Polity IV Country Report 2010: Cape Verde

Score:	2009	2010	Change
Polity:	10	10	0
Democ:	10	10	0
Autoc:	0	0	0
Durable:		19	
Tentative:		No	
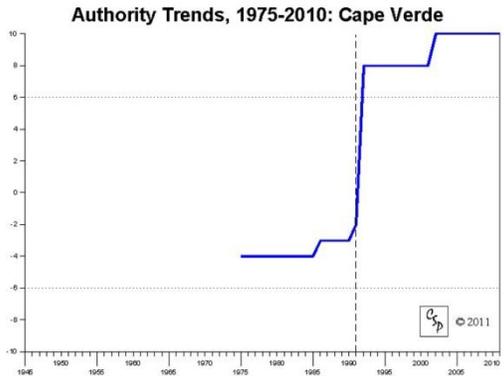
Authority Trends, 1975-2010: Cape Verde

SCODE	**CAP**		CCODE	**402**	Date of Report	**1 October 2011**

Polity IV Component Variables

XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP
3	3	4	7	5	5

Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)

End Date	17 February 1990		Begin Date	22 March 1991

Polity Fragmentation: No

Constitution	1992 (1995/1999)
Executive(s)	President Jorge Fonseca, directly elected 7 and 21 August 2011, 37.8% and 54.3% Prime Minister Jose Neves (PAICV), nominated by the National Assembly and approved by the president, 1 February 2001

Legislature	Unicameral:
	National Assembly (72 seats, directly elected, elections last held 6 February 2011)
	    African Party for Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV): 38
	    Movement for Democracy (MPD): 32
	    Other Parties: 2

Judiciary	Supreme Tribunal of Justice

Narrative Description:[1]

Executive Recruitment: *Competitive Elections* **(8)**

The previously uninhabited islands of Cape Verde were discovered and colonized by Portugal in the 15th century (1462) and became an important transfer point in the African slave trade. The decline of the slave trade in the 19th century triggered an economic crisis for the islands and rising discontent with Portuguese authority. Links between Cape Verde and the mainland territory of Portuguese Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau) led to the emergence of an independence movement in the mid-1950s under the leadership of Amilcar Cabral, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC). Cabral led the PAIGC armed resistance to Portuguese rule on the mainland from 1963 until his assassination on 20

January 1973; there was no armed resistance on the islands. The leadership of the independence movement split following Cabral's death with his brother, Luís Cabral, assuming leadership on the mainland and Aristides Pereira taking over the PAIGC leadership in Cape Verde. The PAIGC continued to profess unity and promote the unification of the islands with the mainland; however, independence for the two territories was negotiated separately. An agreement between Portugal and the PAIGC in Cape Verde was reached on 30 December 1974 and a transitional government was established to prepare for independence. An election was held on 30 June 1975 for a People's Assembly in which only PAIGC candidates stood for election; the assembly was tasked with drafting a constitution. Cape Verde gained independence on 5 July 1975 and the People's Assembly selected the PAIGC leader as president and named Major Pedro Pires as prime minister. Cape Verdeans continued to control the leadership of the PAIGC on the mainland until an indigenous movement on the mainland led by Maj. Joao Bernardo Vieira ousted President Luís Cabral on 14 November 1980. Following the coup in Guinea-Bissau, the Cape Verdean party abandoned its plans for unification, broke off its relations with the mainland party, and changed its name to the Africa Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). Cape Verde remained a one-party state though the 1980s, although the ruling PAICV did allow independent candidates to run for office on the party list in legislative elections held 7 December 1985.

The ban on opposition parties was lifted during the PAICV party congress held 14-17 February 1990; opposition leaders, then, formed the Movement for Democracy (MPD) in March 1990. The one-party state was officially abolished on 28 September 1990. The country's first multi-party legislative election was held on 13 January 1991; the opposition MPD won 56 of the 79 seats in the National Assembly. The PAIGV government remained in a caretaker role until presidential elections were held 17 February 1991; the MPD candidate, Antonio Monteiro, won the election and was inaugurated on 22 March 1991. In February 2001 elections, the PAICV candidate, Pedro Pires, won by the slimmest of margins (12 votes); the PAICV also won a plurality in legislative elections. President Pires was sworn in on 22 March 2001. The PAICV comfortably won legislative elections in 2006; however, President Pires was returned to office once more by a slim margin over MPD candidate Carlos Veiga. Pires announced that he would not stand for reelection in 2011 in accordance with the constitutional limit of two terms. Three strong candidates competed in presidential elections held on 7 August 2011 with MPD candidate Jorge Carlos Fonseca and PAICV candidate Manuel Sousa narrowly outpolling Aristides Lima of the PAICV who ran as an independent; Fonseca won the runoff election held on 21 August 2011 and was sworn in as president on 9 September 2011. The PAICV won legislative elections held 6 February 2011 taking a slim majority of seats (38 of 72).

Executive Constraints: *Executive Parity or Subordination* (**7**)
Since the one-party state ruled by the PAICV was abolished on 28 September 1990, Cape Verde has been and currently is a multi-party, electoral democracy in which executive authority is shared between a directly elected president (head of state) and a prime minister (head of government) chosen by the National Assembly. There are two main parties, PAICV and MFD, and several smaller parties which compete freely and openly in elections that have been deemed free and fair by international observers. Transfers of power as the result of elections have occurred regularly and without coercion since 1991, although there have been some challenges to electoral results lodged in the media and considered by legal authorities. The courts are impartial and independent although inexperienced and inefficient.

Political Participation: *Institutionalized Open Electoral Competition* (**10**)
Cape Verde is a small, island country that only crossed the 500,000 population threshold for inclusion in the Polity IV series in 2010. The islands were uninhabited prior to colonization by Portugal; the population is mainly mestizo (c70%) and black African and largely descended from persons involved with the African slave trade that ended in the mid-19th century and laborers brought from the mainland to work on plantations. The islands have few natural resources and fresh water is limited; agriculture is prone to periods of drought. The economy is service-oriented with dependence on commerce, transport, and tourism. Difficult environmental conditions have contributed to emigration from the islands and it is estimated that about half of Cape Verdeans live abroad; remittances contribute as much as 20% of the country's GDP.