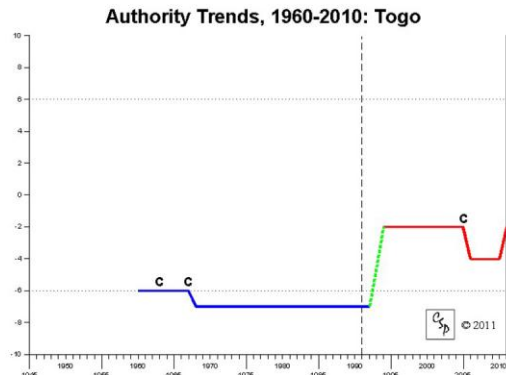


| Polity IV Country Report 2010: Togo                            |  |        |            |                |                    |
|--|--|--------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Score:   | 2009   | 2010   | Change     |                |                    |
| <b>Polity:</b>   | -4   | -2     | +2         |                |                    |
| <b>Democ:</b>  | 1  | 1      | 0          |                |                    |
| <b>Autoc:</b>  | 5  | 3      | -2         |                |                    |
| <b>Durable:</b>  | 17   |        |            |                |                    |
| <b>Tentative:</b>  | Yes  |        |            |                |                    |
| SCORE  | <b>TOG</b>   | CCODE  | <b>461</b> | Date of Report | <b>1 June 2011</b> |
| Polity IV Component Variables                                  |  |        |            |                |                    |
| XRREG  | XRCOMP   | XROPEN | XCONST     | PARREG         | PARCOMP            |
| 2  | 1  | 4      | 2          | 3              | 3                  |
| Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change) |  |        |            |                |                    |
| End Date   | 26 August 1991   |        | Begin Date | 26 August 1993 |                    |
| Polity Fragmentation: No                                       |  |        |            |                |                    |
| <b>Constitution</b>  | 1992   |        |            |                |                    |
| <b>Executive(s)</b>  | President Faure Gnassingbe (RPT); initially appointed 5 February 2005, following the death of his father, Gnassingbe Eyadema; directly elected, 24 April 2005, reelected 4 March 2010; 60.9%                               |        |            |                |                    |
| <b>Legislature</b>   | Unicameral:<br>National Assembly (81 seats; directly elected; most recent elections, 14 October 2007)<br>Rally of the Togolese People (RPT): 50<br>Union of Forces for Change (UFC): 27<br>Action Committee for Renewal: 4 |        |            |                |                    |
| <b>Judiciary</b>   | Supreme Court  |        |            |                |                    |



**Narrative Description:**<sup>1</sup>

**Executive Recruitment: Designation (3)**

Togo has a long history of authoritarian rule. Upon achieving independence from France in 1960, Sylvanus Olympio became the country's first president in an unopposed election. In 1963 President Olympio was deposed in a military coup by his brother-in-law, Nicolas Grunitzky. Grunitzky, in turn, was deposed in 1967 in a bloodless military coup led by Lieutenant General Etienne Gnassingbe Eyadema. Up until his death in February 2005, President Eyadema was the longest-serving head of state in Africa. While President Eyadema consolidated his authority through military rule and the creation of a one-party state, by the early 1990s he found himself under increasing political pressure to liberalize Togo's political system. Despite the return to multiparty politics in Togo in 1993, President Eyadema continued to dominate the

<sup>1</sup> 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.

political system. In the 1993 presidential election, which was boycotted by opposition candidates, Eyadema claimed to have won ninety-three percent of the popular vote. His reelection in June 1998, moreover, was deemed by international observers to be blatantly fraudulent. In the absence of an independent electoral commission to oversee the electoral contest, the electoral rolls were deemed to be suspect and the tabulation of results to be biased in favor of the president. In addition to using force to harass opposition candidates, President Eyadema relied on his control of state largesse and the media to ensure his electoral success. While President Eyadema had promised that he would not seek reelection in 2003, in late 2002 the parliament voted to remove a clause in the constitution that would have barred the president from the upcoming election.

Eyadema won the 1 June 2003 election with fifty-seven percent of the vote. The opposition accused Eyadema of massive fraud and vote rigging. While African election monitors indicated that they did not witness the widespread fraud claimed by opposition politicians, nevertheless, most international observers chose not to monitor the election, saying it was unlikely to be fair. Eyadema's main political rival, Gilchrist Olympio, leader of the Union of Forces for Change (UFC), was barred from contesting the presidential election. In the aftermath of the election violent protests erupted in the streets of the capital.

President Eyadema died in early February 2005 and was subsequently replaced by his son, Faure Gnassingbe, by an act of Parliament. After violent street protests erupted in the capital, Faure Gnassingbe agreed to step down and hold elections in April 2005. The elections of 24 April 2005, while decried as fraudulent by the opposition, produced a landslide victory for Faure Gnassingbe. The presidential election held on 4 March 2010 was conducted under tight security in order to avoid a repeat of the violence that had marred the 2005 election. Incumbent President Faure Gnassingbe was declared the victor with 61% of the vote in a field of seven candidates; his main challenger, Jean-Pierre Fabre of the Union of Forces for Change received 34% of the vote. The opposition once again claimed that Gnassingbé's victory was achieved through fraud and intimidation.

#### **Executive Constraints: Slight to Moderate Limitations (3)**

After three decades of continuous rule, President Eyadema had created a cult of personality around himself. Political power remained highly concentrated around Eyadema and a small circle of military associates; Faure Gnassingbe appears to have inherited much of this power concentration himself. While a democratically elected National Assembly was established in 1994, it has proven itself to be little more than a rubber stamp institution. Opposition boycotts of the National Assembly have undermined the capacity of this institution to limit the powers of the executive branch. Moreover, the judiciary is subject to constant political interference by the executive branch and represents no real check on presidential authority.

#### **Political Participation: Factional Competition (7)**

While Togo reestablished multiparty politics in 1993, political competition remains far from democratic in nature. While numerous political parties are permitted to operate in Togo, nevertheless, they face significant obstacles that have prevented them from effectively challenging the political hegemony of either President Eyadema or his son Faure Gnassingbe and their military-backed Rally of the Togolese People (RTP) party. Although Eyadema did not obstruct the formation of opposition parties, their rights to assembly were and continue to be limited and they are often subjected to military intimidation and harassment.

Underlying the restriction of political voice in Togo is a social system of ethnic cleavages that has long defined politics in this country. There are over forty linguistically distinct ethnic groups within Togo and most political parties have distinct ethnic and regional bases of support. Of these ethnic groups, the largest and most important are the southern-based Ewe and Mina and the northern-based Kabye. The geographic division between the inhabitants of the less populous and poorer northern region of Togo and the more populated and prosperous south has long been a source of political tension and violence in this country. During the past three decades members of a few northern ethnic groups have narrowly held political and military power in Togo. President Eyadema's own ethnic group, the northern-based Kabye, has been the primary beneficiary of state largesse and privilege in the post-colonial era. Northern ethnic groups have been favored in all government positions but perhaps none more important than the military. Over ninety percent of the officers and seventy percent of soldiers are from the President's Kabye ethnic group.

Togo's most recent round of political instability stems from the controversial presidential election of June 1998. In the wake of President Eyadema's fraudulent reelection, which was further marred by reports of hundreds of state-sponsored killings, Togo's main opposition parties boycotted the March 1999 legislative elections. The Lome Framework Agreement, signed by the Government and members of the political opposition in July 1999, sought to increase the transparency of future elections and strengthen the rights of opposition parties and the media. Under the terms of this agreement, President Eyadema agreed to dissolve the National Assembly and hold new elections in March 2000. These elections were subsequently postponed until October 2001. The newly established Electoral Commission, which was composed of ten members from the RPT and ten members from the opposition, however, postponed the elections once again after a UN commission report cited a general lack of preparation. Throughout the summer of 2001 opposition parties engaged in street protests over the arrest of opposition leader Yowori Agboyibo on the grounds of libeling the Prime Minister.

In the spring of 2002 the legislative elections were delayed once again after the opposition refused to join the National Independence Electoral Commission. The opposition claimed that the new electoral code, which required all presidential candidates to reside in the country for a least one year prior to the election, violated the Lome Agreement of July 1999. Moreover, the opposition refused to sit on the Commission until its leader, Yowori Agboyibo, was released from jail. While President Eyadema freed Agboyibo in March 2002, the political impasse was not resolved. In an effort to overcome the continuing political crisis in the country, in May 2002 Togo's Constitutional Court named seven judges to take over the functions of the National Electoral Commission and pave the way for new elections. Legislative elections were finally held in October 2002. In these elections the ruling party won a landslide victory as the main opposition parties boycotted the poll. In early 2003 the new parliament chose a new electoral commission made up of opposition and ruling party representatives. However, Togo's main opposition party, the Union of Forces for Change (UCF), was not represented in this new election body. The UCF had decided to withdraw from the Coalition des Forces Democratiques, the country's main opposition block, when the coalition had agreed to sit on the new National Independent Electoral Commission.

Under increasing political pressure from the European Union, in the spring of 2004 the Togolese government promised to adopt a series of reforms aimed at improving democracy in the country. In late May 2004 political talks between the Togolese government and opposition parties were convened. While twenty-six parties were invited to participate in these talks (the first since 1999), the main opposition parties, the Union of the Forces for Change, the Action Committee for Renewal, and the Democratic Convention for African People, boycotted the process. Despite this boycott, the government formally adopted a twenty-two point program of political reform that promised "to guarantee, without delay, the free action of all political parties, without any act of harassment," and to hold "transparent and free elections acceptable to all parties, within six months." While President Eyadema failed to live up to most of these promises, nevertheless, during 2004 the government did permit exiled opposition leader Gilchrist Olympio to return to the country and pardoned over five hundred political prisoners.

The weakness of the government's commitment to democracy was clearly evident in the wake of President Eyadema's death in February 2005. In an effort to limit opposition influence in the government, the Parliament, with the backing of the military, agreed to let Faure Gnassingbe, son of the former dictator, serve out the remainder of his father's term. Only after a series of violent street protests did the new president agree to hold fresh elections. While Faure Gnassingbe was the winner of the April 2005 polls, nevertheless, opposition parties claimed that the election results were rigged. In an attempt to reconcile with the opposition, President Faure Gnassingbé on 16 September 2006 appointed Yawovi (Yao) Agboyibo of the opposition Action Committee for Renewal (CAR) as the new Prime Minister; seven political parties and civil society organizations were represented in Agboyibo's new Cabinet. New legislative elections were held on 14 October 2007. The ruling Rally of Togolese Peoples party won 50 or 81 seats; the main opposition Union of Forces for Change (UFC) party received 27 seats and the Action Committee for Renewal party took the remaining 4 seats. The results were disputed by the opposition but were confirmed by the Constitutional Court on October 30. European Union observers said the poll was conducted under "transparent" and "satisfactory" conditions.

In late May 2010 Togo's "eternal opposition leader" Gilchrist Olympio announced that he and his Union of Forces for Change (UFC) party would join the government, raising hopes that the decades of political strife that have plagued this poor West African state would soon be coming to an end. As part of the negotiated settlement between Olympio and President Gnassingbe, the UFC was given seven

ministerial posts in Gnassingbe's cabinet. This marks the first time that the UFC has played a formal role in government since the process of democratization began in Togo in the early 1990s.

The decision by Olympio to seek a political compromise with Gnassingbe is unprecedented and undercuts the decades-old feud between their two families. Olympio, who has been the main opposition figure in Togo for decades, is the son of President Sylvanus Olympio, who was assassinated in 1963. Since that time, a power struggle has been waged between the two families, with their respective power bases in the north (Gnassingbe clan) and south (Olympio clan) of the country. While Olympio has been the primary political opposition to the Gnassingbe political dynasty since the establishment of multiparty elections in 1993, nevertheless, he has lost every contest (which were marred by widespread fraud and post-election violence). In 2010, however, Olympio, while retaining his position as head of the UFC, chose not to run as the party's candidate in the March presidential contest against Gnassingbe, citing health reasons for the decision. In place of Olympio, the UFC was represented by Jean-Pierre Fabre in the presidential contest. Like his predecessor before him, Fabre lost to Gnassingbe. While international observers indicated that the election was broadly satisfactory, nonetheless, there was widespread concern over the lack of transparency associated with the ballot counting process.

After losing the election in March 2010, Fabre united with the more radical FARC opposition to protest the fraudulent victory of Gnassingbe. While the post-election violence was less severe than what had occurred in 2005, nonetheless, the escalation of violence seemed to worry Olympio. As a deepening divide within the UFC between the more hardline Fabre and the more conciliatory Olympio began to surface, Olympio was working behind the scenes to broker a political compromise with Gnassingbe. The political compromise announced by Olympio in May was immediately renounced by Fabre and his faction within the UFC. Fabre charged that Olympio was acting unilaterally and without the full consent of the party. While the Olympio-Gnassingbe reconciliation is seen as good news in that it now allows citizens of the south of the country to be better represented in government, nonetheless, the growing rift within the UFC that it triggered decreases their chances of replacing Gnassingbe through democratic electoral mechanisms.