request of Chief Minister Abdullah, the Indian government extended the Disturbed Areas Act in August to cover six additional districts in southern Kashmir, as well as proposing an amnesty for security forces accused of human rights violations.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** India has never held a referendum on Kashmiri self-determination as called for in a 1948 UN resolution. The state's residents can nominally change the local administration through elections. However, the 1996 state election was marred by violence and irregularities. Militants enforced boycotts, threatened election officials and candidates, and killed at least 20 people prior to and during the balloting. Soldiers and state-backed militias coerced some Kashmiris into voting. Violence and intimidation also severely disrupted voting in the 1999 Indian national elections, when militant groups again threatened to kill voters, assassinated at least three politicians, and carried out bombings and other attacks. The All Parties *Hurriyat* (Freedom) Conference (APHC), an umbrella group of 23 legal pro-independence and pro-Pakistani parties, urged voters to boycott the 1996 state elections and the national elections. In January 2001, voters were able to participate in the first village-level elections in 23 years, which were held to choose members on 125 village councils. Despite threats from separatist groups, polling went smoothly, with an 80 percent turnout being reported in some areas.

Under heavy pressure from both the government and militants, the judiciary barely functions. The government frequently disregards judicial orders quashing detentions, while militants routinely threaten judges, witnesses, and the families of defendants.

In a continuing cycle of violence, Indian soldiers, federal paramilitary troops, and the police carried out arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture, disappearances, and summary killings of suspected militants and alleged civilian sympathizers. Amnesty International estimated that since 1989, up to 1,800 people have disappeared after being arrested by police or armed paramilitary forces. In addition, Human Rights Watch noted last year that in response to increased militant attacks on security forces following the 1999 Kargil conflict, army cordon-and-search operations had resumed in the Kashmir Valley and increased in the southern border districts. During these operations, the army detained young men, assaulted other family members, and summarily executed suspected militants.

Many abuses by Indian forces are facilitated by the 1978 Public Security Act (PSA) and other broadly drawn preventive detention laws, which authorities have used to "punish those who criticize the government," according to a June report by Amnesty International. The PSA allows authorities to detain persons for up to two years without charge or trial. Amnesty International noted last year that "hundreds" of people are thought to be held in preventive detention on a range of criminal charges despite court orders for their release, including some people who have been held without charge or trial since the early 1990s. Although detentions under the security laws are nonrenewable, authorities frequently re-arrest suspects on new charges and impose a new two-year detention. In June, a number of human rights activists were detained and beaten following public protests over the killing of six women.

Further contributing to the army's ability to act with near impunity are two other broadly written laws, the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the 1990 Disturbed Areas Act. The laws allow Indian forces to search homes and arrest suspects without a warrant, shoot suspects on sight, and destroy homes or buildings believed to house militants or arms. Moreover, the Special Powers Act requires New Delhi to approve any prosecution of Indian forces. In August, after a militant attack on the Jammu train station that left 11 people dead and many others injured, the government extended the Disturbed Areas Act to cover six additional Hindu-dominated districts in southern Kashmir. While a state human rights commission has been investigating some human rights complaints since 1998, it cannot directly investigate abuses by the army or other federal security forces. Efforts to bring soldiers to justice for rights violations are rare. At the end of August, political leaders as well as human rights groups expressed concern over government proposals to give an amnesty to security force personnel facing human rights charges.

Seeking support during security operations, the army has recruited former servicemen for Village Defense Committees, whose members have committed extrajudicial executions, assaults, and other abuses. Since the mid-1990s, the army has also organized and armed militias composed of former militants who have reportedly carried out extrajudicial executions, disappearances, torture, and other abuses against pro-Pakistani militants as well as journalists and other civilians.

Armed with increasingly sophisticated and powerful weapons, and relying to a greater degree on the deployment of suicide squads, militant groups continued to kill politicians, party workers, public employees, suspected informers, members of rival

factions, soldiers, and civilians. Repeated violence against Kashmiri Hindus throughout the year is part of a pattern since 1990 that has forced tens of thousands of Hindus to flee the region. Separatists have also kidnapped numerous government officials, politicians, and businessmen, and are accused of using rape to deter women from acting as informants.

Women were targeted in 2001 by a hitherto unknown militant group, the *Lashkar-e-Jabbar*, which in early August issued an ultimatum that all Muslim women wear *burqas*, or head-to-toe veils. Members of the group threw acid at five women in downtown Srinagar who were not veiled. The group, which later in the month insisted that men and women be segregated on public buses, was condemned by other militant groups and political parties for its aggressive tactics, but was supported by the *Dukhtaran-e-Millat* (Daughters of the Nation), a hardline Muslim women's organization. Following *Lashkar-e-Jabbar's* September 10 deadline, several women were sprayed with paint and women have been threatened with harsher measures in the event of noncompliance. However, news reports suggest that only about 60 percent of women were complying with the directive.

Kashmir's journalists have been whipsawed between the demands of both the government and the militants to suppress information about human rights abuses or information that would otherwise be damaging to their respective sides. In recent years, militant groups have kidnapped, tortured, killed, or otherwise harassed or threatened numerous journalists, and occasionally coerced newspapers into suspending publication. In February, suspected militants fired grenades at the government-run television center; previous attacks had led to the death of a senior official there. The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres said last year that nine journalists had been killed in the state since 1989. Authorities occasionally beat, detain, or harass journalists. On May 10, seventeen journalists were assaulted by members of the Border Security Force as they attempted to cover a funeral procession. Those implicated in the assault were recalled from Kashmir but no other disciplinary action was taken against them. Though it is generally not used, under India's 1971 Newspaper Incitements to Offenses Act (in effect only in Jammu and Kashmir) district magistrates can censor publications in certain circumstances. Given these constraints, journalists generally practice self-censorship but do report on some abuses by security forces.

Several human rights activists have been killed since 1989, and only a few individuals and groups continue to do human rights work. In recent years, authorities have briefly arrested political leaders either before or during peaceful protests and have broken up numerous pro-independence or antigovernment demonstrations. Along the Line of Control separating the two adversaries, shelling by Indian and Pakistani troops each year kills numerous civilians, displaces many more, and disrupts schools and the local economy.

# Indonesia

## West Papua

Polity: Dominant party (military-dominated)  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 1,800,000  
 Ethnic Groups: Indigenous West Papuan (Melanesian), Indonesian groups

Political Rights: 5  
 Civil Liberties: 5  
 Status: Partly Free



### Overview:

Efforts to peacefully resolve demands for independence in West Papua were in tatters in late 2001. Tensions in Indonesia's easternmost province rose as unknown assailants killed prominent independence activist Theys Eluay, authorities jailed several leading activists, and pro-independence leaders rejected a new Indonesian law granting the territory greater autonomy. Eluay, 64, chaired the Papua Presidium Council, a forum for West Papuan leaders seeking peaceful independence. At year's end police had made no arrests in connection with Eluay's death, while courts continued to try four other leading Presidium members for subversion.

Located on the western part of the island of New Guinea, West Papua has been dominated by outside powers for nearly two centuries. The Dutch set up the first European outpost in New Guinea in 1828 and formally took control of the island's western part under an 1848 agreement with Britain. That deal paved the way for Britain and Germany to colonize the eastern part, which today is the independent state of Papua New Guinea. The Japanese occupied the Dutch-controlled territory during World War II. The Netherlands ceded its territory to Indonesia in 1963 under a United Nations agreement calling for Jakarta to hold a referendum on self-determination by 1969.

Seeking an independent homeland, a group of tribesmen calling themselves the Free Papua Movement (OPM) began waging a low-grade insurgency in the mid-1960s. As the violence continued, Jakarta gained UN approval to formally annex West Papua in the summer of 1969 after holding a tightly controlled "Act of Free Choice." The 1,025 traditional leaders who participated voted unanimously against independence. Indonesia in 1973 renamed the land, known locally as West Papua, Irian Jaya.

As the OPM escalated its hit-and-run attacks against the far more powerful Indonesian troops, the army launched a counteroffensive in 1984 that drove hundreds of villagers into neighboring Papua New Guinea. That year, Indonesian forces also killed the prominent anthropologist Arnold Ap. The army carried out more major anti-OPM offensives in 1989.

While the OPM and other tiny armed groups continue to mount sporadic antigovernment attacks, civilian groups have become increasingly vocal in demanding independence ever since Indonesia's democratic transition began in 1998. In an event high on symbolism but short on tangible results, Eluay's Papua Presidium Council organized a week-long congress in spring 2000 that called for Jakarta to recognize a 1961 West

Papuan declaration of independence. The 1961 declaration took place under Dutch rule and was never recognized internationally.

Even before tensions were increased by Eluay's killing, which took place on or about November 10, 2001, it was not clear how pro-independence groups and Jakarta would manage to find common ground. The Presidium Council in early November rejected a law passed by the Indonesian parliament giving West Papua political autonomy and a greater share of local forestry, fishery, and energy revenues.

Indonesian authorities, moreover, continued in 2001 to crack down on peaceful pro-independence activism. Before his death, Eluay was among the Presidium leaders being tried for subversion for their advocacy efforts. Separately, a court in March 2001 sentenced five leading activists in the town of Wamena to between four and four and a half years in prison after convicting them of "conspiring to commit separatism." They had been accused of "masterminding" violence in Wamena in October 2000 that had killed more than 30 people. The London-based Amnesty International said that there is no evidence that the five activists, all of whom are members of the Presidium Council, were involved in the violence, which began after Indonesian forces killed two people while trying to forcibly lower a pro-independence Morning Star flag. Amid mounting tensions, security forces shot dead 11 more people and local Papuans killed 19 migrants from other parts of Indonesia. Jakarta has banned Papuans from flying the pro-independence flag except in several designated locations, where it must be flown alongside the Indonesian flag.

Military developments in 2001 also seemed to diminish prospects for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Pro-independence rebels increased attacks on security posts, while Jakarta continued a troop buildup that began in June 2000, sending thousands of fresh soldiers to the province, the New York-based Human Rights Watch said in July. On the same day the five activists were sentenced, the Wamena court also sentenced 17 pro-independence supporters to prison terms of between 21 months and three and a half years after finding them guilty of attacking police and carrying weapons without licenses. Most of the 17 are believed to be members of a pro-independence militia group, the Papua Taskforce.

The worst violence in 2001 killed some 15 police officers, plantation workers, and others in the Wasior area of the Manokwari district. They were killed in a series of alleged rebel attacks and security force crackdowns during the year that also caused thousands of villagers to flee their homes, according to the New York-based Human Rights Watch.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** West Papuans enjoy many basic rights, but Jakarta's crack-down on independence activism has made it harder to express political views, hold protests, and run nongovernmental groups (NGOs). Newspapers freely report on West Papua's pro-independence movement and other local political news. NGOs monitor human rights and provide social services despite having limited funds. By contrast, during the Suharto era officials banned all expression of support for West Papuan independence, routinely jailed dissidents, and kept a tight lid on the private media and civil society.

In a setback to these new freedoms, however, authorities in 2001 subjected prominent human rights organizations such as the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy and other civic groups to increased surveillance and harassment. Activists



who reported on the police killings of three students and other abuses in the town of Abepura, near the provincial capital of Jayapura, in December 2000, and other alleged rights violations were summoned by police for questioning, according to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The Abepura killings followed a rebel attack on a police post. Observers also expressed concern not only over the jailings in March of the five Wamena independence activists but over the conduct of their trials. The trials of both the activists and of the 17 independence supporters were carried out in "a tense atmosphere of intimidation and secrecy" amid a heavily armed police presence around the courtroom, Amnesty International said in March.

Most Papuans follow either Christian or indigenous beliefs, and all generally enjoy freedom to worship as they please. In part because of societal norms, women tend to face discrimination when pursuing schooling and seeking jobs, according to the U.S. State Department's February 2001 report on Indonesia's human rights record in 2000, which covers West Papua.

Indonesian rule has helped modernize West Papua and develop its economy. Most of the benefits, however, have been reaped by foreign investors, the military, and by immigrants from other parts of the archipelago, according to the U.S. State Department report and other sources. Papuans also have little control over the territory's abundant natural resources. They say authorities continue to expropriate their ancestral lands and grant mining, logging, and energy contracts without adequate consultation or compensation, while investing little in local development projects.

Critics say the presence of large numbers of non-Papuans in the territory threatens to marginalize the indigenous-Melanesian culture and makes it harder for Papuans to find work. Local government agencies and private mining outfits reportedly tend to fill job openings with immigrants rather than Papuans. Immigrants also dominate small business and reportedly discriminate against indigenous Papuans. The October 2000 killings in Wamena of at least 19 immigrants from other parts of Indonesia were the worst of several incidents in the past few years where Papuans violently attacked or otherwise harassed non-Papuans. Some 170,000 non-Papuans came to West Papua from Indonesia's overcrowded main islands under a largely defunct "transmigration" program that began in the 1970s. Thousands more migrated on their own.

In addition to having fairly little control over economic affairs, West Papuans lack the right to decide the territory's political future. They had no input in the 1962 New York Agreement between the Netherlands and the UN that transferred their land from Dutch to Indonesian control in 1963. Moreover, the 1969 referendum that ratified Indonesian rule was neither free nor fair. The New York Agreement did not specify a procedure for the referendum, but it did call for Indonesia to hold a popular consultation "in accordance with international practice," a standard that Jakarta arguably ignored. The Indonesian military reportedly coerced the traditional leaders into approving Jakarta's rule, with the UN special observer reporting that "the administration exercised at all times a tight political control over the population."

## Iraq

### Kurdistan

Polity: Dual leadership  
 Economy: Capitalist-statist  
 Population: 4,000,000

Political Rights: 5\*  
 Civil Liberties: 5\*  
 Status: Partly Free



Ethnic Groups: Kurdish, Turkoman, Assyrian, others

**Ratings Change:** Kurdistan's political rights and civil liberties ratings improved from 6 to 5, and its status changed from Not Free to Partly Free, because of a generally free climate for expression and association, efforts to implement the 1998 Washington accord, and the demilitarization of the ceasefire line between KDP- and PUK-controlled areas.

#### Overview:

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) improved relations during 2001 and made progress on implementing the 1998 Washington agreement on power sharing. The agreement called for the establishment of an elected government after a transitional period of power sharing, arrangements for the equitable distribution of revenues from cross-border trade with Turkey, and the elimination of checkpoints to allow for freedom of movement throughout the region. The primary issue impeding cooperation appears to be the division of revenues, but other obstacles remain, including disputes over the composition of a joint regional government. The intermittent military conflict between the two sides has subsided, and the KDP and the PUK took steps in 2001 to enhance cooperation on security, demilitarization, the return of displaced people, and other issues.

In April 1991, the United States, Britain, France, and Turkey established a secure region with a U.S.-enforced no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel in Iraq. Following the collapse of an autonomy agreement with the Iraqi government, the 105-member Iraqi Kurdistan National Assembly was created in 1991. After a 1992 vote produced no clear winner, the KDP and the PUK agreed to fill 50 seats each. The remaining five seats were reserved for Christian Assyrians. Disputes over power and revenue sharing erupted into civil war in 1994, precluding operation of the government and any further elections. Frequent clashes occurred up until the Washington Agreement in 1998.

Currently, Kurdistan is split into two parts, with Massoud Barzani's KDP controlling about 1.8 million Kurds in the western regions, including the capital of Irbil, and Jalal Talabani's PUK controlling the region of Suleimaniyah toward the southeast, with a population of about 1.2 million. The KDP reaps a disproportionate share of revenues from trade—both legitimate and illicit—between Turkey, Iraq, and Syria via routes in KDP territory. In contrast, Talabani's region raises most of its revenue from duties on goods smuggled between Iran and Iraq, and from taxes on its population. Poverty and unemployment are widespread in PUK territory, though not nearly as serious as in Baghdad-controlled Iraq. The KDP and PUK each maintain their own administrative, legislative, and executive structures, and despite the institutions created in Irbil under power-sharing arrangements, the PUK has established its own courts and other bodies.

Kurdistan receives 13 percent of Iraq's oil revenues under the 1996 oil-for-food

arrangement initiated by the United Nations to allow Iraq to sell a limited amount of oil to pay for humanitarian goods. Kurdish authorities, with UN supervision, have used their share of the revenues to build schools, roads, hospitals, sewage systems, and other development projects, even in rural areas. Infant mortality is actually lower today than it was in 1990, when the UN first imposed sanctions. Meanwhile, indices of human welfare continued to decline in Baghdad-administered Iraq, leading many to conclude that the efficacy of the oil-for-food program depends on who administers it.

Barzani and Talabani improved their cooperation in several areas during 2001. In January, Talabani reportedly ordered media under his control to stop broadcasting anti-KDP propaganda. In April, the KDP and the PUK agreed to demilitarize the line dividing their areas of control and to open bureaus in each other's territory. They also agreed to cooperate on criminal procedures, eased restrictions on travel and trade between the two areas, and allowed displaced people to begin returning to their hometowns. However, they had not agreed on a unified administration by year's end.

In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the KDP and the PUK found themselves fighting an apparent terrorist threat in their own region. In September, the *Jund al-Islam* (soldiers of Islam), a group composed of splinter factions of the mainstream Islamic Unity Movement of Kurdistan (IUMK), occupied two villages near the town of Halabcha, southeast of Suleimaniyah. The PUK launched an assault, with offers of assistance from the KDP, and clashes continued into October. The PUK reportedly lost some 150 fighters before calling a ceasefire and declaring an amnesty for Jund al-Islam fighters in late October. PUK officials claimed that Jund al-Islam was funded by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist network, and that its aim was to disrupt the region, spread religious rule, and eliminate non-Muslims. Skeptics, including IUMK leaders and Turkish officials, accused the Kurds of exaggerating the terrorist threat in order to crack down on Islamists, who constitute the third-largest political party in Iraqi Kurdistan.

As the only group possessing anti-Baghdad forces on the ground within Iraq, the Kurds could be key participants in any attempt to oust Saddam Hussein. Given that Iraq may be the next target in the U.S.-led war on terrorism, they face the possibility of reprisal from Baghdad in the event of an unsuccessful U.S. attack on Iraq, or the risk of losing U.S. protection if they refuse to take sides against the Iraqi dictator. Saddam has renewed past offers of rapprochement with the Kurds; according to the BBC, he "vowed to cut out the tongue of whoever refuses to enter 'calm dialogue'" with him. The Kurds have so far declined the offer.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Iraqi Kurds cannot change their government democratically, as factional strife has precluded parliamentary activity since 1995. However, the KDP and the PUK have separate administrations and cabinets for the territories under their control, and the PUK led generally free and fair municipal elections in February 2000. The KDP held municipal elections in its territory in May 2001. Assyrian Christians claimed that the elections were rigged by Kurdish tribal leaders, and that when they prepared to boycott the polls, the Kurds threatened them into participating in order to create the appearance of fairness. In one case, tribal villagers and security forces reportedly attacked the Assyrian village of Koso on May 17, severely beating some villagers in an apparent warning to Assyrian leaders contemplating a boycott.

Although the KDP and the PUK maintain separate judicial systems in areas under their control, reliable information about judicial independence is difficult to obtain. Reportedly, hearings are conducted, adjudicated, and enforced by local officials of the two parties. The two groups also run separate prisons and detention facilities where human rights violations, including denial of due process and torture, have occurred. However, both sides regularly grant access to their prisons to delegations from the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) continues to use Iraqi Kurdistan as a base for its military insurgency against Turkey. Many PKK fighters fled to Kurdistan following the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999. Turkey sent troops into northern Iraq in pursuit of PKK fighters during 2001. The PUK and the KDP have adopted a unified policy of expelling the PKK from the region. Iraq sent troops to the Kurdish region on several occasions in 2001. According to Human Rights Watch, Baghdad sent tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery, and infantry units south of Irbil in June, at the same time that the United States and Britain were making efforts to restructure the economic embargo on Iraq. There are some 900,000 internally displaced persons throughout Kurdistan, with dozens of new arrivals every day from the Iraqi town of Kirkuk, where Iraqi officials continue to carry out a policy of "Arabization." Islamic groups based in Kurdistan committed abuses as well; in February, Francois Hariri, the governor of Irbil, was apparently assassinated by a group that would become part of Jund al-Islam. In September, the Jund al-Islam abducted a doctor from his office in Halabcha and held him for 20 days.

Observers report a generally open climate for discussion of political issues. Dozens of newspapers and magazines appear regularly in the main cities, and opposition television and radio broadcasts are widely available. Kurdnet, a Kurdish satellite network, began broadcasting in 2000 from Suleimaniyah, while the pro-PKK "Voice of Mesopotamia" was launched in May 2001. Internet access and satellite dishes are available without restriction. In July 2001, a journalist from *Hawlati* in Suleimaniyah was reportedly arrested by KDP officials. Numerous political parties, social organizations, and cultural associations operate freely.

Kurds are overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim. Ethnic and religious minorities face discrimination and harassment at the hands of Kurds in northern Iraq. According to the Assyrian International News Agency, the KDP in particular has pursued policies of land expropriation, assassination, abduction, rape, and torture against Assyrians, all with impunity. Teaching of the Assyrian language is restricted. The Turkoman-ethnic minority faces similar discrimination and has complained of a policy of "ethnic cleansing" against them by Kurdish authorities. In October 2001, KDP officials shut down the offices of the new Turkoman Student Organization, apparently because the office was not licensed by the relevant authorities.

In November 2001, Kurdish media reported that six women were among 140 applicants who passed the required conditions to become cadets in a new training course for police officers in Kurdistan. There are disproportionately more women than men in Kurdistan, according to the UN. This is reportedly because of the Anfal campaign, in which Baghdad killed some 200,000 Kurdish civilians using firing squads and chemical attacks following the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). In 2000, the PUK abolished legal provisions legitimizing honor killings of women. Several women's organizations operate in Kurdistan.

## Israel

### ↓ Israeli-Administered Territories<sup>a</sup> ↓ & Palestinian Authority-Administered Territories<sup>b</sup>



Polity: Military and PLO administered

Economy: Capitalist

Population: 3,300,000 (1,200,000:

Gaza; 2,100,00: West Bank). In addition, there are some 176,000

Israeli settlers in the West Bank

and about 173,000 in East Jerusalem. Some

6,900 Israeli settlers live in the Gaza Strip.

Ethnic Groups: Palestinian, Jewish, Bedouin

**Trend Arrow:** The Israeli-Administered territories received a downward trend arrow due to the chaotic nature of the *intifada* (uprising), along with strong Israeli reprisals, including air strikes, blockades, home demolitions, and invasions of Palestinian territory, which resulted in a deterioration of living conditions.

**Trend Arrow:** The Palestinian-Authority Administered territories received a downward trend arrow due to the shooting deaths of Palestinian civilians by Palestinian security personnel; the summary trials and executions of alleged collaborators by the Palestinian Authority (PA); extrajudicial killings of suspected collaborators by militias; and the apparent official encouragement of Palestinian youths to confront Israeli soldiers, thus placing them directly in harm's way. The failure, and at times, refusal, by the PA to clamp down on terror resulted in Israeli reprisals, thereby affecting Palestinian lives. Numerous reports of press intimidation by the PA and its allied militias were also documented.

Political Rights: 6<sup>a</sup>

Civil Liberties: 6<sup>a</sup>

Status: Not Free

Political Rights: 5<sup>b</sup>

Civil Liberties: 6<sup>b</sup>

Status: Not Free

### Overview:

The Palestinian *intifada* continued through 2001 with no genuine signs of abatement, despite attempts by the United States to directly broker ceasefire agreements. The continuing violence led to further deterioration of Palestinian living conditions and personal safety. For the first time since the implementation of the Oslo peace accords, Israel conducted raids into Palestinian territory, resulting in the deaths of several Palestinians and the destruction of many Palestinian civil and military institutions and homes. Israel also continued its policy of targeted killings of suspected Palestinian militants, prompting widescale international condemnation. Israel imposed tight restrictions on the movement of Palestinians both within and outside Palestinian-administered areas and those still under Israeli control. By the end of the year, with the *intifada* over one year old, more than 600 Palestinians and over 200 Israelis had been killed.

Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority (PA) continued to be undermined as factions of his Fatah organization and other militant groups took the lead—at times against his orders, without his consultation, or perhaps even with his tacit approval—in perpetuating the *intifada*. Palestinian suicide bombers carried out numerous attacks inside Israel, killing scores. Gunmen carried out ambushes and drive-by shootings, killing sev-

eral Jewish settlers in the West Bank. Mortars were also fired at Jewish neighborhoods in Jerusalem and at settlements in the Gaza Strip.

After several ceasefire declarations by Israel, and in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States in September, Arafat called upon Palestinians to refrain from attacking Israelis, an order that held only temporarily. Within days, violence resumed. Palestinian security forces opened fire on Palestinian protestors, killing three. Palestinian militiamen assassinated an Israeli cabinet member in October, bringing both sides to the brink of all-out war. After a wave of Palestinian suicide bombers killed scores in Israel in November and December, Arafat enforced a ceasefire, which significantly damped down the violence for the rest of the year.

The PA continued to face accusations of autocratic leadership, mismanagement, and political corruption. Several Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel were sentenced to death after summary trials. Some were executed.

The West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem came under the British Mandate in 1920. After Palestinian rejection of a United Nations partition plan in 1947, Israel declared its independence on the portion of land allotted for Jewish settlement. The fledgling state was jointly attacked by neighboring Arab states in the 1948 War of Independence. While Israel maintained its sovereignty, Jordan seized East Jerusalem and the West Bank, while Egypt took control of Gaza. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel came to occupy the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, which had been used by Syria to shell towns in northern Israel. Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967 and the Golan Heights in 1981.

Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza began attacking mainly military targets in 1987 to protest Israeli rule in what became known as the intifada. A series of secret negotiations between Israel and Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) conducted in Oslo, Norway, produced an agreement in August 1993. The Declaration of Principles provided for three Israeli troop withdrawals and gradual Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza.

Elections for the first Palestinian legislative council and head of the council's executive authority were held in January 1996 and were considered to be generally free and fair. Independents won 35 of the 88 council seats, while Arafat's Fatah movement won the remainder. Arafat won the chairmanship of the executive authority with 88 percent of the vote.

Most of Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho were turned over to the PA in May 1994. In late 1995, Israel began redeploying its forces in the West Bank. The election of Labor Party leader Ehud Barak as Israeli prime minister in May 1999 reinvigorated the Oslo peace process. Under the provisions of the Oslo Accords implemented so far, the Palestinians have full or partial control of 40 percent of the West Bank, or 98 percent of the territory's Palestinian population.

In July 2000, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, led by Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, respectively, held two weeks of talks at Camp David under U.S. auspices. The talks culminated in the most far-reaching negotiations ever between the two sides. For the first time, Israel offered compromise proposals on Jerusalem, agreeing to some form of Palestinian control and quasi-sovereignty over East Jerusalem, which contains Islamic holy sites. Israel also offered more than 95 percent of the West Bank to the Palestinians and expressed some willingness to recompense and resettle a limited number of Palestinian refugees. The Palestinians rejected the Israeli offers, insist-

ing on full sovereignty over East Jerusalem, 100 percent of the West Bank, and an Israeli commitment to a "right of return" of Palestinian refugees. No agreement was reached. At the end of September 2000 a widespread Palestinian uprising erupted.

In January 2001, the two sides negotiated intensively in Taba, an Egyptian Red Sea resort town. The talks, however, yielded no concrete results. Days later, in nationwide voting, Ariel Sharon became prime minister. Barak's defeat effectively ended short-term prospects for renewed negotiations. The intifada continued, showing few signs of abatement throughout the year.

In May, a fact-finding commission headed by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell issued a report on the crisis. Apportioning blame for the violence to both sides, the Mitchell Report called for a cessation of violence as an unconditional first step, to be followed by a series of confidence-building measures. These included a total freeze of Israeli settlement activity, 100 percent effort by the PA in clamping down on terror, the use of nonlethal force by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) against Palestinian demonstrators, the prevention by the PA of attacks against Israelis from Palestinian areas, the lifting of border closures by Israel, and the resumption of PA cooperation with Israeli security agencies.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon demanded one week of calm before a "cooling off" period could take place, after which the Mitchell plan could take effect. A Palestinian suicide bombing in the Israeli city of Netanya in mid-May put off implementation of the plan. Israel responded to the murder of five of its civilians with F-16 air strikes on Palestinian police and militia posts in the West Bank and Gaza, killing nine.

Palestinian militias, along with the radical groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, carried out several ambush attacks and bombings against Jewish soldiers and settlers in Gaza and the West Bank. Previously marginalized groups such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) resurfaced during the intifada, seizing upon the legitimization of violence by more mainstream Palestinian groups. The PFLP carried out a series of car bombings in Israel in June. In August, Israel killed the PFLP leader, Abu Ali Mustafa, in a helicopter gunship strike on his office in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

In response to armed Palestinian attacks, including sustained small arms and mortar fire at homes in Gilo, a Jewish suburb of Jerusalem considered by Palestinians to be a settlement on occupied land, Israel responded with heavy weapons, including helicopter gunship and tank attacks on select Palestinian targets. Persistent mortar fire was also directed at Jewish settlement areas in Gaza. For the first time since the implementation of the Oslo accords in 1994, Israeli forces reentered Palestinian territory. They withdrew after attacking police posts and tearing down embankments and other strategic positions used by Palestinian gunmen. Yasir Arafat's compounds in Gaza and Ramallah were also hit by Israeli fire.

Israel killed several top Palestinian militia figures and radical Islamists suspected of carrying out or preparing attacks against Israel. Palestinians condemned Israel for the killings—often carried out by helicopter gunships or undercover units—and labeled them "assassinations." Israel also faced international criticism for what it termed "targeted killings." Israel justified the policy on the grounds that its repeated requests that the PA detain Palestinians suspected of planning or carrying out attacks had gone unheeded.

Violence against Israel was carried out against a backdrop of incitement by Palestinian religious and political leaders. Islamic clerics, preaching from mosques in the

West Bank and Gaza, frequently called for the deaths of Jews and praised Palestinian suicide bombers. Sermons are often broadcast live on Palestinian TV, a PA-controlled media outlet. Some secular Palestinian leaders had also called for liberating all of Israel's land, not just the West Bank and Gaza.

Attempts in June by Central Intelligence Agency Director George Tenet to broker a ceasefire and implement the Mitchell plan largely failed. The PA continued to refuse Israeli entreaties to arrest suspected Palestinian terrorists, afraid of the potential political backlash. However, in early June, Yasir Arafat declared a ceasefire after a member of the radical Islamic Jihad group blew himself up outside a Tel Aviv disco, killing 21 Israelis. While Israel refrained from retaliating immediately, the ceasefire ultimately proved short lived.

In August, a Hamas suicide bomber blew himself up inside a packed pizza parlor in downtown Jerusalem, killing 15. Israeli F-16 jets fired on Palestinian police stations in the West Bank and invaded the town of Jenin, considered a primary center from where many suicide attacks emanate. Israeli forces destroyed a police building there before withdrawing. Israeli troops also took over Orient House, the unofficial PA headquarters in East Jerusalem. Israel revealed that it had earlier submitted the name of the coordinator of the Jerusalem bombing to the PA, stating it had credible intelligence of an imminent attack.

Arafat's refusal to arrest terror suspects underscored his apparent loss of street credibility. Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti apparently defied the Palestinian leader by declaring the continuation of the intifada whenever Arafat called for a ceasefire. With the skyrocketing popularity of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Arafat's room for maneuverability appeared hampered throughout the year. A poll conducted at the end of September by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, a Palestinian polling institute, found only 23.5 percent of West Bank and Gaza residents trust Arafat. Approximately 75 percent support suicide bombings against Israelis.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, prospects for a sustained halt in violence appeared to improve toward the end of September. Motivated to disassociate himself from acts of terror while the United States formed an international antiterror coalition, Arafat ordered a ceasefire. Despite periodic attacks on Jewish settlers, a discernable drop in Palestinian violence was registered. Hamas also signaled its intention to suspend suicide operations for the foreseeable future, but did not rule out continuing attacks against Israeli troops and settlers in the West Bank and Gaza. Islamic Jihad announced it would not abide by the ceasefire. Israel issued an extradition request for Barghouti, accusing him of masterminding the shooting deaths of Israeli civilians. At the end of the month, Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met in Gaza to discuss terms for a lasting ceasefire. Israel eased some border closures along the West Bank and Gaza.

The period of relative calm, however, proved short lived. Palestinian gunmen continued to ambush West Bank Jewish settlers amidst the ceasefire talks; Israel continued to target top-ranking Hamas and Islamic Jihad members and staged incursions into Palestinian territory in an attempt to tamp down the violence. In the middle of October, the PFLP claimed responsibility for the assassination of Rehavam Ze'evi, an Israeli cabinet member. Israel demanded that the PA arrest and extradite the suspected killers to Israel, a move Yasir Arafat refused after outlawing the PFLP. Israel cut off contacts with the PA and within days of the killing invaded several Palestinian-ruled



cities in the West Bank. The invasions—resulting in the deaths of a number of Palestinians—were partly in response to shooting attacks on Jewish neighborhoods and individual settlers, but were also carried out as a pressure tactic on Arafat to force him to hand over Ze'evi's assassins. In late October, under intense American pressure, Israel withdrew from three of the cities.

In late November, the United States sent retired General Anthony Zinni to the region to try to broker a ceasefire. His meetings with Israeli and Palestinian leaders came to naught, however, as a wave of Palestinian suicide bombings in Israeli cities undermined his efforts. He returned to the United States in December.

Late in the year, Palestinian demonstrators clashed violently with Palestinian security forces over the PA's detention of militants suspected of masterminding attacks against Israelis. Some demonstrators died in the clashes. With his credibility among his people already strained, Arafat declared a state of emergency in Gaza and West Bank in December. Israel accused Arafat directly of sponsoring terrorism and attacked PA buildings and installations on several occasions.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Palestinian residents of the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem chose their first popularly elected government in 1996. Despite some irregularities, international observers regarded the vote as reasonably reflective of the will of the voters. The legislative council has complained of being marginalized by executive authority; though it has debated hundreds of draft laws, few have been signed into law. The Palestinian government indefinitely postponed local elections in May 1998, citing the threat of Israeli interference. However, most believe that democratic municipal elections would reflect widespread Palestinian disillusionment both with the Oslo accords and with Yasir Arafat's leadership.

Although the council passed a basic law in 1997, Arafat has yet to approve it. Such a law would outline the separation between legislative and executive authority and presumably curtail Arafat's own authority.

Allegations of corruption and abuse of power have been increasingly problematic for Arafat's government. His autocratic tendencies have put him at odds with the legislative council. He frequently scuttles the legislative process or refuses to sign council rules into law.

Government corruption and popular disaffection with the peace process have benefited Hamas, an Islamic group whose military wing is largely responsible for terrorist attacks against Israel. Vocal opposition to Israel and to the Oslo Accords has turned Hamas into a growing political alternative to Arafat's Fatah party.

Palestinian judges lack proper training and experience. Israeli demands for a Palestinian crackdown on terrorism have given rise to state security courts, which lack almost all due process rights. Suspected Islamic militants are rounded up en masse and often held without charge or trial. There are reportedly hundreds of administrative detainees currently in Palestinian jails and detention centers. The same courts are also used to try those suspected of collaborating with Israel or for drug trafficking. Defendants are not granted the right to appeal sentences and are often summarily tried and sentenced to death. Executions often take place immediately after sentencing and are carried out by firing squad.

In January, the Palestinian Authority authorized the execution of two Palestinians accused of acting as informants for Israel. The European Union, Human Rights Watch,

and Palestinian human rights groups protested the executions, claiming those convicted were not afforded a fair trial.

In August, four Palestinians were sentenced to death for allegedly helping Israeli agents kill Palestinian militia members. The verdicts were passed after a ten-minute hearing. In the same month, a suspected collaborator, Suleiman Abu Amra, died during interrogation in a Gaza jail. His body reportedly revealed evidence of torture. According to the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group, alleged collaborators are routinely tortured in Palestinian jails and are denied the right to defend themselves in court. This practice is not prohibited under Palestinian law.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the UN criticized Palestinian security forces for not reining in militias whose armed attacks against Israelis further endangered Palestinian civilians. The PA was also criticized for, at best, not preventing Palestinian youth from challenging Israeli soldiers and, at worst, for actively encouraging them to demonstrate.

In early October, during demonstrations in Gaza in support of Osama bin Laden, the Saudi-born leader of Al Qaeda, Palestinian police opened fire, killing three protestors.

Palestinians accused by Israel of security offenses in Israeli-controlled areas are tried in Israeli military courts. Security offenses are broadly defined. Some due process protections exist in these courts, though there are limits on the right to counsel, the right to bail, and the right to appeal. Administrative detention is widely used. Most convictions in Israeli military courts are based on confessions, which are often obtained through torture. Confessions are usually spoken in Arabic and translated into Hebrew for official records. Palestinian detainees seldom read Hebrew and thus sign confessions that they cannot read.

Some Palestinian structures built without permits were destroyed during the year. Building permits are difficult for West Bank Palestinians to obtain. Throughout the Palestinian uprising, Israeli forces destroyed several homes and farming areas providing cover for Palestinian gunmen.

Israel faced intense international criticism for its handling of the Palestinian uprising. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the UN condemned Israel for employing excessive lethal force against Palestinian demonstrators. In August, six Israeli soldiers were arrested on suspicion of beating Palestinian civilians.

Journalists covering the intifada faced increased harassment by the PA. The Authority reportedly threatened Palestinian journalists who filed stories deemed unfavorable. PA-affiliated militias also warned Israeli journalists to stay out of Palestinian areas. In January, a Gaza-based cameraman was arrested for filming the execution of accused collaborators.

On September 11, immediately following the terrorist attacks in the United States, Palestinian security forces threatened journalists covering public celebrations by Palestinians in the West Bank. In one case, a cameraman for the Associated Press (AP) was threatened with death should he broadcast his videotape. The AP decided against airing the tape, despite protests by other Jerusalem-based journalists.

Under a 1995 Palestinian press law, journalists may be fined and jailed and newspapers closed for publishing "secret information" on Palestinian security forces or news that might harm national unity or incite violence. However, another press law, also signed in 1995, stipulates that Palestinian intelligence services do not reserve the right to interrogate, detain, or arrest journalists on the basis of their work. Still, several small media

outlets are pressured by authorities to provide favorable coverage of Arafat and the PA. Arbitrary arrests, threats, and the physical abuse of journalists critical of the PA are routine. Official Palestinian radio and television are government mouthpieces. In September 2001, the PA shut down Al-Roa TV, a private television station. The closure was thought to be in response to the airing of a statement in which a group affiliated with Arafat's Fatah organization claimed responsibility for the murders of Jewish settlers in a drive-by shooting in the West Bank.

Chairman Arafat has yet to ratify a 1996 law passed by the Palestinian legislative council that guarantees freedom of expression.

The PA requires permits for rallies and demonstrations and prohibits violence and racist sloganeering. Private Palestinian organizations must register with Israeli authorities. In the PA, Palestinian and pro-Islamic organizations that oppose Arafat's government have been harassed and detained.

In June 2001, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) issued a report on the shootings of journalists covering the intifada. It claimed 15 had been shot and wounded by Israeli forces since the beginning of the uprising in September 2000. In some cases, CPJ claimed journalists were deliberately targeted, a charge the Israeli government denied. In July, Israeli military authorities ordered field commanders to protect journalists covering street clashes in the West Bank and Gaza.

Newspapers are subject to Israeli censorship on security matters, though such control has eased since 1993. Israeli authorities prohibit expressions of support for Hamas and other groups that call for the destruction of Israel.

All West Bank and Gaza residents must have identification cards in order to obtain entry permits into Israel and Jerusalem. Israel often denies permits to applicants with no explanation. Even senior Palestinian officials are subject to long delays and searches at Israeli West Bank checkpoints. Israel frequently seals off the West Bank and Gaza in response to terrorist attacks, preventing tens of thousands of Palestinians from traveling to their jobs in Israel. The Israeli army continued to erect roadblocks throughout the West Bank in order to prevent terrorists from entering Israel. The measure denied Palestinians easy passage from one town to another, making access to jobs, hospitals and schools extremely difficult. Restrictions of movement between and among Palestinian towns and cities were denounced as collective punishment.

The border closings imposed throughout most of the uprising exacted a serious toll on the Palestinian economy. According to the UN, the intifada has cost the Palestinian economy more than \$1.15 billion. Unemployment is close to 40 percent and gross domestic product has fallen by half. One million Palestinians are estimated to be living below the poverty line as established by the World Bank (\$ 15 per week). In Gaza, four-fifths of the population is below the poverty line, with two-thirds of the workforce unemployed and more than half the population living on emergency rations supplied by the UN.

B'tzelem, an Israeli human rights organization, reported in August that 200,000 Palestinians lack sufficient access to water. The group blamed Israel for not updating the Palestinian water infrastructure and for diverting water to Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. Israeli roadblocks were also blamed for preventing water trucks from reaching parched Palestinian villages.

Palestinian women are underrepresented in most professions and encounter discrimination in employment. Under *Sharia* (Islamic law), women are disadvantaged in

marriage, divorce, and inheritance matters. Rape, domestic abuse, and "honor killings," in which unmarried women thought not to be virgins are murdered by male relatives, continue. Since societal pressures prevent reporting of such incidents, the exact frequency of attacks is unknown.

Labor affairs in the West Bank and Gaza are governed by a combination of Jordanian law and PA decisions pending the enactment of new Palestinian labor codes. Workers may establish and join unions without government authorization. Palestinian workers seeking to strike must submit to arbitration by the PA ministry of labor. There are no laws in the PA-ruled areas to protect the rights of striking workers. Palestinian workers in Jerusalem are subject to Israeli labor law.

The PA generally respects freedom of religion, though no law exists protecting religious expression. Some Palestinian Christians have experienced intimidation and harassment by radical Islamic groups and PA officials. On several occasions during the renewed intifada, Israel restricted the right of Muslim men under the age of 40 from praying on the Temple Mount compound in Jerusalem's Old City, for fear of violent confrontations.

## Moldova

### Transnistria

Polity: Presidential	Political Rights: 6
Economy: Statist (transitional)	Civil Liberties: 6
Population: 700,000	Status: Not Free
Ethnic Groups: Russian and Ukrainian (51 percent), Moldovan-Romanian (40 percent), other (9 percent)	



#### Overview:

The Dnestr Moldovan Republic (DMR) is a breakaway region in the eastern part of Moldova. In Moldova, the region is called Transnistria. Despite continued negotiations in 2001 among high-level officials from Moldova, Ukraine, Russia, the DMR, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the region's political status remain unresolved. In DMR presidential elections that took place on December 9, incumbent President Igor Smirnov was reelected.

When the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, pro-Russian separatists in Transnistria feared that Moldova would join with Romania. They reacted by declaring independence, establishing the DMR, and setting up an authoritarian presidential system. With weapons and other assistance from Russia's Fourteenth Army, the DMR leadership also fought a military conflict with Moldova that ended with a 1992 ceasefire.

Representatives of the OSCE, Russia, and Ukraine have been acting as mediators in the negotiations between Moldova and the DMR. They also participate in the Joint Control Commission that monitors compliance with the ceasefire. Despite multiple agreements and memorandums of understanding since 1992, the question of DMR's political status remains unsettled.

In 1999, the two sides agreed to build relations based on common borders and shared economic, legal, defense, and social domains. In 2000, the OSCE stepped up its efforts

to resolve the situation and sponsored several high-level meetings. Moldova and Russia formed special state committees to coordinate DMR-related policies. Former Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, who heads Russia's new committee, proposed the creation of a "common state" in which Moldova and the DMR would maintain separate constitutions, branches of government, armies, flags, and national anthems. The common state would share responsibility for foreign policy and border guards.

Observers of the region were optimistic that the election in 2001 of Communist Party leader Vladimir Voronin as president of Moldova would lead to improvements in the pace and substance of talks on the DMR's status. In April, in his first official act as president, Voronin met with DMR President Smimov and the two signed agreements on harmonizing tax and customs laws, recognizing official documents, attracting foreign investment, and supporting an independent media. A month later, Moldova announced plans to end checkpoints at DMR borders. Negotiators sensed that they were "closer than ever" to a resolution of the conflict, but talks collapsed in August over the DMR's insistence on complete sovereignty. Although the talks briefly resumed, President Voronin suspended the negotiations again in December and declared that Smirnov was impossible to work with. At year's end, the DMR's status still remained unresolved.

The failure of Russia to withdraw its Fourteenth Army has delayed resolution of the region's status. In 1994, Russia and Moldova agreed to a three-year timetable for removing all troops and arms, but Russia failed to meet the goal. In 1999, Russia agreed to complete the army's withdrawal by 2002. With more than 2,000 troops and approximately 40,000 tons of weapons still in the region, Russia finally resumed its withdrawal in November 2000. In August 2001, when negotiations between the DMR and Moldova temporarily broke down, the DMR's foreign minister called for a suspension of the troop withdrawal. In early November, however, the DMR's Supreme Soviet approved an agreement that pledges cooperation in the withdrawal of Russia's arsenal. By midmonth, freight trains loaded with Russian military equipment had already departed the region.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Residents of Transnistria cannot elect their leaders democratically. They are also unable to participate freely in Moldovan elections. While the DMR maintains its own legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, no country recognizes its sovereignty. The DMR's Supreme Soviet was transformed into a unicameral body with 43 members in 2000.

Parliamentary elections in December 2000 resulted in a victory for President Igor Smirnov's supporters and the reelection of Grigori Marakusa as chairman of the unicameral Supreme Soviet. Marakusa has held this position continuously since 1990. Two opposition groups, the *Edinstvo* (Unity) bloc and the *VlastNarodu* (Power to the People) bloc, won 9 seats and 1 seat, respectively. Despite their differences, members of the new body unanimously support Transnistrian independence and the presence of Russia's military.

In 2001, DMR authorities refused to let the Moldovan government open polling stations for national parliamentary elections. Instead, Moldovan authorities invited the region's estimated 80,000 registered voters to cross the Nistru River to vote in special polling places. Although some residents of Transnistria managed to vote, there were reports of voter intimidation by DMR authorities.

Three candidates registered for the DMR's presidential election on December 9, 2001: incumbent President Igor Smirnov, Aleksandr Radchenko of the People's Power

movement, and independent candidate Tom Zenovich. After announcing his campaign, Zenovich complained that he and his family were harassed and spied on. According to the DMR's Central Electoral Commission, Smirnov won 80 percent of the vote; Zenovich, 5.7 percent; and Radchenko, 4.1 percent. Voter turnout was reportedly 64 percent. Moldovan authorities called the vote "illegitimate and undemocratic." In the region's 1996 presidential election, Smirnov defeated challenger Vladimir Malakhov with 72 percent of the vote.

The DMR government controls most print and electronic media in Transnistria and restricts freedom of speech. Independent newspapers and television stations do exist, but they frequently experience harassment for criticizing the government. Authorities have also confiscated copies of independent newspapers without court orders. In 2001, President Smirnov issued a decree on the creation of a state editorial committee to oversee the activity of all print and electronic media. The committee's members will include the ministers of security, justice, foreign affairs, and information. Late in the year, the DMR blocked the local transmission of a report on Russia's RTR television channel about organized crime and illegal arms trading in the separatist region. Days later, DMR authorities threatened to sue RTR for slander.

The government restricts most political rights and civil liberties including freedom of association and assembly. Trade unions are holdovers from the Soviet era, and the United Council of Labor Collectives works closely with the government. Authorities have denied registration to some religious groups and prevented them from distributing literature or leading public meetings. The government also limits the ability of religious groups to rent space for prayer meetings.

DMR authorities discriminate against ethnic Moldovans, who make up 41 percent of the region's population. For example, the government has forced schools to teach Romanian using the Cyrillic, rather than the Latin, alphabet. In 1999, though, the first Romanian-language school opened in Tiraspol, the DMR's capital.

The local judiciary is not independent. Politically motivated killings and police harassment have been reported, and political prisoners are frequently denied access to lawyers. Police can detain suspects for up to 30 days. In 2000, the DMR introduced a moratorium on capital punishment. The decision effectively stayed the execution of Ilie Illascu, a member of the Tiraspol Six opposition group that was convicted in 1993 of killing two separatist leaders. In 2001, DMR authorities released Illascu but continued to detain other members of the group. The European Court of Human Rights agreed to hear their case.

## Morocco

### Western Sahara

Polity: Appointed governors    Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Capitalist            Civil Liberties: 6  
 Population: 250,000            Status: Not Free  
 Ethnic Groups: Arab, Berber



**Overview:**                      Prospects for a long-awaited United Nations-sponsored referendum on the future of Western Sahara dimmed in 2001 as UN envoy James Baker proposed a plan to give the territory five years of limited autonomy within Morocco. The separatist Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (*Polisario*) rejected the plan and continued to call for a referendum. Tensions rose during the year, as Morocco took several opportunities to assert its authority over Western Sahara and Polisario leaders announced their willingness to return to war.

Morocco and Mauritania partitioned Western Sahara in 1976 under a tripartite agreement with Spain, which had ruled the territory as a colony for 92 years. The Algerian-based Polisario opposed the partition with guerrilla units recruited largely from nomadic tribes indigenous to the region. The weaker of the two occupying forces, Mauritania signed a peace agreement with the Polisario in 1979, prompting Morocco to seize Mauritania's section of the territory.

The Polisario continued its guerrilla war against Morocco until 1991, when the UN brokered a ceasefire and set up the Mission for a Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to oversee the details of an independence referendum. Since then, the referendum has been blocked by disputes over who will be allowed to vote. As MINURSO has worked to identify and register eligible voters, Morocco has been accused of padding voter lists with its own citizens in order to influence the referendum result.

With the referendum on hold and refugee and security issues still unsettled, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan sent Baker to mediate talks between Polisario and Moroccan officials in 1997. In June 2001, Baker proposed offering Sahrawis limited autonomy within Morocco for a period of five years. Sahrawis would gain control over their economic and social affairs and law enforcement, while leaving defense, foreign affairs, and currency to Morocco. The plan includes the establishment of an executive to run Western Sahara's internal affairs and an assembly elected by the current adult population of the territory. The relationship between the executive and the assembly would be determined through negotiations, and it is unclear what kind of permanent settlement would be reached after the five-year interim period. Morocco agreed to the plan, but the Polisario rejected it and accused Baker of plotting to prevent the referendum.

Polisario sentiments became inflamed in January 2001, when the French organizers of the annual Paris to Dakar (Senegal) motor rally sought to route the event through Western Sahara without obtaining permission from the Polisario. The Sahrawi foreign minister called the move an act of war and announced that the Polisario was no longer bound by the 1991 ceasefire because "Morocco does not want a referendum." The rally crossed Western Sahara without incident, but during the year, Polisario officials

were angered by what they called provocative moves by Morocco, including Morocco's signing of deals with French and U.S. oil companies allowing for exploration off the coast of Western Sahara, and a visit by King Mohammad of Morocco to the territory in November. French President Jacques Chirac sparked further anger in December, when he publicly referred to Western Sahara as the "southern provinces of Morocco." Still, analysts call any resumption of the guerrilla war unlikely because of U.S. pressure on Algeria to withhold the necessary support to the Polisario. The United States has also threatened to cut funding to MINURSO if a settlement is not reached soon.

### **Political Rights and Civil Liberties:**

Sahrawis have never been allowed to elect their own government. The four provinces of Western Sahara have held local elections organized and controlled by the Moroccan government, and pro-Moroccan Sahrawis fill the seats reserved for Western Sahara in the Moroccan legislature. About 165,000 civilian Sahrawi refugees and Polisario rebels live in four refugee camps in the desert outside Tindouf, Algeria. Called the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), the territory has its own constitution, army, police force, national anthem, flag, and embassies in several countries. In June 2001, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN World Food Organization urgently appealed for funds to feed Sahrawis in Tindouf, who are dependent on tenuous supplies from donors.

Sahrawis are subject to Moroccan law. Since inheriting the Moroccan throne in July 1999, King Mohammad has tried to win the support of Sahrawis. He established an advisory council on the territory and set up a fund to finance projects in Western Sahara aimed at easing unemployment and other social problems. He also fired his interior minister, a long-time loyalist of former King Hassan, who was responsible for the brutal administration of Western Sahara. Human rights groups report greater freedom from repression, but arbitrary arrests, unfair trials, and torture by Moroccan security forces continue. The legal maximum limit of 72 hours for incommunicado detention is not always respected. Amnesty International cites numerous cases of political prisoners detained for years following unfair trials, including that of Mohamed Daddach, a Sahrawi who has been in prison since 1979 for attempting to desert the Moroccan security forces, into which he had reportedly been forcibly enlisted. King Mohammad announced an amnesty for 56 Sahrawi prisoners.

Torture and other abuses by Polisario forces, including arbitrary killing, have been reported. However, verification of these reports is difficult because of scant access to areas under Polisario control. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Polisario holds 1,496 Moroccan prisoners of war in six centers in Tindouf, Algeria, and in Polisario-controlled areas of Western Sahara. Most of these prisoners have been held for at least 20 years. Four ICRC delegates visited 796 of the prisoners in May 2001 to assess health and living conditions. They called for the immediate release of the prisoners.

More than 900 people disappeared at the hands of Moroccan security forces between the mid-1960s and the early 1990s. Though the government has released hundreds of Sahrawis after keeping them for years in secret detention centers, some 450 more remain unaccounted for. Another 70 are known by international human rights groups to have died in detention, but their deaths have not been acknowledged by the government. According to Amnesty International, many of those formerly disappeared



are denied compensation or means of redress for their treatment by the government and are often intimidated or re-arrested by security forces.

Freedoms of assembly, expression, and association are severely restricted in Western Sahara, where both criticism of the government and opposition activities are not tolerated. Political parties, nongovernmental organizations, and private media are virtually nonexistent, and suspected pro-independence activists and opponents of the government, including former political prisoners, are subject to surveillance and harassment. Beatings and ill-treatment of demonstrators have been reported. The BBC reported that clashes occurred when Moroccan security forces disrupted a sit-in demonstration in Smara, Western Sahara, in November. An unspecified number of police and demonstrators were reportedly injured, and several vehicles were burned. In November, Moroccan police arrested Nourredine Darif, a correspondent with the weekly *alAmal Addimocrati* in Smara. According to Reporters Sans Frontieres, Darif had apparently been beaten and his home ransacked.

## Russia

### Chechnya

Polity: Presidential      Political Rights: 7  
 Economy: Mixed statist      Civil Liberties: 7  
 Population: 500,000 (est.)      Status: Not Free  
 Ethnic Groups: Chechen majority, small Russian minority



#### Overview:

In the wake of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the subsequent U.S.-led attacks against the Taliban in Afghanistan, Russia intensified its efforts to portray the war in Chechnya as part of the struggle against international terrorists. Russian President Vladimir Putin's support of the U.S. antiterrorism campaign led to concern that Moscow would use its newfound cooperation with Washington to justify hardline policies in Chechnya. Some countries in the West, including the United States, which previously had criticized Russian actions in the breakaway republic, softened their stance over Chechnya in the months following the attacks of September 11. While Russian and Chechen representatives held face-to-face negotiations in November for the first time in more than two years, clashes between federal troops and Chechen separatists continued throughout the year, underscoring the Russian military's tenuous hold over much of Chechen territory.

A small Northern Caucasus republic covered by flat plains in the north-central portion and by high mountains in the south, Chechnya has been at war with Russia almost continuously since the late 1700s. In February 1944, the Chechens were deported en masse to Kazakhstan under the pretext of their having collaborated with Germany during World War II. Although rehabilitated by Nikita Khrushchev in 1957 and allowed to return to their homeland, they continued to be politically suspect and were excluded from the region's administration.

In his first decree as head of state after his election as Chechnya's president in

October 1991, former Soviet Air Force Commander Dzhokhar Dudayev proclaimed Chechnya's independence on November 1. Moscow responded by instituting an economic blockade of the republic and engaging in political intimidation of the territory's leadership.

In 1994, Russia began overtly to assist Chechen figures opposed to Dudayev, whose rule was marked by corruption and the rise of powerful clans and criminal gangs. Low-intensity conflicts developed in July, and fighting escalated in September. Citing the need to protect Moscow's national security and important economic interests, such as railways and energy pipelines, President Boris Yeltsin sent 40,000 Russian troops into Chechnya by mid-December 1994 and attacked the capital city on New Year's Eve. Russian forces intensified the shelling of Grozny and other population centers throughout 1995, with civilians becoming frequent targets. Chechen forces regrouped, making significant gains against ill-trained, undisciplined, and demoralized Russian troops. Russian public opposition to the war increased, fueled by criticism from many of the country's media. In April 1996, President Dudayev was killed, reportedly by a Russian missile.

With mounting Russian casualties and no imminent victory for Moscow, a peace deal was signed in August 1996. While calling for the withdrawal of most Russian forces from the breakaway territory, the document postponed a final settlement on the republic's status until 2001. Russia had suffered a humiliating defeat against the much smaller Chechen forces, while Chechnya's formal economy and infrastructure were virtually destroyed. The war had been marked by serious human rights violations committed by Russian government forces, as well as reported abuses by armed Chechen opposition groups.

On January 27, 1997, moderate Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov was elected president over 12 other candidates, including his principal rival, field commander Shamil Basayev. Concurrent national legislative elections ushered in the fifth parliament since 1990, as none of the previous ones had lasted their full term. Maskhadov, who subsequently named Basayev acting prime minister, sought to maintain Chechen sovereignty while pressing Moscow to help rebuild the republic. On May 12, Yeltsin and Maskhadov signed an accord that included a reference to Moscow's recognition of Maskhadov as Chechnya's legitimate president. Throughout 1998, Basayev and other former field commanders formed an unruly opposition of often-competing warlords, removing large areas of Chechnya from Maskhadov's control. A series of kidnappings, including the taking of foreign nationals as hostages by criminal gangs and militia groups, illustrated Maskhadov's growing weakness.

In early August 1999, a group of more than 1,000 Chechen guerillas crossed into the neighboring Russian republic of Dagestan, seizing several towns and declaring their intention to unite Chechnya and Dagestan as an independent Islamic state. Russian troops soon recaptured the villages and claimed to have driven the guerillas back into bases in Chechnya by late September. A few weeks later, a string of bombings in Moscow and two other Russian cities killed nearly 300 people. Although the Kremlin blamed the attacks on Chechen militants, both the Chechen government and rebel groups denied any involvement.

In what was described by Moscow as an operation to destroy the Chechen guerillas, the Kremlin ordered air strikes on key Chechen military installations and economic targets in late September 1999, and the subsequent deployment of ground troops in

Chechnya. Although Russian troops advanced rapidly over the largely flat terrain in the northern third of the republic, their progress slowed considerably as they neared the heavily defended city of Grozny, which they entered in mid-December but failed to capture by year's end. In a notable policy shift, then Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in early October effectively withdrew Moscow's recognition of President Maskhadov as the republic's main legitimate authority.

Russia's increasingly deliberate and indiscriminate bombing attacks on civilian targets caused some 200,000 people to flee Chechnya, most to the tiny neighboring Russian republic of Ingushetia. Tens of thousands of residents remained trapped in basements in Grozny during the deadly air and artillery strikes. While Western governments and international organizations expressed growing condemnation of the attacks, in Russia the campaign enjoyed broad popular support, fueled by the media's one-sided reporting favoring the official government position.

After Russian troops finally captured the largely destroyed city of Grozny in early February 2000, causing thousands of Chechen separatists to flee the capital, the Russian military turned its offensive against the remaining rebel strongholds in the southern mountain region. While Russian troops conducted air and artillery raids against towns suspected of harboring large numbers of Chechen fighters, frequently followed by often indiscriminate mopping-up operations to check for remaining rebels, they became subject to almost daily guerilla bomb and sniper attacks by rebel forces. The international community issued periodic condemnations of Moscow's operation in Chechnya, as did the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly, which voted in April to suspend Russia's voting rights in the organization.

Throughout 2001, Chechen rebels continued to engage in guerilla warfare against Russian troops with regular mine, sniper, and bomb attacks, highlighting Moscow's inability to assert full control over the breakaway republic. In January, President Putin signed a decree transferring command of military operations in Chechnya from the defense ministry to one of the country's main intelligence agencies, the FSB. The same month, the Kremlin announced that it would scale down its operations in Chechnya by reducing the number of Russian troops in Chechnya from 80,000 to 20,000. However, the withdrawal halted in early May after only 5,000 soldiers were sent home.

Following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Russian officials announced their support for the U.S. antiterrorism campaign. Moscow described the Chechen conflict as part of the broader war on global terrorism, drawing a connection between Chechen separatists and international terrorist groups associated with Osama bin Laden. Meanwhile, the West softened its criticisms of Moscow's actions in Chechnya in apparent exchange for Russia's support of U.S.-led operations against the Taliban. While German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder suggested that the world should reevaluate the situation in Chechnya in light of the September 11 events, the United States urged Chechen rebels to cut their alleged ties with terrorist groups. In contrast, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had approved a resolution less than half a year earlier condemning what it called the disproportionate and indiscriminate use of force by Russia's armed forces in Chechnya.

In the worst outbreak of hostilities in many months, Chechen fighters staged a series of surprise offensives in mid-September in the second largest city of Gudermes and shot down a military helicopter over Grozny. The Russian military responded by detaining more than 400 people suspected of assisting the rebels.

In an unexpected reversal of the Russian policy of refusing to negotiate with Chechen separatists, President Putin on September 24 offered the rebels a 72-hour deadline to sever all of their alleged contacts with international terrorists and approach federal representatives in the region to discuss disarmament procedures. As the deadline passed, Putin's envoy to Chechnya, Viktor Kazantzev, reported having made brief telephone contact with Asian Maskhadov's representative, Akhmed Zakayev. Some analysts maintained that the Kremlin's goal in extending the offer to negotiate was to deflect Western criticism of Russian human rights abuses in Chechnya, while at the same time justifying continued military operations in the republic if the deadline was not met.

In another surprising development, Russian and Chechen representatives sat down on November 18 for the first official face-to-face negotiations since the war broke out more than two years ago. Kazantsev and Zakayev, who met in Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport for a few hours, discussed a possible resolution to the conflict and agreed to hold future meetings. Despite these initiatives, fighting continued in several cities throughout the republic, and Russia's defense minister announced plans in December to launch a new winter offensive targeting rebel groups. Also, serious doubts remained as to whether President Maskhadov maintained sufficient control over the territory's various rival factions to impose a peace process.

The trial of prominent Chechen rebel leader Salman Raduyev, who had led a hostage-taking raid on a hospital in neighboring Dagestan in 1996 that left 78 people dead, opened in Dagestan on November 15. Russia's prosecutor-general personally handled the case, underscoring the importance with which federal authorities regarded the trial. On December 25, Raduyev was found guilty of hostage taking, terrorism, and murder, and sentenced to life in prison.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** With the resumption of war in Chechnya in 1999, residents of the republic currently do not have the means to change their government democratically. The 1997 presidential elections were characterized by international observers to have been reasonably free and fair. President Asian Maskhadov fled the capital city in December 1999, and the parliament elected in 1997 ceased to function. Russia placed Moscow loyalists or Chechens opposed to Maskhadov's central government in various administrative posts throughout the republic. In June 2000, Putin enacted a decree establishing direct presidential rule over Chechnya, appointing Akhmed Kadyrov, a Muslim cleric and Chechnya's spiritual leader, to head the republic's administration. Kadyrov was denounced by Maskhadov and separatist Chechens as a traitor, while pro-Moscow Chechens objected to his support during the first Chechen war for the republic's independence.

The Russian military continued to impose severe restrictions on journalists' access to the Chechen war zone, issuing accreditation primarily to those with proven loyalty to the Russian government. Few foreign reporters are allowed into the breakaway republic. Anna Politkovskaya, a journalist with the daily Russian paper *Novaya Gazeta*, who has published articles critical of Moscow's war effort in Chechnya, was briefly detained by Russian forces in February. In July, the Russian military announced that journalists covering the war must be accompanied at all times by an official from the interior ministry's press service. The disruptive effects of the war severely hinder news production and the flow of information to the general public. Russian state-run televi-

sion and radio resumed broadcasts in Chechnya in March via a transmitter north of Grozny, although much of the population remains without electricity. The Chechen rebel government operates a website, Kavkaz Center, with reports about the conflict and other news from its perspective.

Muslims enjoy freedom of worship, although the Wahhabi sect, a group with roots in Saudi Arabia and characterized by a strict observance of Islam, has been banned. Most religious Chechens practice Sufiism, a mystical form of Islam.

Since the resumption of war, the rule of law has become virtually nonexistent. Civilians have been subject to harassment and violence, including torture, rape, and extrajudicial executions, at the hands of Russian soldiers, while senior military authorities have shown general disregard for these abuses. In the spring of 2001, Russian Colonel Yuri Budanov went on trial at a military court on charges of abducting and murdering a young Chechen woman in March 2000. The trial was adjourned in July to allow for a psychiatric evaluation of the defendant, who was found to be "emotionally distressed" at the time he committed the crime, allowing the charge to be reduced to manslaughter. Human rights groups emphasized that this case represented only one of many crimes committed by Russian soldiers against local civilians. Chechen fighters have targeted Chechens who have cooperated with Russian government officials. According to Human Rights Watch, at least 18 local administration heads and 5 religious leaders, as well as many Chechen teachers, police officers, and other civil servants, were murdered in 2001. Kadyrov survived several assassination attempts, and one of his deputies was killed.

A mass grave containing 51 bodies, many in civilian clothing and showing signs of torture, was discovered in February in a town near Grozny. According to a report by Human Rights Watch, the Russian government's investigators failed to preserve crucial evidence and prematurely reburied unidentified bodies. In early July, a roundup of some 1,500 men for supposed document checks unleashed new allegations of brutality against the Russian military. According to eyewitness accounts, some of those detained were not released until their families paid bribes, while others were tortured or had disappeared and were presumed dead. Soldiers reportedly looted homes, schools, and hospitals during the raids, which were in apparent retaliation for rebel attacks that had left five Russian policemen dead. The massive mopping-up operation took place in three towns that had been declared safe zones for refugees, causing almost all of the 26,000 Chechens harbored there to seek safety in neighboring Ingushetia. Kadyrov expressed unprecedented criticism of the roundups, and several local officials appointed by Moscow threatened to quit in protest. The Russian military initiated an investigation into the incident and subsequently arrested six lower-ranking soldiers, although no top army officials were charged.

Travel both within and to and from the republic is severely restricted. After the resumption of war, the Russian military failed to provide safe exit routes for many civilians out of the conflict zones. Many Chechens, particularly those in Grozny, face often random harassment or physical assault by Russian troops and local armed groups while traveling even short distances. Bribes are usually required to pass the numerous military checkpoints. By the end of 2001, about 150,000 officially registered internally displaced persons remained in Ingushetia, citing fears for their personal safety if they returned to Chechnya. According to a Council of Europe representative, conditions in the refugee camps had worsened over the year, with a shortage of clothing, food, and medicine.

Widespread corruption and economic devastation caused by the war severely limit equality of opportunity. Ransoms obtained from kidnapping, counterfeiting, and the production of low-quality fuel out of oil stolen from pipelines provide money for guerrillas and criminal elements. Residents of Russian-occupied areas report that many basic social and other services have not been restored.

While women continue to face discrimination in the traditional male-dominated culture, the war has resulted in many women becoming the primary breadwinners for their families. Russian soldiers reportedly rape Chechen women in areas controlled by the Russian military.

## Turkey

### Cyprus (T)

Polity: Presidential parliamentary democracy (Turkish-occupied)  
 Political Rights: 2  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free  
 Economy: Mixed capitalist  
 Population: 180,000  
 Ethnic Groups: Turkish Cypriot, Turkish, Greek Cypriot, Maronite



*Note: See Cyprus (Greek) under country reports*

### Overview:

The urgency of continuing United Nations-sponsored proximity talks between Greek Cypriot leader Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş increased in 2001 as Cyprus moved closer to joining the European Union (EU). Denktaş had withdrawn from a sixth round of talks in late 2000, but in December 2001 he was persuaded to launch a new peace process after the first direct talks between the leaders in more than four years were held.

Annexed to Britain in 1914, Cyprus gained independence in 1960 after a ten-year guerrilla campaign seeking Cyprus's union with Greece. In July 1974, Greek Cypriot national guard members, backed by the military junta in power in Greece, staged an unsuccessful coup aimed at unification. Turkey invaded five days later, seized 37 percent of the island, and expelled 200,000 Greek Cypriots from the north. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus declared its independence in 1982, but so far has been recognized only by Turkey, which maintains more than 35,000 troops in the territory and provides an estimated \$200 million in annual assistance. The Green Line, a buffer zone controlled by a 1,200-strong UN peacekeeping force, has partitioned Cyprus since 1974. The capital, Lefkosa (Nicosia), remains the world's only divided capital city, and tensions and intermittent violence between the two populations have plagued the island since independence.

Negotiations on the future of the island have stalled over issues of security, territory, property and compensation, and the distribution of power on the island. The Greek Cypriots favor a federation with local autonomy, free movement, and a strong central

government. Turkish Cypriots favor a confederation of two independent states, with shared bodies holding very limited powers. Instead of a central assembly, Turkish Cypriots propose a consultative council and joint overseas representation. Proximity talks broke down in 1997 when the EU announced its decision to open accession negotiations with Greek Cyprus. By the end of 1999, goodwill between Greece and Turkey in the aftermath of devastating earthquakes in both countries, and EU acceptance of Turkey as an official candidate for membership, brought the two sides back to the negotiating table. Talks stalled in late 2000 when Denktash insisted that northern Cyprus be recognized as a separate state and pulled out of UN-sponsored negotiations, but they were unexpectedly restarted in December 2001.

The north is far less prosperous than the south. An embargo by the Greek Cypriots significantly hampers the northern economy. Turkish Cypriots' standard of living is roughly a third that of Greek Cypriots, and the north is almost totally reliant on the Cypriot Republic for a free but insufficient power supply that suffers frequent outages, from 12 to 14 hours per day. However, a vibrant black market economy provides for a great deal of unaccounted-for wealth. In January 2001, Turkey agreed to provide the northern republic with a new loan of \$350 million.

The debate over the role of the Turkish army in the territory escalated during 2000 when Deputy Prime Minister Mustafa Akinci called for a constitutional amendment to make local police and firefighters accountable to the interior minister rather than the Turkish Cypriot armed forces, which are led by a Turkish general (the general responded by accusing Akinci of treason). In September, protesters denounced Denktash's "intransigence" over the division of Cyprus, and in October several thousand demonstrators rallied against a government spending package in a show of anger over economic dependence on Turkey. In late July 2001, some 6,000 people took to the streets, waving EU banners and chanting anti-Ankara and anti-Denktash slogans. Turkish Cypriots' increasing disapproval of their leader weakens his position in negotiations for a settlement in the divided island.

Nevertheless, Denktash retains a high degree of control over Cypriot politics as well as foreign policy, which includes the all-important negotiating process. In April 2000, he won a fourth elected five-year term as president when his closest challenger, Turkish Cypriot Prime Minister Dervis Eroglu, withdrew from the race before a runoff vote. Eroglu's coalition government fell apart in May 2001 after his center-right National Unity Party withdrew from a partnership with the liberal Communal Liberation Party (led by Akinci), reportedly as a result of differences over how to solve the Cyprus conflict as well as the role of Turkey in the island's affairs.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** Turkish Cypriots can change the government of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) democratically. The presidential-legislative system of government calls for the election of a leader and a national assembly at least every five years. Presidential elections have been considered generally free and fair by observers. The National Unity Party (UBP) took the most seats in the 50-member national assembly following the December 1998 general elections. At least six other parties participated in those elections, four of them winning seats. Some 1,000 Greek and Maronite residents in the north are disenfranchised in Turkish Cypriot elections, but many vote in Cypriot Republic elections.

The judiciary is independent, and trials generally meet international standards of fairness. Civilians suspected of violating military zones are tried in military courts, which respect due process but have been accused of pro-military bias. Turkish Cypriot police (who are under the control of the Turkish military) sometimes flout due process rights and abuse and intimidate detainees. Detainees are ordinarily held no longer than 24 hours without charge.

Private newspapers and periodicals offer a wide range of views, while at least 11 new private radio and four private television stations broadcast alongside government stations. International broadcasts are available without interference. The small left-wing newspaper *Avrupa* has faced judicial harassment unprecedented in the TRNC for its criticism of Denktash, his policy on the division of the island, and the Turkish military presence in the territory. In May 2000, hearings began before a criminal court on 75 lawsuits against the paper for "instigating hatred against the TRNC and the Turkish army." Four journalists from the paper were arrested in July for "espionage," and in May 2001, *Avrupa's* printing house was the target of a bomb attack. In November, the Union of Cyprus Journalists (based in the Greek half of the island) expressed support for the paper after its equipment and assets were seized by authorities on the pretext that it had not paid taxes.

Advocates for Greek Cypriots living in the northern city of Karpassia claim that these individuals are denied freedom of movement, free speech, property ownership, and access to Greek media. Outstanding property claims arising from the 1974 division and population exchange remain an obstacle to a final peace and demilitarization settlement on the island. Approximately 85 percent of the land in the north is claimed by its original Greek Cypriot owners. In May 2001, the European Court for Human Rights found Turkey guilty of widespread human rights abuses arising from its 1974 invasion of northern Cyprus, including violations of the right to life, liberty, security, and freedom of expression.

Turkish Cypriot authorities generally respect freedom of assembly and association, and there are numerous political parties, trade unions, and nongovernmental organizations. About 99 percent of Turkish Cypriots are Sunni Muslim. There is a small Baha'i community, and there are some 650 Greek Orthodox and Maronite residents in the north. All reportedly worship freely. Turkish Cypriots have difficulty traveling to other countries because travel documents issued by the TRNC are recognized only by Turkey. Some restrictions exist on travel to and from the south, but in May 2000 the Turkish Cypriot authorities eliminated the system of fees for crossing the buffer zone. Cypriots from both sides may freely visit religious sites in each other's territory.

Women are underrepresented in government and politics. A 1998 law grants Turkish Cypriot women who marry non-Muslim men a fair distribution of assets in case of divorce. Legal provisions that require equal pay for equal work are not respected in all sectors. Workers may form independent trade unions, bargain collectively, and strike.



## ↓ United Kingdom Northern Ireland

Polity: Parliamentary democracy (Protestant/Catholic power-sharing assembly) Political Rights: 2 Civil Liberties: 2 Status: Free

Economy: Mixed capitalist

Population: 1,700,000

Ethnic Groups: Irish, English, Scottish

Trend Arrow: Northern Ireland received a downward trend arrow because of increased sectarian violence, as well as the continued political stalemate regarding the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.



### Overview:

The peace process and the devolved government set out by the 1998 Good Friday Agreement remained on shaky ground throughout 2001, as disputes over arms decommissioning, British Army demilitarization, and policing continued. The failure of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to move on disarmament led to increasing unionist opposition to the power-sharing arrangement, even within the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) of First Minister David Trimble. Trimble resigned in July, triggering a protracted period of negotiations to salvage the peace process that ended only in October, when the IRA announced that it had come to an arrangement intended to put its weapons beyond use.

Northern Ireland comprises six of the nine counties of the Irish province of Ulster. At the insistence of the locally dominant Protestants, these counties remained part of the United Kingdom after the other 26, predominantly Catholic, Irish counties gained independence in 1921. Catholics now constitute a majority in four of the six counties. The demographic trends have aroused anxiety among Protestants, who are largely descended from seventeenth-century Scottish and English settlers. Britain's 1920 Government of Ireland Act set up the Northern Irish parliament, which functioned until the British imposed direct rule in 1972.

Disorder resulting from a nonviolent Catholic civil rights movement in the 1960s prompted the deployment of British troops that remain in the territory today. Amid sectarian violence beginning in the 1970s, divisions grew within both the primarily Protestant unionist and Catholic nationalist communities. The numerous political factions include the conservative UUP, the hardline Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), the interdenominational unionist Alliance Party, the moderate pro-nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and the nationalist Sinn Fein (the political wing of the IRA). Paramilitary groups on both the unionist and the nationalist sides have engaged in terrorism.

Negotiations for a peace settlement began in June 1996, and British general elections in May 1997 ushered in a Labour government with a mandate to bolster the peace process. The new prime minister, Tony Blair, immediately began to undertake confidence-building measures, such as reinstating official contacts between his government and Sinn Fein and repatriating republican prisoners from Northern Irish to Irish prisons. His efforts helped secure an IRA ceasefire, and Sinn Fein's participation in talks, in July 1997.

Intense determination by Blair and Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern kept negotiations on track despite a continuation of violence by paramilitary groups that had not declared ceasefires. U.S. President Bill Clinton sent his own envoy, former Senator George Mitchell, to chair negotiations. In April 1998, Mitchell presented a compromise plan that became the Good Friday Agreement. The agreement called for a 108-member, directly elected Northern Ireland Assembly with full executive and legislative authority; a north-south council of Northern Irish and Irish officials to develop consultation, cooperation, and action on matters of mutual interest; and a council of British, Irish, Northern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh representatives to discuss particular policy issues. Perhaps most significantly, the Good Friday Agreement recognizes the "principle of consent," that is, that a united Ireland will not come about without the consent of a majority of people in both jurisdictions.

Elections to the new assembly took place in June 1998. Of almost 300 candidates representing 12 political parties, pro-agreement moderates and nationalists were the big winners. The UUP took 28 seats, while the SDLP took 24 and Sinn Fein 18. Anti-agreement parties took 28 seats. The Alliance Party won 6 seats. At the first session of the new legislature, David Trimble of the UUP was elected first minister. Britain officially handed power to the assembly in December 1999.

Disputes over the decommissioning of IRA weapons have stalled progress on peace and cooperation since negotiations began. Under the Good Friday Agreement, Sinn Fein led other participants to believe that steps toward disarmament would occur by February 2000. Not only did the IRA fail to take those steps, but as many unionists pointed out, the IRA still had not explicitly and permanently renounced violence. The dispute led Britain to shut down the assembly and reassert control on February 11, 2000. In May, the IRA offered to open its arms dumps to independent inspection. Later that month, the IRA publicly stated its intention to put its arms "completely and verifiably beyond use." Home rule was then restored under a British-Irish agreement that extended the IRA's disarmament deadline to June 2001.

Increasing anti-agreement sentiment within the UUP created significant problems for David Trimble. During 2000, he faced five challenges to his leadership of the party, surviving as its leader by a narrow margin each time. However, each political fight left Trimble in a more precarious position. The British general election in June 2001 led to increased representation in parliament for hardline groups at the expense of moderates.

Frustrated with the continued lack of progress on disarmament in 2001 and under pressure from hardline unionists, Trimble resigned as first minister on July 1, triggering a six-week period at the end of which the assembly would face either collapse or suspension. Following this, the Ulster Freedom Fighters and Ulster Volunteer Force, two of Northern Ireland's main loyalist paramilitary groups, withdrew their support for the peace process. An update published in July by the de Chastelain commission, the international body charged with overseeing the disarmament process, stated that there had been no tangible signs of decommissioning by the IRA or the main loyalist paramilitary organizations.

The British and Irish governments led talks aimed at breaking the deadlock, but when the major parties failed to accept their proposals, the assembly was suspended briefly in August, and then again in September, to allow for further six-week periods of negotiation. A breakthrough was achieved in late October when the IRA announced that a scheme to decommission weapons had been partially implemented. In early

November, Trimble failed in a reelection bid after anti-agreement unionists voted against him, but his election was pushed through four days later with a bare majority of unionist support. SLDP leader Mark Durkan was elected as his deputy.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** The people of Northern Ireland elected a 108-member legislature in free and fair elections in June 1998. The assembly has full executive and legislative power, though Britain maintains responsibility for defense and security.

The Good Friday Agreement specifically addresses a number of human rights issues. It requires the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into Northern Irish law, so that aggrieved parties may take alleged violations of the convention to Northern Irish courts. In July, the European Court of Human Rights found the British government guilty of violating the human rights of ten IRA members shot dead by security forces in incidents that occurred between 1982 and 1992. The agreement also requires Britain to promote equality in employment, to preserve and promote the Irish language, to reduce British troop deployments to peacetime levels, to establish an independent commission on police reform, and to appoint a body to review the criminal justice system. These reforms proceeded, but according to rights monitors, have not yet gone far enough.

The British parliament passed the Police (Northern Ireland) Bill in November 2000. Based on a report by an independent commission on police reform led by former Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten, the law's most controversial provisions included changing the working title of the police force from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) to the more neutral Police Service of Northern Ireland, and changing the symbols used on police badges and uniforms. In August 2001, the British and Irish governments issued a revised implementation plan for the Patten Commission report, which, although agreed to by the SDLP, was not approved by Sinn Fein, who cited its failure to incorporate several key provisions of Patten's report, particularly increased accountability. In addition, the law aimed to create an equal ratio of Catholic and Protestant police officers, and to establish a 19-member policing board. In September 2001, the Northern Ireland Police Board was established with representation from all the major political parties except Sinn Fein, leading to concerns that Catholics with nationalist tendencies would be less likely to join the police service.

The Terrorism Act 2000 came into effect in February 2001. The law replaces emergency laws throughout the United Kingdom and extends, for up to five years, most of the emergency provisions already in force in Northern Ireland, including nonjury courts for terrorist offenses, a lower standard for the admissibility of confessions than in criminal courts, the interpretation of a suspect's silence as an admission of guilt, the imprisonment of suspected terrorists on the word of a senior police officer, and army and police powers of arrest, entry, search, and seizure without a warrant.

Sectarian violence by loyalist and republican paramilitary groups, which had largely abated after the Good Friday Agreement, made a comeback in 2001. Clashes broke out during the annual summer marching season, when Protestant parades celebrate historic military victories over Catholics. Rioting between crowds of nationalists and loyalists in northern Belfast, during which more than 100 petrol bombs were thrown at police, left 39 officers wounded in June; a similar serious riot took place in late September at which 33 officers were injured. Young girls at the Holy Cross elementary

school in the Ardoyne area of Belfast were targeted by local loyalist protestors, who shouted sectarian slurs and death threats, threw bottles, and lobbed blast bombs.

Britain has shut down 32 military posts in Northern Ireland and has withdrawn nearly 4,000 soldiers, leaving a current total of 13,000. In October, following the IRA's decision to put some of its weapons beyond use, the British government announced its intention to dismantle four of its security installations.

A new inquiry into the killing by British soldiers of 14 unarmed civil rights marchers in Londonderry on January 30, 1972 (Bloody Sunday), opened in March 2000; a previous tribunal was discredited after finding the army not liable. Also, the investigation continues into the August 1998 bombing in Omagh that killed 29 people and injured hundreds. Human rights groups, as well as the British and Irish governments, have called for inquiries into the murders of defense lawyer Patrick Finucane in 1989 and of human rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson in 1999. In December, William Stobie, a key witness concerning allegations of official collusion in the Finucane case, was murdered by armed gunmen in Belfast.

Antiterror legislation may restrict the right of assembly, association, or freedom of expression, but it is not generally used to do so, and Northern Ireland enjoys a vibrant civil society. According to Human Rights Watch, press outlets continued to face some difficulty in reporting on the Force Research Unit, a unit within British Army intelligence alleged to be responsible for a number of killings through its network of agents in various paramilitary groups. In October, investigative journalist Martin O'Hagan was shot dead outside his home by unknown gunmen. The Red Hand Defenders, a Protestant paramilitary group, later took responsibility for the murder.

Women are well represented in the workplace and the professions, although domestic violence is considered to be a problem. Workers may bargain collectively and strike, and there are at least 33 trade unions in the territory.

The findings of a comprehensive study into racial prejudice in Northern Ireland were released in April 2000. The study determined that racism is now twice as common as sectarianism, and that hostility is mainly directed at the traditional Irish nomadic Traveller community. In a University of Ulster survey of parents and children from racial minorities in schools, 66 percent of those interviewed reported racist name-calling and 13 percent reported physical harassment. A rising number of attacks on homosexuals had led the RUC to announce in July 2000 the implementation of a monitoring system for homophobic incidents.

# United States

## Puerto Rico



Polity: Parliamentary with elected governor  
 Economy: Capitalist  
 Population: 3,900,000  
 Ethnic Groups: White, mostly Spanish origin (80 percent), black (8 percent), other, including Indian and mixed (2 percent)

Political Rights: 1  
 Civil Liberties: 2  
 Status: Free

### Overview:

The year was marked by continuing controversy over the status of the small island of Vieques. For several years, some leading Puerto Rican political figures, supported by civil rights leaders and political officeholders in the United States, have raised protests over the U.S. Navy's use of the island as a bombing range. A number of protestors were arrested and given jail sentences for participating in demonstrations during naval exercises on the bombing site during the past summer. The protest campaign, however, died down after the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11.

Puerto Rico acquired the status of a commonwealth of the United States following approval by plebiscite in 1952. Under its terms, Puerto Rico exercises approximately the same control over its internal affairs as do the 50 U.S. states. Though U.S. citizens, residents cannot vote in presidential elections and are represented in the U.S. Congress by a delegate to the House of Representatives who can vote in committee but not on the floor. The commonwealth constitution, modeled after that of the U.S., provides for a governor and a bicameral legislature, consisting of a 28-member senate and a 54-member house of representatives, elected for four years. A supreme court heads an independent judiciary, and the legal system is based on U.S. law.

The controversy over Vieques was triggered in 1999, when a Puerto Rican civilian was killed accidentally during a bombing exercise. The incident ignited protests by Puerto Ricans and stimulated a debate over American policy towards Puerto Rico. Protests continued during 1999 and into 2001. Puerto Rico's governor, Sila Maria Calderon, a member of the pro-commonwealth Popular Democratic Party, sided with the protestors and urged a speedy shutdown of the bombing range and a handover of the territory involved to Puerto Rico. Calderon sponsored a referendum in 2001 in which voters opted strongly for the return of Vieques to Puerto Rican control. A referendum scheduled by the U.S. Navy for November was canceled in the wake of the terror attacks. At year's end, Calderon indicated that President George W. Bush had pledged to abandon the military use of Vieques in 2003.

Calderon was elected governor in 2000, winning 48.5 percent of the vote against 45.7 percent for her main rival, Carlos Pesquera of the pro-statehood New Progressive Party (NPP).

The island's relationship with the U.S. remains a fundamental issue. In a nonbinding 1993 referendum, voters narrowly opted to retain commonwealth status. Commonwealth status received 48.4 percent of the vote, statehood 46.3 percent, and independence 4.4 percent. The vote indicated significant gains for statehood, which in the last

referendum, in 1967, received only 39 percent of the vote. Voters also opted for the status quo in a 1998 referendum. Although many more voters chose statehood over independence, the percentage who voted for no change in the island's status was greater than it had been in the 1993 referendum. In one of his last acts as president, Bill Clinton created a task force to study whether Puerto Rico should retain its current status, or become a state or an independent country. Any vote to change the island's status would have to be approved by the U.S. Congress. As Washington seeks to cut the federal deficit, the benefits the island receives under Section 936 of the Internal Revenue Code will be phased out over the next ten years. This fundamental change in U.S.-Puerto Rican economic relations would mean the eventual end to a system in which subsidiaries of U.S. companies operating on the island receive income tax and wage credits. The tax-free status of interest earned on income would also be eliminated.

Calderon was elected on a platform that stressed anticorruption themes. A leading NPP senator, Edison Mislá Aldarondo, was arrested for influence peddling and investigations were initiated into corruption cases that involved several other major political figures from both major parties.

**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** As U.S. citizens, Puerto Ricans are guaranteed all civil liberties granted in the United States. The press and broadcast media are well developed, highly varied, and critical. In recent years, the Puerto Rican Journalists' Association has charged successive governments with denying complete access to official information. A recent controversy involved an effort to adopt a proposed Freedom of Information Act for the island. Press freedom organizations have expressed skepticism about the proposed law, contending that such measures often do more harm than good and urging instead strict adherence to the basic right of freedom of speech.

The greatest cause for concern is the steep rise in criminal violence in recent years, much of which is drug related. Puerto Rico is now the Caribbean's main drug transshipment point. Since mid-1993, about 80 public housing projects, or about two-fifths of the total, have been under the control of the National Guard, the first time U.S. military units have been routinely deployed to fight crime.

Puerto Rico is predominantly Roman Catholic. Freedom of religion is guaranteed, and a substantial number of Evangelical churches have been established on the island in recent years. Laws have been adopted calling for equal rights for women in education, at the work place, and in other aspects of society. Women's rights organizations, however, claim that women are still subject to widespread discrimination.

## ↑ Yugoslavia

### Kosovo

Polity: International protectorate  
 Economy: Mixed-statist (transitional)

Political Rights: 6  
 Civil Liberties: 6  
 Status: Not Free

Population: 2,000,000 (est.)  
 Ethnic Groups: Albanians (90 percent), other, including Serb, Croat, Montenegrin (10 percent)  
 Capital: Pristina



**Trend Arrow:** Kosovo received an upward trend arrow due to elections held in November for a provincial assembly that were held in relative peace, and because of a noticeable drop in terror attacks against ethnic minorities after September 11.

#### Overview:

Kosovo's first post-1999 elections for a provincial assembly were held in relatively peaceful circumstances in November 2001, raising hopes that a degree of normalcy was returning to the province. Importantly, the Serb minority agreed to participate in the elections, raising more hopes that a meaningful degree of interethnic cooperation could begin. Nevertheless, numerous attacks on ethnic minorities during the year again showed that postwar Kosovo was far from conflict-free.

Control over the Yugoslav province of Kosovo has been a source of conflict between Albanians and Serbs in the Balkans for most of the twentieth century. The current round of troubles began in the 1980s, particularly after former Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic came to power and began to revoke much of Kosovo's autonomy. For most of the 1990s, an uneasy but generally nonviolent status quo was maintained between the Yugoslavian government and the Kosovo Albanians, who, under the leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, developed an entire parallel society in Kosovo, replete with quasi-governmental institutions, hospitals, and school systems.

In late 1997, a guerrilla movement called the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began a series of attacks on Serbian police forces, government officials, and Serbian refugees in the province, provoking harsh reprisals from Yugoslav governmental forces. In March 1999, NATO launched a 78-day air campaign against Yugoslavia to force it to relinquish control over the province.

Under the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1244 of June 1999, Yugoslav forces withdrew from the province, and a NATO-led peacekeeping force (KFOR) assumed responsibility for security in Kosovo. UNSCR 1244 turned Kosovo into a protectorate of the international community, while officially maintaining Yugoslav sovereignty over the province.

Since international forces moved into Kosovo in mid-1999, a campaign of reverse ethnic cleansing has been taking place. More than 250,000 Serbs, Roma (Gypsies), Bosniacs, Croats, Turks, and Jews have been forced to flee the province. Most of the non-Albanian population remaining in Kosovo live in small clusters of villages or in urban ghettos under round-the-clock KFOR protection. The largest Serb population left in Kosovo is concentrated in a triangle-shaped piece of territory north of the Ibar River.

In May, after months of difficult negotiations, international officials and local Albanian politicians (albeit not representatives of the Serbian population, who boycotted the proceedings) produced the "Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government" for Kosovo. The agreement created a 120-member assembly for the province, in which delegates would be proportionally elected. The assembly would in turn elect a president of Kosovo, who would be responsible for nominating a prime minister. The Constitutional Framework is considered a first step in allowing a measure of self-government in Kosovo, although the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) retains responsibility for the administration of justice and law enforcement, and KFOR remains in charge of overall security. The head of UNMIK (formally, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General) also retains the power to veto any decisions of the provincial assembly considered to be at odds with UNSCR 1244. The Constitutional Framework also avoided creating a constitutional court for Kosovo and, importantly, provided no provision for a potential referendum on independence, dashing Albanian hopes for giving the provincial assembly the power to weigh in on Kosovo's final status.

The Constitutional Framework also left UNMIK in charge of the increasingly controversial Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), the successor to the KLA intended to serve as a national guard for Kosovo. Many leading members of the KPC were, during the course of the year, involved in the fighting in neighboring Macedonia, leading U.S. President George Bush in June to sign an executive order declaring that those individuals were engaging "in actions that constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States." Throughout the year, Macedonian officials repeatedly charged that Albanian insurgents in Macedonia were using NATO-occupied Kosovo as their staging ground. Similarly, Yugoslav officials criticized NATO for failing to prevent Albanians from crossing the border into Serbia proper to participate in the incipient rebellion in the Presevo Valley.

Kosovo's elections for a provincial assembly, held on November 17, were contested by 26 political parties. Rugova's Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), considered relatively moderate by international officials, won a plurality in the elections, gaining some 45.7 percent of the votes cast; former KLA leader Hashim Thaci's Democratic Party of Kosovo came in second with 25.7 percent; and the mainly Serb Return Coalition won 11.3 percent. The elections brought out more than 64 percent of eligible voters.

Despite the fact that the elections went off relatively peacefully, there is uncertainty about how the new provincial assembly will function. There are still considerable concerns about guaranteeing the safety of non-Albanian delegates who have to participate in the assembly's work. Although there appears to have been a noticeable drop in the number of terror attacks on the non-Albanian population in Kosovo after the September 11 attacks in the United States (out of the fear on the part of Kosovo Albanian leaders that continuing terror against civilians could hurt their cause), ethnic minorities in the province still have to live under 24-hour KFOR protection. Among the worst acts of violence during the year was the February 16 bombing of a bus carrying Serb civilians in which 11 people were killed and more than 40 injured.

The overall failure of the international community to create a secure environment in the province has made Kosovo a European hub for Albanian organized-crime syndicates trafficking in women from the former Soviet Union, narcotics, illegal aliens, and stolen cars.



**Political Rights and Civil Liberties:** According to UNSCR 1244, ultimate authority within Kosovo resides with the UN Special Representative in the province, who is appointed by the UN secretary-general. UNMIK is responsible for implementing civilian aspects of the agreement ending the war.

Freedom of expression is limited because of the overall lack of security in the province. Journalists report frequent harassment and intimidation. In August, a journalist from a newspaper sympathetic to LDK leader Ibrahim Rugova was assassinated in a drive-by shooting.

The Albanian population in Kosovo on the whole enjoys freedom of belief and religious association. Throughout the year, however, there were frequent attacks on Orthodox churches and other holy sites associated with the Serb population. Since NATO took control of Kosovo, more than 100 churches and other properties belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church have been destroyed or damaged.

Freedom of movement continues to be a significant problem in Kosovo for ethnic minorities, who face frequent attacks from the majority Albanian population once they leave their NATO-protected enclaves. Ethnic minorities living in these enclaves also suffer from lack of access to health and social services, schools, and employment opportunities.

Kosovo lacks a functioning criminal justice system. International agencies report that ethnic-Albanian judges are unwilling to prosecute cases involving Albanian attacks on non-Albanians, and the physical safety of non-Albanian judges cannot be guaranteed. By mid-2000, for example, more than 500 murders in Kosovo had not resulted in a single conviction. UNMIK has brought international judges into the province, but this is only considered a temporary measure. Criminal suspects who have been arrested according to the Special Representative's power to order executive detentions are frequently released on the orders of local judges. Several leading members of the formally disbanded KLA are under investigation for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for actions committed before, during, and after the NATO intervention. During the course of 2001, KFOR also frequently engaged in military detention of Albanians caught crossing the Kosovo-Macedonia border or the Kosovo-Serbia border near the Presevo Valley.

Gender equality continues to be a serious problem in Kosovo Albanian society. Patriarchal societal attitudes often limit a woman's ability to gain an education or to choose the marriage partner of her choice.

# Survey Methodology— 2001-2002

Since its inception in the 1970s, Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* survey has provided an annual evaluation of political rights and civil liberties throughout the world. The survey attempts to judge all countries and territories by a single standard, emphasizing the importance of democracy and freedom. At a minimum, a democracy is a political system in which the people choose their authoritative leaders freely from among competing groups and individuals who are not designated by the government. Freedom is the opportunity to act spontaneously in a variety of fields outside the control of the government and other centers of potential domination.

The survey rates countries and territories based on real-world situations caused by state and nongovernmental factors, rather than on governmental intentions or legislation alone. Freedom House does not rate governments per se, but rather the rights and freedoms enjoyed by individuals in each country or territory. The survey team does not base its judgment solely on the political conditions in a country or territory (e.g., war, terrorism), but by the effect that these conditions have on freedom.

Freedom House does not maintain a culture-bound view of democracy. The survey demonstrates that there are free states with varying forms of democracy functioning among people of all races and religions. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of democracies in developing countries, and the survey reflects their growing numbers. To reach its conclusions, the survey team employs a broad range of sources of information, including foreign and domestic news reports, nongovernmental organization publications, think tank and academic analyses, and individual professional contacts.

## DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIES OF THE SURVEY

The survey's concept of freedom encompasses two general sets of characteristics, grouped as political rights and civil liberties. In a free society, political rights enable people to participate freely in the political process, including enjoying the right to vote and compete for public office and to elect representatives who have a decisive vote on public policies. Civil liberties include the freedom to develop views, institutions, and personal autonomy without interference from the state.

The survey assigns each country or territory under consideration two numerical ratings, one for political rights and one for civil liberties. These two ratings are then averaged to determine an overall status of "Free," "Partly Free," or "Not Free." (See the following section, Rating System for Political Rights and Civil Liberties, for a detailed description of the survey's methodology.)

Freedom House rates both independent countries and select territories. For the purposes of the survey, countries are defined as internationally recognized independent states whose governments reside within their officially claimed borders. In the case of Cyprus, two sets of ratings are provided, as there are two governments on that

divided island. However, this does not imply that Freedom House endorses Cypriot division. We note only that neither the predominantly Greek Republic of Cyprus, nor the Turkish-occupied, predominantly Turkish territory of the Republic of Northern Cyprus, is the de facto government for the entire island.

Freedom House divides territories into two categories: related territories and disputed territories. Related territories consist mostly of colonies, protectorates, and island dependencies of sovereign states that are in some relation of dependency to that state and whose relationship is not currently in serious legal or political dispute. Puerto Rico and Hong Kong are examples of related territories. Disputed territories are areas within internationally recognized sovereign states whose status is in serious political or violent dispute and that often are dominated by a minority ethnic group. This group also includes territories whose incorporation into nation-states is not universally recognized. In some cases, the issue of dispute is the desire of the majority of the population of that territory to secede from the sovereign state and either form an independent country or become part of a neighboring state. Tibet, Kashmir, and Abkhazia are examples of disputed territories. Beginning with the 2000-2001 survey, only those 17 territories about which reports have been written have been assigned ratings or a status designation.

The survey assigns the designation "electoral democracy" to those countries that have met minimum standards for free and fair elections as judged by various international election observers. Among the basic criteria are that voters should have access to information about candidates and their platforms, that they should be able to vote without undue pressure from the authorities, and that candidates should be able to campaign free from intimidation. The presence of certain irregularities during the electoral process does not automatically disqualify a country from being designated an electoral democracy. All Free countries rated in the survey would qualify as electoral democracies, as would some Partly Free countries.

#### **RATING SYSTEM FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES**

The survey rates political rights and civil liberties separately on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the most free and 7 the least free. A country or territory is assigned a particular rating on the basis of the individual survey author's responses to a series of checklist questions and the judgments of the survey team at Freedom House. The authors assign initial ratings to countries or territories by awarding from 0 to 4 raw points per checklist item, depending on the comparative rights or liberties present. (In the surveys completed from 1989-1990 through 1992-1993, the methodology allowed for a less nuanced range of 0 to 2 raw points per question.) The only exception to the addition of 0 to 4 raw points per checklist item is Additional Discretionary Question B in the Political Rights Checklist, for which 1 to 4 raw points are subtracted depending on the severity of the situation. The highest possible score for political rights is 32 points, the total of up to 4 points for each of 8 questions. The highest possible score for civil liberties is 56 points, the total of up to 4 points for each of 14 questions. After the countries and territories have been assigned political rights and civil liberties ratings based on the total number of raw points in each of the two categories, the survey team makes minor adjustments to account for factors such as extreme violence, the intensity of which may not be reflected in answers to the checklist questions.

Almost without exception, countries and territories have ratings in political rights

and civil liberties that are within two ratings numbers of each other. Without a well-developed civil society, it is difficult, if not impossible, to have an atmosphere supportive of democracy. A society that does not enjoy free individual and group expression in nonpolitical matters is not likely to make an exception for political ones. Consequently, there is no country in the survey with a rating of 6 or 7 for civil liberties and, at the same time, a rating of 1 or 2 for political rights.

A change in a country's political rights or civil liberties situation since the previous survey may be indicated by a political rights or civil liberties ratings change (depending on the total raw points), and possibly a status change. Freedom House also assigns upward or downward trend arrows to countries and territories to indicate general positive or negative trends since the previous survey that are not necessarily reflected in the raw points and do not warrant a ratings change. A country cannot receive both a numerical ratings change and a trend arrow in the same year, nor can it receive trend arrows in the same direction in two successive years.

**POLITICAL RIGHTS CHECKLIST**

1. Is the head of state and/or head of government or other chief authority elected through free and fair elections?

<b>Political Rights Category Number</b>	<b>Raw Points</b>
1	28-32
2	23-27
3	19-22
4	14-18
5	10-13
6	5-9
7	0-4

2. Are the legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

3. Are there fair electoral laws, equal campaigning opportunities, fair polling, and honest tabulation of ballots?

4. Are the voters able to endow their freely elected representatives with real power?

5. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

6. Are there a significant opposition vote, de facto opposition power, and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

7. Are the people free from domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian

parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group?

8. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, and other minority groups have reasonable self-determination, self-government, autonomy, or participation through informal consensus in the decision-making process?

**Additional Discretionary Political Rights Questions:**

A. For traditional monarchies that have no parties or electoral process, does the system provide for consultation with the people, encourage discussion of policy, and allow the right to petition the ruler?

<b>Civil Liberties Category Number</b>	<b>Raw Points</b>
1	50-56
2	42-49
3	34-41
4	26-33
5	17-25
6	9-16
7	0-8

B. Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

To answer the political rights questions, Freedom House considers to what extent the system offers voters the opportunity to choose freely from among candidates, and to what extent the candidates are chosen independently of the state. However, formal electoral procedures are not the only factors that determine the real distribution of power. In many countries, the military retains a significant political role, while in others, the king maintains considerable power over the elected politicians. The more that people suffer under such domination by unelected forces, the less chance the country has of receiving credit for self-determination in the survey.

#### CIVIL LIBERTIES CHECKLIST

##### A. Freedom of Expression and Belief

1. Are there free and independent media and other forms of cultural expression? (Note: In cases where the media are state controlled but offer pluralistic points of view, the survey gives the system credit.)
2. Are there free religious institutions, and is there free private and public religious expression?

##### B. Association and Organizational Rights

1. Is there freedom of assembly, demonstration, and open public discussion?
2. Is there freedom of political or quasi-political organization? (Note: This includes political parties, civic organizations, ad hoc issue groups, etc.)
3. Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or equivalents, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?

##### C. Rule of Law and Human Rights

1. Is there an independent judiciary?
2. Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters? Is the population treated equally under the law? Are police under direct civilian control?
3. Is there protection from political terror, unjustified imprisonment, exile, or torture, whether by groups that support or oppose the system? Is there freedom from war and insurgencies? (Note: Freedom from war and insurgencies enhances the liberties in a free society, but the absence of wars and insurgencies does not in and of itself make a Not Free society Free.)
4. Is there freedom from extreme government indifference and corruption?

##### D. Personal Autonomy and Economic Rights

1. Is there open and free private discussion?
2. Is there personal autonomy? Does the state control travel, choice of residence, or choice of employment? Is there freedom from indoctrination and excessive dependency on the state?
3. Are property rights secure? Do citizens have the right to establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces, or organized crime?

4. Are there personal social freedoms, including gender equality, choice of marriage partners, and size of family?
5. Is there equality of opportunity, including freedom from exploitation by or dependency on landlords, employers, union leaders, bureaucrats, or other types of obstacles to a share of legitimate economic gains?

When analyzing the civil liberties checklist, Freedom House does not mistake constitutional guarantees of human rights for those rights in practice. For states and territories with small populations, particularly tiny island nations, the absence of trade unions and other forms of association is not necessarily viewed as a negative situation unless the government or other centers of domination are deliberately blocking their establishment or operation. In some cases, the small size of these countries and territories may result in a lack of sufficient institutional complexity to allow for full comparison with larger countries. Question D5, on equality of opportunity, implies a free choice of employment and education. Extreme inequality of opportunity prevents disadvantaged individuals from enjoying full exercise of civil liberties. Typically, very poor countries and territories lack both opportunities for economic advancement and other liberties included on this checklist. Question C4, on extreme government indifference and corruption, highlights the fact that the human rights of a country's residents suffer when governments ignore the social and economic welfare of large sectors of the population. Government corruption can pervert the political process and hamper the development of a free economy.

#### EXPLANATION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES RATINGS

##### Political Rights

Countries and territories that receive a rating of 1 for political rights come closest to the ideals suggested by the checklist questions, beginning with free and fair elections. Those who are elected rule, there are competitive parties or other political groupings, and the opposition plays an important role and has actual power. Citizens enjoy self-determination or an extremely high degree of autonomy (in the case of territories), and minority groups have reasonable self-government or can participate in the government through informal consensus. With the exception of such entities as tiny island states, these countries and territories have decentralized political power and free subnational elections.

Countries and territories rated 2 in political rights are less free than those rated 1. Such factors as gross political corruption, violence, political discrimination against minorities, and foreign or military influence on politics may be present and weaken the quality of democracy.

The same conditions that undermine freedom in countries and territories with a rating of 2 may also weaken political rights in those with a rating of 3, 4, or 5. Other damaging elements can include civil war, heavy military involvement in politics, lingering royal power, unfair elections, or one-party dominance. However, states and territories in these categories may still enjoy some elements of political rights, including the freedom to organize quasi-political groups, reasonably free referenda, or other significant means of popular influence on government.

Countries and territories with political rights rated 6 have systems ruled by military juntas, one-party dictatorships, religious hierarchies, or autocrats. These regimes may allow only a minimal manifestation of political rights, such as competitive local elec-

tions or some degree of representation or autonomy for minorities. Some countries and territories rated 6 are in the early or aborted stages of democratic transition. A few states are traditional monarchies that mitigate their relative lack of political rights through the use of consultation with their subjects, toleration of political discussion, and acceptance of public petitions.

For countries and territories with a rating of 7, political rights are absent or virtually nonexistent as a result of the extremely oppressive nature of the regime or severe oppression in combination with civil war. States and territories in this group may also be marked by extreme violence or warlord rule that dominates political power in the absence of an authoritative, functioning central government.

### Civil Liberties

Countries and territories that receive a rating of 1 come closest to the ideals expressed in the civil liberties checklist, including freedom of expression, assembly, association, and religion. They are distinguished by an established and generally equitable system of rule of law and are comparatively free of extreme government indifference or corruption. Countries and territories with this rating enjoy free economic activity and tend to strive for equality of opportunity.

States and territories with a rating of 2 have deficiencies in three or four aspects of civil liberties, but are still relatively free.

Countries and territories that have received a rating of 3, 4, or 5 range from those that are in at least partial compliance with virtually all checklist standards to those with a combination of high or medium scores for some questions and low or very low scores on other questions. The level of oppression increases at each successive rating level, particularly in the areas of censorship, political terror, and the prevention of free association. There are also many cases in which groups opposed to the state engage in political terror that undermines other freedoms. Therefore, a poor rating for a country is not necessarily a comment on the intentions of the government, but may reflect real restrictions on liberty caused by nongovernmental terror.

Countries and territories rated 6 are characterized by a few partial rights, such as some religious and social freedoms, some highly restricted private business activity, and relatively free private discussion. In general, people in these states and territories experience severely restricted rights of expression and association, and there are almost always political prisoners and other manifestations of political terror.

States and territories with a rating of 7 have virtually no freedom. An overwhelming and justified fear of repression characterizes these societies.

### EXPLANATION OF FREE, PARTLY FREE, AND NOT FREE

The survey assigns each country and territory the status of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free by averaging their political rights and civil liberties ratings. Those whose ratings average 1 to 2.5 are considered Free, 3 to 5.5 Partly Free, and 5.5 to 7 Not Free. The dividing line between Partly Free and Not Free falls at 5.5. For example, countries that receive a rating of 6 for political rights and 5 for civil liberties, or a 5 for political rights and a 6 for civil liberties, could be either Partly Free or Not Free. The total number of raw points is the definitive factor that determines the final status. Countries and territories with combined raw scores of 0 to 30 points are Not Free, 31 to 59 points are Partly Free, and 60 to 88 are Free.

The designations of Free, Partly Free, and Not Free each cover a broad third of the available raw points. Therefore, countries and territories within any one category, especially those at either end of the category, can have quite different human rights situations. In order to see the distinctions within each category, one should examine a country or territory's political rights and civil liberties ratings.

The differences in raw points between countries in the three broad categories represent distinctions in the real world. There are obstacles that Partly Free countries must overcome before they can be considered Free, just as there are impediments that prevent Not Free countries from being considered Partly Free. Countries at the lowest rung of the Free category (2 in political rights and 3 in civil liberties, or 3 in political rights and 2 in civil liberties) differ from those at the upper end of the Partly Free group (e.g., 3 for both political rights and civil liberties). Typically, there is more violence and/or military influence on politics at 3, 3 than at 2, 3.

The distinction between the least repressive Not Free countries and the worst Partly Free may be less obvious than the gap between Partly Free and Free, but at Partly Free, there is at least one additional factor that keeps a country from being assigned to the Not Free category. For example, Lebanon, which was rated 6, 5 Partly Free in 1994, was rated 6, 5, but Not Free, in 1995 after its legislature unilaterally extended the incumbent president's term indefinitely. Though this was not sufficient to drop the country's political rights rating to 7, there was enough of a drop in raw points to change its category.

Freedom House does not view democracy as a static concept, and the survey recognizes that not every democratic country necessarily belongs in our category of Free states. A democracy can lose freedom and become merely Partly Free. Sri Lanka and Colombia are recent examples of such Partly Free democracies. In other cases, countries that replaced military regimes with elected governments can have less than complete transitions to liberal democracy. Guatemala fits the description of this kind of Partly Free democracy. Some scholars use the term "semi-democracy" or "formal democracy," instead of Partly Free democracy, to refer to countries that are democratic in form but less than free in substance.

The designation Free does not mean that a country enjoys perfect freedom or lacks serious problems. As an institution that advocates human rights, Freedom House remains concerned about a variety of social problems and civil liberties questions in the United States and other countries that the survey places in the Free category. An improvement in a country's rating does not mean that human rights campaigns should cease. On the contrary, the findings of the survey should be regarded as a means of encouraging improvements in the political rights and civil liberties conditions in all countries.



# Tables and Ratings

## Table of Independent Countries

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating	Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating
↑ Afghanistan	7	7	Not Free	Dominica	1	1	Free
Albania	3▲	4▲	Partly Free	↓ Dominican Republic	2	2	Free
Algeria	6	5	Not Free	East Timor	5▲	3	Partly Free
Andorra	1	1	Free	↓ Ecuador	3	3	Partly Free
Angola	6	6	Not Free	Egypt	6	6▼	Not Free
↑ Antigua and Barbuda	4	2	Partly Free	El Salvador	2	3	Free
Argentina	3▼	3▼	Partly Free	Equatorial Guinea	6▲	6▲	Not Free
Armenia	4	4	Partly Free	Eritrea	7	6▼	Not Free
Australia	1	1	Free	Estonia	1	2	Free
Austria	1	1	Free	↓ Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free
↓ Azerbaijan	6	5	Partly Free	Fiji	4▲	3	Partly Free
Bahamas	1	1	Free	Finland	1	1	Free
Bahrain	6▲	5▲	Not Free	France	1	2	Free
Bangladesh	3	4	Partly Free	Gabon	5	4	Partly Free
Barbados	1	1	Free	The Gambia	5▲	5	Partly Free
↓ Belarus	6	6	Not Free	Georgia	4	4	Partly Free
Belgium	1	2	Free	Germany	1	2	Free
Belize	1	2▼	Free	↑ Ghana	2	3	Free
Benin	3▼	2	Free	Greece	1	3	Free
Bhutan	7	6	Not Free	Grenada	1	2	Free
Bolivia	1	3	Free	↓ Guatemala	3	4	Partly Free
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5	4	Partly Free	Guinea	6	5	Not Free
↓ Botswana	2	2	Free	↓ Guinea-Bissau	4	5	Partly Free
↓ Brazil	3	3	Partly Free	Guyana	2	2	Free
Brunei	7	5	Not Free	Haiti	6	6▼	Not Free
Bulgaria	1▲	3	Free	↓ Honduras	3	3	Partly Free
Burkina Faso	4	4	Partly Free	Hungary	1	2	Free
Burma	7	7	Not Free	Iceland	1	1	Free
↑ Burundi	6	6	Not Free	India	2	3	Free
Cambodia	6	5▲	Not Free	Indonesia	3	4	Partly Free
Cameroon	6▲	6	Not Free	Iran	6	6	Not Free
Canada	1	1	Free	Iraq	7	7	Not Free
Cape Verde	1	2	Free	Ireland	1	1	Free
Central African Republic	5▼	5▼	Partly Free	Israel	1	3	Free
Chad	6	5	Not Free	Italy	1	2	Free
Chile	2	2	Free	Jamaica	2	3▼	Free
China (P.R.C.)	7	6	Not Free	Japan	1	2	Free
↓ Colombia	4	4	Partly Free	Jordan	5▼	5▼	Partly Free
Comoros	6	4	Partly Free	Kazakhstan	6	5	Not Free
Congo(Brazzaville)	5▲	4	Partly Free	Kenya	6	5	Not Free
Congo(Kinshasa)	6▲	6	Not Free	Kiribati	1	1	Free
Costa Rica	1	2	Free	Korea, North	7	7	Not Free
Côte d'Ivoire	5▲	4▲	Partly Free	Korea, South	2	2	Free
Croatia	2	2▲	Free	Kuwait	4	5	Partly Free
Cuba	7	7	Not Free	Kyrgyz Republic	6	5	Not Free
Cyprus (G)	1	1	Free	Laos	7	6	Not Free
Czech Republic	1	2	Free	Latvia	1	2	Free
Denmark	1	1	Free	Lebanon	6	5	Not Free
↑ Djibouti	4	5	Partly Free	↑ Lesotho	4	4	Partly Free
				Liberia	6▼	6	Not Free

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating	Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating
Libya	7	7	Not Free	↓ Seychelles	3	3	Partly Free
Liechtenstein	1	1	Free	↑ Sierra Leone	4	5	Partly Free
Lithuania	1	2	Free	Singapore	5	5	Partly Free
Luxembourg	1	1	Free	Slovakia	1	2	Free
Macedonia	4	4▼	Partly Free	Slovenia	1	2	Free
Madagascar	2	4	Partly Free	Solomon Islands	4	4	Partly Free
Malawi	4▼	3	Partly Free	Somalia	6	7	Not Free
Malaysia	5	5	Partly Free	South Africa	1	2	Free
Maldives	6	5	Not Free	Spain	1	2	Free
Mali	2	3	Free	Sri Lanka	3	4	Partly Free
Malta	1	1	Free	Sudan	7	7	Not Free
Marshall Islands	1	1	Free	Suriname	1	2	Free
Mauritania	5▲	5	Partly Free	Swaziland	6	5	Not Free
Mauritius	1	2	Free	Sweden	1	1	Free
↑ Mexico	2	3	Free	Switzerland	1	1	Free
Micronesia	1	2	Free	Syria	7	7	Not Free
Moldova	2	4	Partly Free	Taiwan (Rep. of China)	1	2	Free
Monaco	2	1	Free	Tajikistan	6	6	Not Free
Mongolia	2	3	Free	↑ Tanzania	4	4	Partly Free
Morocco	5	5▼	Partly Free	Thailand	2	3	Free
Mozambique	3	4	Partly Free	Togo	5	5	Partly Free
↓ Namibia	2	3	Free	Tonga	5	3	Partly Free
Nauru	1	3	Free	Trinidad and Tobago	3▼	3▼	Partly Free
↓ Nepal	3	4	Partly Free	↓ Tunisia	6	5	Not Free
Netherlands	1	1	Free	↑ Turkey	4	5	Partly Free
New Zealand	1	1	Free	Turkmenistan	7	7	Not Free
Nicaragua	3	3	Partly Free	Tuvalu	1	1	Free
↑ Niger	4	4	Partly Free	Uganda	6	5	Partly Free
Nigeria	4	5▼	Partly Free	↓ Ukraine	4	4	Partly Free
Norway	1	1	Free	United Arab Emirates	6	5	Not Free
Oman	6	5	Not Free	United Kingdom*	1	2	Free
Pakistan	6	5	Not Free	↓ United States	1	1	Free
Palau	1	2	Free	Uruguay	1	1	Free
Panama	1	2	Free	Uzbekistan	7	6	Not Free
Papua New Guinea	2	3	Free	Vanuatu	1	3	Free
Paraguay	4	3	Partly Free	↓ Venezuela	3	5	Partly Free
Peru	1▲	3	Free	Vietnam	7	6	Not Free
Philippines	2	3	Free	Yemen	6▼	6	Not Free
Poland	1	2	Free	Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)	3▲	3▲	Partly Free
Portugal	1	1	Free	Zambia	5	4	Partly Free
Qatar	6	6	Not Free	Zimbabwe	6	6▼	Not Free
Romania	2	2	Free				
Russia	5	5	Partly Free				
Rwanda	7	6	Not Free				
St. Kitts and Nevis	1	2	Free				
St. Lucia	1	2	Free				
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	2	1	Free				
Samoa	2	2	Free				
San Marino	1	1	Free				
Sao Tome and Principe	1	2	Free				
Saudi Arabia	7	7	Not Free				
↑ Senegal	3	4	Partly Free				

PR and CL stand for Political Rights and Civil Liberties. 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free category.

↑ ↓ up or down indicates a general trend in freedom.

▲ ▼ up or down indicates a change in Political Rights or Civil Liberties since the last survey.

The freedom ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results. See the essay on survey methodology for more details.

\* Excluding Northern Ireland.

Table of Related Territories

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating
China			
Hong Kong	5	3	Partly Free
Macao	6	4	Partly Free
United Kingdom			
🇬🇧 Northern Ireland	2	2	Free
United States of America			
Puerto Rico	1	2	Free

Table of Disputed Territories

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Rating
Armenia/Azerbaijan			
Nagorno-Karabakh	5	6	Not Free
China			
Tibet	7	7	Not Free
Georgia			
Abkhazia	6	5	Not Free
India			
Kashmir	6	6	Not Free
Indonesia			
West Papua	5	5	Partly Free
Iraq			
Kurdistan	5▲	5▲	Partly Free
Israel			
🇮🇱 Israeli-Administered territories	6	6	Not Free
🇮🇱 Palestinian Authority-Administered territories	5	6	Not Free
Moldova			
Transnistria	6	6	Not Free
Morocco			
Western Sahara	7	6	Not Free
Russia			
Chechnya	7	7	Not Free
Turkey			
Cyprus (T)	2	2	Free
Yugoslavia			
🇲🇪 Kosovo	6	6	Not Free

**Table of Social and Economic Indicators**

Country	Real GDP Per Capita (PPP\$)	Life Expectancy	Country	Real GDP Per Capita (PPP\$)	Life Expectancy
Afghanistan	na	45	East Timor	na	48
Albania	3,189	72	Ecuador	2,994	71
Algeria	5,063	69	Egypt	3,420	66
Andorra	na	Na	El Salvador	4,344	70
Angola	3,179	38	Equatorial Guinea	4,676	50
Antigua and Barbuda	9,870	70	Eritrea	880	55
Argentina	12,277	73	Estonia	8,355	71
Armenia	2,215	73	Ethiopia	628	52
Australia	24,574	79	Fiji	4,799	67
Austria	25,089	78	Finland	23,096	77
Azerbaijan	2,850	72	France	22,897	79
Bahamas	15,258	72	Gabon	6,024	52
Bahrain	13,688	72	The Gambia	1,580	52
Bangladesh	1,483	59	Georgia	2,431	73
Barbados	14,353	73	Germany	23,742	78
Belarus	6,876	68	Ghana	1,881	58
Belgium	25,443	78	Greece	15,414	78
Belize	4,959	72	Grenada	6,330	65
Benin	933	50	Guatemala	3,674	66
Bhutan	1,341	66	Guinea	1,934	45
Bolivia	2,355	62	Guinea-Bissau	678	45
Bosnia-Herzegovina	na	68	Guyana	3,640	65
Botswana	6,872	41	Haiti	1,464	49
Brazil	7,037	68	Honduras	2,340	66
Brunei	17,868	74	Hungary	11,430	71
Bulgaria	5,071	72	Iceland	27,835	79
Burkina Faso	965	47	India	2,248	61
Burma	1,027	56	Indonesia	2,857	67
Burundi	578	47	Iran	5,531	70
Cambodia	1,361	56	Iraq	na	59
Cameroon	1,573	55	Ireland	25,918	77
Canada	26,251	79	Israel	18,440	78
Cape Verde	4,490	68	Italy	22,172	79
Central African Republic	1,166	45	Jamaica	3,561	71
Chad	850	50	Japan	24,898	81
Chile	8,652	75	Jordan	3,955	70
China	3,617	71	Kazakhstan	4,951	66
Colombia	5,749	71	Kenya	1,022	48
Comoros	1,429	56	Kiribati	na	62
Congo (Brazzaville)	727	50	Korea, North	na	70
Congo (Kinshasa)	801	48	Korea, South	15,712	74
Costa Rica	8,860	77	Kuwait	17,289	73
Cote d'Ivoire	1,654	46	Kyrgyz Republic	2,573	69
Croatia	7,387	74	Laos	1,471	52
Cuba	na	75	Latvia	6,264	71
Cyprus (Greek)	19,006	77	Lebanon	4,705	71
Czech Republic	13,018	75	Lesotho	1,854	53
Denmark	25,869	76	Liberia	na	50
Djibouti	2,377	46	Libya	7,570	75
Dominica	5,040	73	Liechtenstein	na	72
Dominican Republic	5,507	69	Lithuania	6,656	73

Table of Social and Economic Indicators

Country	Real GDP Per Capita (PPP\$)	Life Expectancy	Country	Real GDP Per Capita (PPP\$)	Life Expectancy
Luxembourg	42,769	78	Slovenia	15,977	76
Macedonia	4,651	73	Solomon Islands	2,050	67
Madagascar	799	54	Somalia	na	46
Malawi	586	39	South Africa	8,908	53
Malaysia	8,209	73	Spain	18,079	78
Maldives	4,423	61	Sri Lanka	3,279	72
Mali	753	46	Sudan	664	56
Malta	15,189	77	Suriname	4,178	71
Marshall Islands	na	65	Swaziland	3,987	40
Mauritania	1,609	51	Sweden	22,636	80
Mauritius	9,107	71	Switzerland	27,171	80
Mexico	8,297	75	Syria	4,454	70
Micronesia	na	66	Taiwan (Rep. of China)	na	75
Moldova	2,037	68	Tajikistan	1,031	68
Monaco	na	na	Tanzania	501	53
Mongolia	1,711	63	Thailand	6,132	72
Morocco	3,419	69	Tbgo	1,410	55
Mozambique	861	72	Tonga	na	71
Namibia	5,468	46	Trinidad and Tobago	8,176	71
Nauru	na	61	Tunisia	5,957	72
Nepal	1,237	57	Turkey	6,380	69
Netherlands	24,215	78	Turkmenistan	3,347	67
New Zealand	19,104	77	Tuvalu	na	67
Nicaragua	2,279	68	Uganda	1,167	42
Niger	753	41	Ukraine	3,458	68
Nigeria	853	52	United Arab Emirates	18,162	74
Norway	28,433	78	United Kingdom	22,093	77
Oman	13,356	71	United States	31,872	77
Pakistan	1,834	60	Uruguay	8,879	74
Palau	na	67	Uzbekistan	2,251	70
Panama	5,875	74	Vanuatu	2,880	65
Papua New Guinea	2,367	56	Venezuela	5,495	73
Paraguay	4,384	73	Vietnam	1,860	66
Peru	4,622	69	Yemen	806	59
Philippines	3,805	67	Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)		
Poland	8,450	73		na	72
Portugal	16,064	76	Zambia	756	37
Qatar	18,789	72	Zimbabwe	2,876	40
Romania	6,041	71			
Russia	7,473	66			
Rwanda	885	39			
St. Kitts and Nevis	10,400	69			
St. Lucia	5,200	71			
St. Vincent and Grenadines					
	4,990	72			
Samoa	4,070	68			
San Marino	na	80			
Sao Tome and Principe	na	65			
Saudi Arabia	10,815	67			
Senegal	1,419	52			
Seychelles	na	70			
Sierra Leone	448	45			
Singapore	20,767	78			
Slovakia	10,591	73			

### Combined Average Ratings: Independent Countries

<b>FREE</b>	Slovakia	Guatemala	Bahrain
<b>1.0</b>	Slovenia	Indonesia	Cambodia
Andorra	South Africa	Malawi	Chad
Australia	Spain	Mozambique	Guinea
Austria	Suriname	Nepal	Kazakhstan
Bahamas	Taiwan	Paraguay	Kenya
Barbados	United Kingdom	Senegal	Kyrgyz Republic
Canada	<b>2.0</b>	Sri Lanka	Lebanon
Cyprus (G)	Bolivia	<b>4.0</b>	Maldives
Denmark	Botswana	Armenia	Oman
Dominica	Bulgaria	Burkina Faso	Pakistan
Finland	Chile	Colombia	Swaziland
Iceland	Croatia	East Timor	Tunisia
Ireland	Dominican Republic	Georgia	United Arab Emirates
Kiribati	Greece	Lesotho	<b>6.0</b>
Liechtenstein	Guyana	Macedonia	Angola
Luxembourg	Israel	Niger	Belarus
Malta	Korea, South	Solomon Islands	Brunei
Marshall Islands	Nauru	Tanzania	Burundi
Netherlands	Peru	Tonga	Cameroon
New Zealand	Romania	Ukraine	Congo (Kinshasa)
Norway	Samoa	Venezuela	Egypt
Portugal	Vanuatu	<b>4.5</b>	Equatorial Guinea
San Marino	<b>2.5</b>	Bosnia-Herzegovina	Haiti
Sweden	Benin	Congo (Brazzaville)	Iran
Switzerland	El Salvador	Cote d'Ivoire	Liberia
Tuvalu	Ghana	Djibouti	Qatar
United States	India	Gabon	Tajikistan
Uruguay	Jamaica	Guinea-Bissau	Yemen
<b>1.5</b>	Mali	Kuwait	Zimbabwe
Belgium	Mexico	Nigeria	<b>6.5</b>
Belize	Mongolia	Sierra Leone	Bhutan
Cape Verde	Namibia	Turkey	China (PRC)
Costa Rica	Papua New Guinea	Zambia	Eritrea
Czech Republic	Philippines	<b>5.0</b>	Laos
Estonia	Thailand	Central African Rep.	Rwanda
France	<b>PARTLY FREE</b>	Comoros	Somalia
Germany	<b>3.0</b>	Ethiopia	Uzbekistan
Grenada	Antigua and Barbuda	The Gambia	Vietnam
Hungary	Argentina	Jordan	<b>7.0</b>
Italy	Brazil	Malaysia	Afghanistan
Japan	Ecuador	Mauritania	Burma
Latvia	Honduras	Morocco	Cuba
Lithuania	Madagascar	Russia	Iraq
Mauritius	Moldova	Singapore	Korea, North
Micronesia	Nicaragua	Togo	Libya
Monaco	Seychelles	<b>5.5</b>	Saudi Arabia
Palau	Trinidad and Tobago	Azerbaijan	Sudan
Panama	Yugoslavia	Uganda	Syria
Poland	<b>3.5</b>	<b>NOT FREE</b>	Turkmenistan
St. Kitts and Nevis	Albania	<b>5.5</b>	
St. Lucia	Bangladesh	Algeria	
St. Vincent and Grenadines	Fiji		
Sao Tome and Principe			

### Combined Average Ratings: Related Territories

**FREE**  
**1.5**

Puerto Rico (US)

**2.0**  
Northern Ireland (UK)

**PARTLY FREE**  
**4.0**

Hong Kong (China)

**5.0**  
Macao (China)

### Combined Average Ratings: Disputed Territories

**FREE**

**2.0**

Cyprus (Turkey)

**PARTLY FREE**

**5.0**

Kurdistan (Iraq)  
West Papua (Indonesia)

**NOT FREE**

**5.5**

Abkhazia (Georgia)  
Nagorno-Karabakh (Armenia/  
Azerbaijan)  
Palestinian Authority-Administered Territories (Israel)

**6.0**

Israeli-Administered Territories (Israel)  
Kashmir (India)  
Kosovo (Yugoslavia)  
Transnistria (Moldova)

**6.5**

Western Sahara (Morocco)

**7.0**

Chechnya (Russia)  
Tibet (China)

## Electoral Democracies (121)

<b>Albania</b>	<b>Estonia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Andorra</b>	<b>Fiji</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Argentina</b>	<b>Finland</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Armenia</b>	<b>France</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Australia</b>	<b>The Gambia</b>
Parliamentary democracy (federal)	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Austria</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
Parliamentary democracy (federal)	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Bahamas</b>	<b>Germany</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy (federal)
<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>Ghana</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Barbados</b>	<b>Greece</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>Grenada</b>
Parliamentary democracy (federal)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Belize</b>	<b>Guatemala</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Benin</b>	<b>Guinea Bissau</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Bolivia</b>	<b>Guyana</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Botswana</b>	<b>Honduras</b>
Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Brazil</b>	<b>Hungary</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Bulgaria</b>	<b>Iceland</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Canada</b>	<b>India</b>
Parliamentary democracy (federal)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Cape Verde</b>	<b>Indonesia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (military-influenced)
<b>Chile</b>	<b>Ireland</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Colombia</b>	<b>Israel</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Costa Rica</b>	<b>Italy</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Jamaica</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Cyprus</b>	<b>Japan</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>Kiribati</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>Korea, South</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Djibouti</b>	<b>Latvia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (dominant party)	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Dominica</b>	<b>Liechtenstein</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Principality and parliamentary democracy
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	<b>Lithuania</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Ecuador</b>	<b>Luxembourg</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>El Salvador</b>	<b>Macedonia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy



<b>Madagascar</b>	<b>St. Kitts and Nevis</b>
Presidential democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Malawi</b>	<b>SL Lucia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Mali</b>	<b>St Vincent and the Grenadines</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Malta</b>	<b>Samoa</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	<b>San Marino</b>
Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Mauritius</b>	<b>Sao Tome and Principe</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>Senegal</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Micronesia</b>	<b>Seychelles</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal)	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Moldova</b>	<b>Siena Leone</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies)
<b>Monaco</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>
Principality and parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Mongolia</b>	<b>Slovenia</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Mozambique</b>	<b>Solomon Islands</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Namibia</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Nauru</b>	<b>Spain</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Nepal</b>	<b>Sri Lanka</b>
Parliamentary democracy (insurgency)	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgency)
<b>Netherlands</b>	<b>Suriname</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>New Zealand</b>	<b>Sweden</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Nicaragua</b>	<b>Switzerland</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy (federal)
<b>Niger</b>	<b>Taiwan</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Presidential democracy
<b>Nigeria</b>	<b>Thailand</b>
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Norway</b>	<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>
Parliamentary democracy	Parliamentary democracy
<b>Palau</b>	<b>Turkey</b>
Presidential democracy and traditional chiefs	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
<b>Panama</b>	(military-influenced)
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>Tuvalu</b>
<b>Papua New Guinea</b>	Parliamentary democracy
Parliamentary democracy	<b>Ukraine</b>
<b>Paraguay</b>	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>United Kingdom</b>
<b>Peru</b>	Parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>United States of America</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (federal)
Presidential-parliamentary democracy (insurgencies)	<b>Uruguay</b>
<b>Poland</b>	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>Vanuatu</b>
<b>Portugal</b>	Parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>Venezuela</b>
<b>Romania</b>	Presidential-parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	<b>Yugoslavia</b>
<b>Russia</b>	Parliamentary democracy
Presidential-parliamentary democracy	

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 U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Reports  
 Voice of America Online  
 Voice of Bahrain  
*Vreme* [Yugoslavia]  
*Vuelta* [Mexico]  
*The Wall Street Journal*  
*The Washington Post*  
*The Washington Times*  
*The Week in Germany*  
*West Africa*  
*World Population Data Sheet* (Population Reference Bureau)  
 Xinhua News Agency  
*Yemen Times*
- ORGANIZATIONS**
- AFL-CIO  
 Africa Policy Information Center  
 Africa Rights [United Kingdom]  
 American Anti-Slavery Group  
 American Institute for Free Labor Development  
 American Kurdish Information Network  
 Amnesty International  
 Andean Commission of Jurists  
 Anti-Slavery International  
 Article 19 [United Kingdom]  
 Association Pour La Fondation Mohsen Hachtroudi  
 Azerbaijan National Democracy Foundation  
 Bahrain Freedom Movement  
 Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association  
 British Helsinki Human Rights Group  
 B'tzelem [Israel]  
 The Carter Center  
 Center for Free Speech [Nigeria]  
 Center for Monitoring Election Violence [Sri Lanka]  
 Center for Strategic and International Studies  
 Chadian Association for the Protection of Human Rights  
 Child Workers in Nepal  
 Chilean Human Rights Commission  
 Civic Alliance [Mexico]  
 Civil Society Development Foundation  
 Committee of Churches for Emergency Help [Paraguay]  
 Committee to Protect Journalists  
 Constitutional Rights Project [Nigeria]  
 Council of Europe  
 Croatian Democracy Project  
 Cuban Committee for Human Rights  
 Democratic Initiatives [Ukraine]  
 Digital Freedom Network  
 EastWest Institute  
 Election Commission of India  
 Elections Canada  
 Emerging Europe Research Group  
 Equal Access Committee [Ukraine]  
 Ethnic Federation of Romani [Romania]  
 European Bank for Reconstruction and Development  
 European Commission  
 European Institute for the Media  
 Fray Bartolome de Las Casas Center for Human Rights [Mexico]  
 Free Africa Foundation  
 Free and Democratic Bulgaria Foundation  
 Free Trade Union Institute  
 Group for Mutual Support [Guatemala]  
 Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia  
 Honduran Committee for the Defense of Human Rights  
 Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor  
 Human Rights Commission [El Salvador]  
 Human Rights Commission of Pakistan  
 Human Rights Organization of Bhutan  
 Human Rights Organization of Nepal  
 Human Rights Watch  
 Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada  
 Indian Law Resource Center  
 Inform [Sri Lanka]  
 Institute for Legal Research and Resources [Nepal]  
 Institute for the Study of Conflict, Ideology and Policy  
 Institute for War and Peace Reporting [United Kingdom]  
 Inter-American Commission on Human Rights  
 Inter-American Press Association  
 International Campaign for Tibet  
 International Commission of Jurists  
 International Confederation of Free Trade Unions  
 International Crisis Group  
 International Federation of Journalists  
 International Foundation for Electoral Systems  
 International Freedom of Expression Exchange  
 International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights  
 International Human Rights Law Group  
 International League for Human Rights  
 International Press Institute

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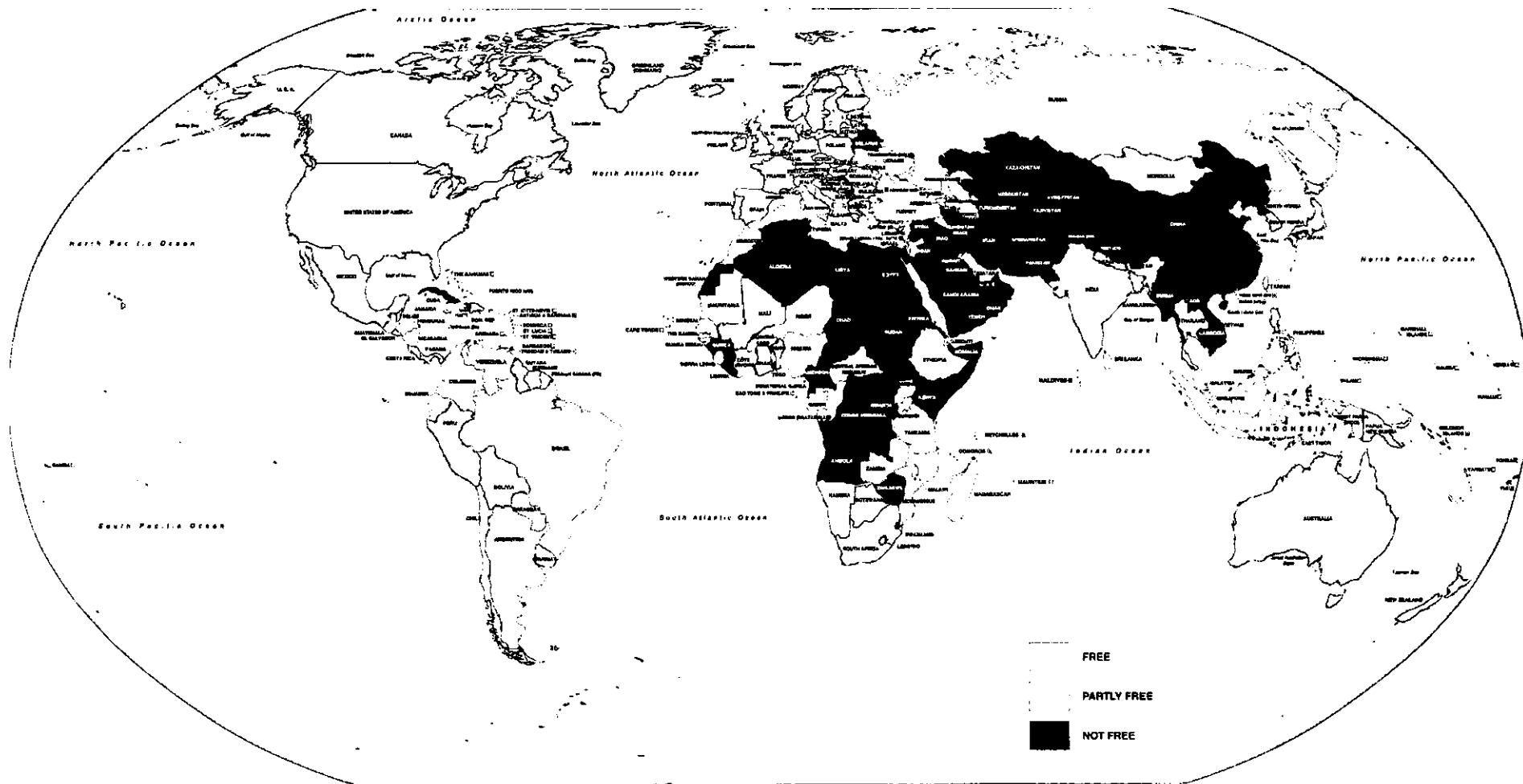
International Republican Institute  
International Research and Exchange Board  
Inter-Parliamentary Union  
Iraqi National Congress  
Jaan Tonisson Institute [Estonia]  
Jamaica Council for Human Rights  
Jamestown Foundation  
Kashmir Study Group  
Kuwait Online  
Latvian Center for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies  
Lawyers Committee for Human Rights  
Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (Pakistan)  
Lithuanian Free Market Institute  
Media Institute of South Africa  
Mexican Human Rights Academy  
National Coalition for Haitian Refugees  
National Coordinating Office for Human Rights [Peru]  
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs  
National Endowment for Democracy  
National Human Rights Commission [India]  
Network for the Defense of Independent Media in Africa  
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Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe  
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Pacific Island Development Program [Hawaii]  
Panamanian Committee for Human Rights  
Peoples Forum for Human Rights, Bhutan  
Permanent Commission on Human Rights [Nicaragua]  
Physicians for Human Rights  
Reporters Sans Frontieres  
Royal Institute of International Affairs  
Runejel Junam Council of Ethnic Communities  
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Stratfor  
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Transparency International  
Tutela Legal [El Salvador]  
Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research  
UNICEF  
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U.N. Integrated Regional Information Networks  
U.S. Committee for Refugees  
Venezuelan Human Rights Education Action Program  
Vicaria de la Solidaridad [Chile]  
Vietnam Committee on Human Rights  
Voice of Bahrain  
Washington Office on Africa  
Washington Office on Latin America  
West Africa Journalists Association  
Women Acting Together for Change [Nepal]  
Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children  
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# MAP OF FREEDOM 2002







# FREEDOM IN THE WORLD

## The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties, 2001-2002

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