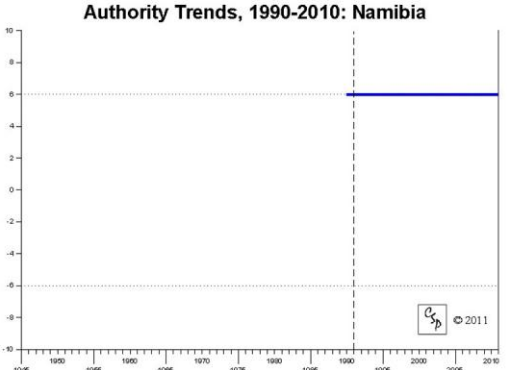


Polity IV Country Report 2010: Namibia

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2009</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2010</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polity:</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democ:</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autoc:</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Durable:</td> <td colspan="3">20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tentative:</td> <td colspan="3">No</td> </tr> </table>	Score:	2009	2010	Change	Polity:	6	6	0	Democ:	6	6	0	Autoc:	0	0	0	Durable:	20			Tentative:	No			
Score:	2009	2010	Change																						
Polity:	6	6	0																						
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Autoc:	0	0	0																						
Durable:	20																								
Tentative:	No																								
SCODE	NAM	CCODE	565	Date of Report	1 June 2011																				
Polity IV Component Variables																									
XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN	XCONST	PARREG	PARCOMP																				
2	2	4	5	2	4																				
Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change)																									
End Date			Begin Date																						
			21 March 1990 (Ind.)																						
Polity Fragmentation: No																									
Constitution	1990																								
Executive(s)	President Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba (SWAPO); directly elected, 15-16 November 2004, reelected 27-28 November 2009, 75.25%																								
Legislature	Bicameral: National Assembly (78 seats; 72 proportionally elected, 6 appointed by the president; most recent elections, 27-28 November 2009) South West African People's Organization (SWAPO): 54 Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP): 8 Other Parties: 10 Appointed members: 6 National Council (26 seats; indirectly elected by regional councils; most recent elections, 27-28 November 2009) SWAPO: 24 DTA: 1 UDF: 1																								
Judiciary	Supreme Court; High Court																								

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: Transitional or Restricted Elections (7)

President Sam Nujoma, the leader of SWAPO, dominated Namibia's politics during the country's first decade of independence (gained in 1990). Prior to the 1999 elections, SWAPO took advantage of its 3/4 majority in the legislature to amend the Constitution so as to permit Nujoma to run for a third presidential

¹ The research described in this report was sponsored by the Political Instability Task Force (PITF). The PITF is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The views expressed herein are the authors' alone and do not represent the views of the US Government.

term. Nujoma subsequently won a landslide victory in Namibia's third presidential elections in 1999, gaining 77% of the national vote against three contenders. Independent observers agreed that the elections were free, but not totally fair, because the opposition was not granted equal access to the media, nor equal opportunities in campaign financing. In some instances, incumbent executive officials harassed opposition candidates. SWAPO dominance of the executive branch continued in November 2004 with the electoral victory of Hifikepunye Pohamba. Pohamba, who was nominated as Nujoma's successor at a SWAPO party conference in May 2004, took office on 21 March 2005. Despite stepping down as president of the country, Nujoma retains significant political authority in his role as chairman of SWAPO. Pohamba was reelected to a second term in office with 75% of the vote in November 2009.

Executive Constraints: Substantial Limitations (5)

Namibia has a separation of powers with a strong presidency. The president is both the chief of state and head of government. Bills passed by the legislature require the president's approval to become laws; however, the president cannot reject the bills passed by a two-thirds majority of the National Assembly. The president can dissolve the legislature at any time, but must then step down for new elections as well. Namibia's first democratic transfer of executive power occurred with the November 2004 election of Hifikepunye Pohamba, the SWAPO candidate nominated to succeed Nujoma. Despite this transfer of executive power, Sam Nujoma retained his role as SWAPO party leader. While it is widely recognized that Pohamba has less power over the legislature than his predecessor, nonetheless, given that SWAPO continues to hold more than ¾ of the seats in the legislature, the President is given a great degree of latitude in designing and implementing government policy. Namibia's judiciary is considered to be independent.

Political Participation: Political Liberalization: Limited and/or Decreasing Overt Coercion (9)

Since independence, Namibia has operated as a "single party democracy." SWAPO has dominated both the executive and legislative branches continuously since independence in 1990. Opposition parties pose no real electoral threat to the dominant party. Originally called the Ovamboland People's Congress (prior to 1960), the party relies on support from the Ovambo, the country's largest ethnic group, as well as its legacy as the leader of the nation's long struggle for independence from white-ruled South Africa. The Congress of Democrats (CD), currently the country's second strongest party, was formed in 1999 by former SWAPO leader Ben Ulenga in protest against Nujoma's paternalistic style. The Congress of Democrats is the first significant party whose organization crosses ethnic and racial divisions. However, up to this point, the CD hasn't been able to contest SWAPO significantly at any level.

For all practical purposes, SWAPO remains the party of the Ovambo majority. While the northern region of Ovamboland gets a disproportionate amount of development funding and government positions, nonetheless, SWAPO has been careful not to unnecessarily exacerbate ethnic tensions in the country. In an effort to defuse mounting ethnic tensions in the country, in October 2005 the government ordered over 200 farmers from the Ovambo tribe off the land owned by the minority Kavango people in the northeast of the country. Moreover, the long-promised land reform has been slow to materialize out of the fear of angering the white minority. However, in the past decade black land ownership has increased from less than 3% to over 15%. Despite this progress, white farmers continue to own over 80% of the land in the country.