

Innovations

Re-Emergence of Military Takeover in West Africa

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Abstract: *This paper discusses the re-emergence of military take-over in West Africa as a threat to democracy. It argued that coups d'état and attempted coups have resurfaced in the last five years in democratic nations like Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon due to the peoples reawakened aspirations for a better living, strong government, and quick progress. Unfortunately, leadership inability to respond to the socioeconomic and security concerns, massive corruption, inadequate infrastructure, instability, and visionless leadership have made the economy dragging, resulting in widespread poverty, filth, and suffering in these West African countries threatened. The paper used historical qualitative method, one in which secondary data such as text books, journals, periodicals, newspapers, magazines, reports and other online resources. The paper reveals that the re-emergence of military coup in West Africa has negative implications such as unlawful replacement of a democratic government, increase insecurity, alteration of the state's social and economic policies due to sanctions and development, oppression of the citizenry as well as loss of reputation which obviously spells doom for the region. In the light of the findings, the paper recommended that the military should focus on their functions and restrain from interventionist move towards state's politics. Democratic leaders should allow the citizenry to participate in the political processes and avoid election rigging that may undermine security that may attract military takeover. Democratic leaders should also make deliberate efforts to grow the economy to avoid inflationary or deflationary trend as economic collapse and institutional decay may attract the military to power. Additionally, ECOWAS and the African Union should unequivocally denounce and reject illegitimate government changes, and be consistent in their implementation of sanctions to prevent aiding illegal regime transitions intentionally or inadvertently.*

Key words: *Re-emergence, Coups d'état, Attempted Coups and West Africa.*

Introduction

Military coups have occurred in a number of West African nations recently, thereby endangering efforts to establish a long lasting democracy in the regions. We recall that little than a decade after independence, practically every country in West Africa underwent a military coup, which in most cases resulted in military dictatorship. The tendency persisted until the 1990s, when the global wave of democracy resulted in the transfer of most West African countries to democratic governance. This was the scenario until recently, when the status quo was once again threatened by renewed military-political adventurism reminiscent of the 1960s and 1970s. We will look at the intertwined nature of inter-state interactions in West Africa from colonial times to the founding of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in order to show how events in one country may readily infect others in the region. The poor performance of West Africa's first post-independence administrations, as well as the politicization of the ostensibly apolitical military, will be discussed. This will allow us to explain the outbreak of coups and counter-coups that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s. It's worth noting that military juntas didn't perform much better in office. In fact, the majority of them departed their states in a worse position than when they arrived. As a result, by the late 1980s/early 1990s, the majority of the population had grown disillusioned with military rule and demanded democracy. As a result, a fresh wave of democracy surged over the West African sub-region in the 1990s, resulting in the establishment of democratic administration in numerous nations.

For the third time in five months, violence has enabled the transition of power in West Africa, with new leaders emerging from the military of Guinea, Mali (twice in the last thirteen months), and Chad. Coups have occurred often throughout West Africa's post-colonial history. However, there was a strong conviction that the days of military coups were ended, especially after regional giant Nigeria switched from military to civilian administration in 1999. Nigeria was active diplomatically opposing coups, particularly during the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo; West Africa's regional grouping, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), vehemently denounced coups and imposed sanctions until they were overturned.

That upward trend has now been reversed. Why? Heads of state who were dismissed from power in Guinea, Mali, Bukina Faso, Chad, Niger and Gabon have questionable legitimacy. President Alpha Condé of Guinea was re-elected to a third term in questionable elections. Idris Deby had been almost "president for life" in Chad until he was assassinated by rebels, only to be replaced by his son in an unconstitutional procedure. The present period of insecurity in Mali traces back to a 2012 coup against long-time political strongman Amadou Touré. In June, current Malian President Assimi Gota deposed the country's interim leader, less than a year after launching a coup against President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita and appointing himself as interim vice president. The most recent Mali coup was appropriately described by French President Emmanuel Macron as "a coup

inside a coup." In Burkina Faso, Captain Ibrahim Traore, a 34-year-old soldier ceased power from a previous junta leader, lieutenant Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba in September, 2022. In Niger, President Mohamed Bazoum was detained by his presidential guards in which the Presidential guard commander, General Abdourahamane Tchiani declared himself leader of the military junta on July 26, 2023. While in Gabon, on August, 2023, just hours after Gabon election commission announced that President Ali Bongo Ondimba had been elected for a third term, a group of Gabonese military officers from the elite presidential guard seized power and placed the president under house arrest. General Brice Oligui Nguema has been sworn as the President of the transition government.

This trend, like the circumstances at independence, reawakened aspirations for a better living, strong and participatory government, and quick progress. Regrettably, this was not the case. Massive corruption, inadequate infrastructure, instability, and visionless leadership have made the economy comatose, resulting in widespread poverty, filth, and suffering. This has resulted in a significant pool of disgruntled individuals who have used ethnic and religious affiliations to attack the States in an attempt to break away or call attention to their plight. The majority of the time, the leadership has been timid in responding to the socioeconomic and security concerns. As a result, they've been seen as weak, hesitant, and unprepared, thus dragging the restive military into yet another round of political escapades. A country-by-country evaluation is not possible in research of this magnitude due to the scope of the subject region. As a result, we've taken a theme approach.

Research Questions

1. What is the rate of coups in Africa?
2. Why the current re-emergence of coup in West-Africa?
3. What is the impact of re-emergence of military takeover in West Africa?
- 4.

Significance of the Study

Africa began to experience military mutinies immediately after the continent opened up for decolonization and independence and the reasons for military re-emergency in 12th century of global acceptance of civilian and democratic rule need an urgent explanation. In the situation where political institutions were not matured and developed. This had made participation difficult, but political power was subjected to monopoly structuration and marginalization. This justified the inevitability of military intervention in African politics. However, military need to be discipline to know their boundary within a political sovereign state.

Theoretical Framework

Several scholars have looked at political strife as well as the origins and consequences of military coups. The early work of Jackman 1978, quoted by Ajayi

and Adeyemi (2015), ascribed the coups d'état that occurred in Africa's new governments between 1960 and 1975 to three primary reasons: social mobilization or "modernization," cultural plurality, and political considerations (i.e. political party systems and mass participation). Both popular mobilization and the presence of a dominating ethnic group, according to Jackman, had destabilizing effects on newly founded republics in Sub-Saharan Africa. He went on to say that having a lot of political parties may be disruptive, but single-party dominance has helped post-independence administrations stay stable. When it comes to election turnout (political mobilization), however, both multipartyism and the majority ethnic group have destabilizing impacts, according to Jackman. Johnson, Slater, and McGowan (1984), citing Ajayi and Adeyemi (2015), discovered that "states with relatively dynamic economies whose societies were not very socially mobilized before independence and which have maintained or restored some degree of political participation and political pluralism have experienced fewer military coups, attempted coups, and coup plots than states with the opposite set of characteristics." In other words, they came to the conclusion that some indicators of strong economic performance, such as high levels of productive employment, strong economic growth, strong export performance (export-import ratio to GNP), and diverse commodity exports, are extremely stabilizing.

McBride (2004) and Collier and Hoeffler (2007) focused their research on the military itself in an attempt to understand the internal elements that lead to a coup. The military, according to McBride, intervenes in political issues primarily for personal gain, driven by the "rents" they seek to take if they achieve power or control over the state. The connection between the risks of a coup (planned, attempted, or successful) and the amount of military spending at the period has been underlined by Collier and Hoeffler. They discovered that governments in nations with a low coup risk respond by cutting military spending, whereas governments in countries with a high coup risk prefer to raise military spending. Another perspective focuses on Africa's colonial legacy, namely the different political systems inherited from the United Kingdom, France, and Portugal. While Luckham (2001) and Coleman and Brice (1962) endorse this idea, Wells (1974) and Tardoff (1993) contend that the data does not back it up. The two West African nations most affected by successful coups (Nigeria and Niger), according to Souaré (2006), have extremely distinct colonial histories. While there have been no successful coups in Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, the other Portuguese colony in West Africa, has had three. The fact that military coups have occurred in Liberia and Ethiopia, both of which were never colonies, supports Souaré's theory. The technique taken in this study builds on some of previous work while also identifying other aspects that have yet to be extensively explored, such as the amount of socio-political and economic development deficiency in West Africa. It will illustrate the inadequacy of democratic institutions in several African

nations and the role that this can play in precipitating military coups, based on an examination of recent coups in established democratic governments.

Research Methodology

This is historical qualitative study one in which secondary data were utilized.

Source of Data and Data Collection

The secondary method of data collection was utilized, which is an embodiment of library materials such as text books, journals, periodicals, newspapers, magazines, reports and other online resources.

Data Analysis

The research is historical-descriptive which delves into historical perspective and describe the nature Africa political vulnerability and the military institution that have interest in the political affairs of West African states; propelling re-emergence of military takeover from democratic elected government.

Findings

Coup in Africa

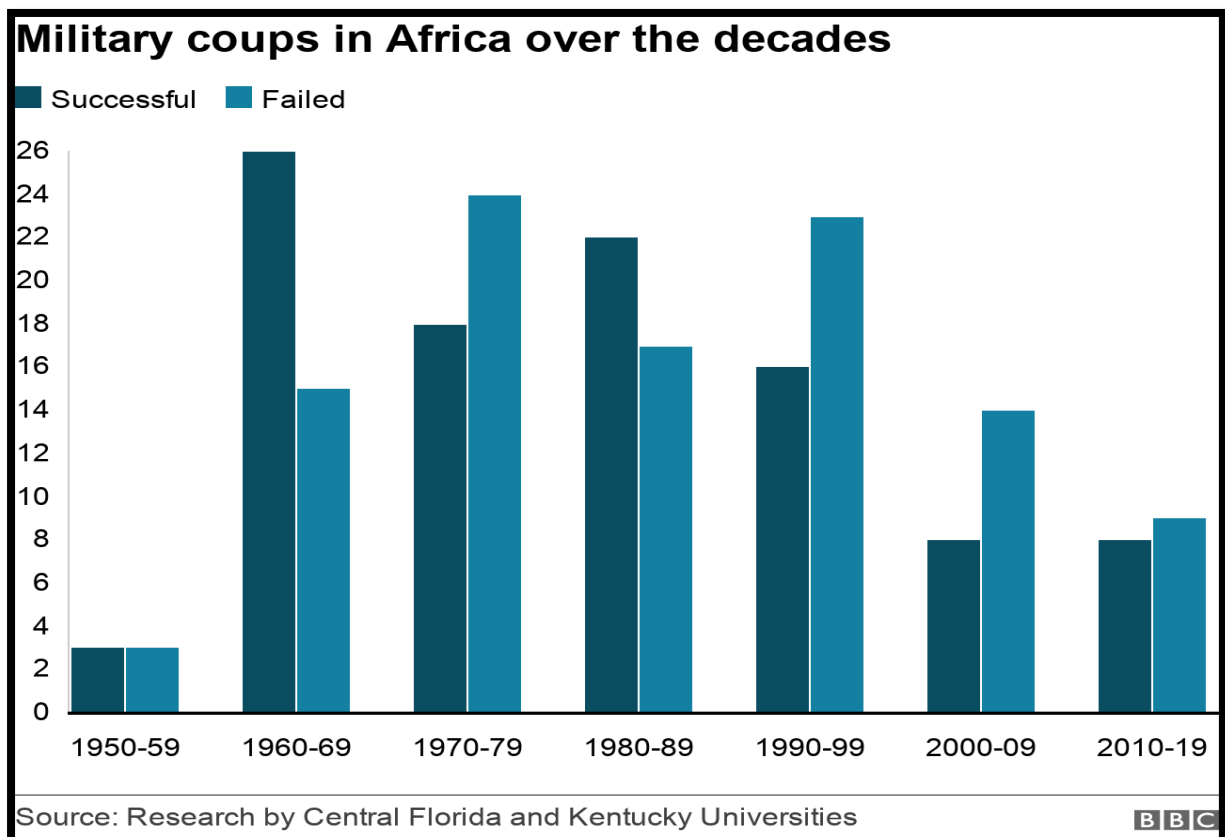
A coup d'état is the overthrow of a government by a small number of military, police, or security personnel in a short period of time (from a few hours to at least one week). It leads to the unlawful replacement of current government people or constitutional connections, and it has the potential to fundamentally alter the state's social and economic policies. It is labelled an attempted intervention or "coup attempt" if the tiny group's battle to oust the existing government fails (which usually takes less than a week). A "plot" is another term for extra-legal military or paramilitary involvement into political activities. In such a circumstance, the general public learns about it only later, when the legitimate government announces that a conspiracy has been discovered and foiled.

Since the post-independence era of the 1960s, Africa has seen more than 200 military coups, with 45 percent of them succeeding and resulting in a change in power at the top, such as the displacement of the head-of-state and government officials, and/or the dissolution of previously existing constitutional structures. Only ten African nations, namely Botswana, Cape Verde, Egypt, Eritrea, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, and Tunisia, have never had a coup d'état (whether successful, attempted, or premeditated) (Ajayi and Adeyemi, 2015). Eighty percent of the nations studied have had at least one coup or unsuccessful coup attempt in the last 52 years, and 61 percent have had several military coups (ranging from 2 to 10 in number). Between 1960 and early 2019, the annual numbers of successful coups and coup attempts in Africa are shown in the table below.

While the early post-independence era (during the 1960s) saw a large number of successful coups, the 1970s and 1980s saw a large number of both successful and

unsuccessful coup attempts. 27 (or 69 percent) of the 39 coups that occurred in the 1960s resulted in the successful overthrow of existing regimes. The fact that most African countries had been independent for a long time contributed to the rise in the failure rate of military coups (61 percent) throughout the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, they were able to put in place political structures that could survive military coup attempts. In the 1990s and 2000s, on the other hand, the number of successful and unsuccessful coups decreased, with almost half of African countries being coup-free. The absence of coups and coup attempts during this period can be attributed to a variety of factors, including foreign powers guaranteeing stability in some countries, other countries being engulfed in various forms of political violence (e.g. civil or interstate wars), or established regimes being equipped with systemic legitimacy measures that discouraged armed forces praetorian assaults.

Comparing the sub-regions of Sub-Saharan Africa strengthens the case for a link between the frequency of coups and the amount of growth in sub-regional political economy (Adetuyi, 2021). The West African sub-region, which includes 17 countries, has the greatest rate of coups (see Figure 1). This sub-region alone has had 104 military coups, accounting for over half of all coups documented throughout Africa. Military coups occurred 35 times in Central Africa and 48 times in Eastern Africa, respectively.



Current Re-Emergence of Coup in West-Africa

The toppling of a democratically elected government in Mali by a small number of military insurgents in the spring of 2012 is indicative of a re-emerging trend of coups d'état across Africa in recent years. As a result, Mali briefly fell under the authority of a handful of middle-ranking troops in March 2012, after twenty years of constitutional democracy. The nation was horribly split at the time, with Tuareg and Islamist rebel groups controlling the north and the combined junta-new civilian administration working to bring the country together. International criticism followed the coup in Mali, as did sanctions imposed by its neighbors and the fall of northern Mali to Tuareg troops. The coup was short-lived: on April 6, the junta decided to stand down in exchange for an end to sanctions with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) negotiations, and power was returned to the transitional government led by Dioncounda Traoré. Every coup d'état has its own roots, reasons, and results; in the case of Mali, it was primarily motivated by troops' dissatisfaction with the government's handling of a Tuareg-led insurrection in the north of the country.

According to the study, people's confidence that elections enable voters to dismiss non-performing leaders has declined by 11 percent points among 11 nations tested consistently since 2008. It's not that Africans don't want to elect their leaders; it's just that many of them now think their political systems are rigged.

Leaders like Conde, who was removed, are a part of the issue. The only reason he remained in power until the revolution was because he pushed through constitutional revisions in 2020 to allow him to run for a third term as president, a practice followed by other African dictators, from Uganda's Yoweri Museveni to Côte d'Ivoire's Alassane Ouattara.

The African Union has rightfully condemned Guinea's coup, but it has been quiet in reaction to other constitutional violations. These purported elite plots and double standards provide the ideal climate for young swashbuckling cops like Doumbouya, 41, to jump in and offer to save the day. "If the people are oppressed by their elites, it is up to the army to rescue them," Guinea's new leader declared, paraphrasing former Ghanaian President Jerry Rawlings, who conducted two coups.

It's possible that Doumbouya was influenced by the fiery Rawlings, who, as the leader of military juntas in Ghana in the 1980s, was particularly adept in expressing Ghanaians' dissatisfaction with their political elites. Anti-elite, anti-corruption rhetoric combined with the promise of the new may readily entice desperate voters living in political systems they perceive are broken.

Unfortunately, we should brace ourselves for additional coups throughout Africa in the coming years. They are not expected in wealthy nations with solid institutions, such as South Africa, Ghana, or Botswana, but rather in poorer, more fragile countries. As are Mali, Niger, Chad, and now Guinea, all of which have lately seen coups or attempted coups.

Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Somalia, and South Sudan are among the top twenty countries on the 2021 Fragile States Index, as are larger nations

like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia (which has been experiencing violent internal conflict for nearly a year), and Nigeria, Africa's most populous country.

Prisoners are marched out of camps. Then the bodies begin to drift down the river. This rising likelihood of coups would make Africa less predictable and stable in general, which will be a negative for investors and aggravate the economic situation.

Is it possible to reverse this unfavourable trend? Yes, but although worldwide condemnations of coups in Guinea and elsewhere are important as deterrents to other would-be power grabbers, African leaders are the only ones who can effectively reverse this alarming trend.

They are the ones in command on the ground, and their reaction to recent events will determine the outcome. They must rekindle faith in democracy's ability to benefit Africans. However, if the issues that are currently being used to justify coups in today's African democracies continue to deteriorate, the temptation to attempt something new will remain dangerously alluring, both for coupists and people.

The rise of power-hungry armies in West Africa is posing a severe danger to the region's hard-won democratic gains since the early 1990s. Guinea's recent military coup was the region's third in a year.

According to statistics from Freedom House and the Center for Systemic Peace, 14 of the 15 members of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) were democratically inclined just a few years ago. Only 11 countries qualify now, with the others on the verge of democratic collapse.

Mali's coups in August 2020 and May 2021, as well as Chad's coup in April 2021, have grave consequences for instability in a region already troubled by rising security challenges. What's to stop others from using a coup as a feasible way of gaining power after the precedent has been set?

Recognizing military coups helps to normalize these extra-legal power grabs. It simultaneously dismantles citizens' fundamental rights and safeguards in one single sweep. Government decision-making is relegated to the coup leader's whims and the men and women in uniform who helped him rise to power. He has complete control over his actions. A notable example is the Guinean junta's demand that the Central Bank freeze all public accounts in order to "protect the state's assets."

Between 2021 and 2023, West Africa have experienced coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Gabon. The military in West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa seems to see that they have a active role in changing governments in their respective countries. Their major reasons are that their leaders are not respect constitutionality, rule of law, sit-tide syndrome, and puppet of their European Colonisers, insecurity, corruption and high level of inequality in their societies.

Military coups in Africa have a poor track record when it comes to civilians' well-being. Guinea is a good example. Colonel Lansana Conté seized control in a

military coup in 1984. He then presided over more than two decades of harsh government marked by human rights violations and mismanagement.

Following Conté's death in 2008, a military coup led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara threw Guinea into even more chaos. Security forces killed at least 150 demonstrators and raped scores of women at the national stadium in the capital city of Conakry during a demonstration against Camara's administration in 2009. Guineans have been traumatized, destitute, and economically isolated as a result of military dictatorship.

As a result, it is evident that the coup in Guinea must be reversed. The challenge is how to do it in the most effective way possible. Any acknowledgement of the coup might encourage such military action in the future. So far, the coup has been universally condemned by the world community. Guinea's participation in Ecowas and the African Union has also been suspended, and the junta has been sanctioned.

Impact of Re-Emergence of Military takeover in West Africa

Many people have blamed a 'coup contagion' phenomena for the high number of successful coups in West and Central Africa. The risk of contagion in West and Central Africa may have had an impact on the success rate of military coups in these two sub-regions. Because military coups in one country increase the risk of military coups in other countries in the sub-region, it has been suggested that the success of a coup in one country determines the result of military coups in neighbouring nations. Mauritania (August 2008), Guinea (December 2008), Guinea-Bissau (December 2008 and April 2012), Guinea (2021), Mali (2020, 2022), Bukina Faso (September, 2022) Niger (July, 2023) and Gabon (August, 2023) are among the African nations that have fallen victim to armed forces during the last five years. A number of questions arise as a result of this: What causes Africa to be such a dangerous place, and what socio-political factors foster dissent? Is there a pattern of events that can be used to forecast when military coups are most likely to take place? Is there anything governments can do to lessen this danger, and if so, what are they? More than 200 military coups have taken place in Africa since independence, including both successful and unsuccessful efforts. Foreign influences at work at various times (post-independence, Cold War, and post-Cold War eras) have all played a role in stoking hostilities and coups in the area. Depending on the national context, destabilizing influences have been numerous and varied: Established and stable states burdened by poor governance and corrupt officials; autocratic regimes repressing any form of opposition but with socio-political discontent and instability simmering beneath the surface; and autocratic regimes repressing any form of opposition but with socio-political discontent and instability simmering beneath the surface. Other fundamental elements, on the other hand, will be the subject of our research. For example, continuously poor economic development, which is accompanied by high levels of poverty, is a sign of the societal unrest that can lead to military

coups in African countries. Furthermore, in the past, Western powers' ambition for geostrategic influence and security has translated into shadow engagement in African inter- and intrastate wars, as well as backing for African tyrants, fuelling the embers of violent rebellion.

The previous sections, which focused on the trends and causes of military coups in Africa, gave a broad overview of successful and unsuccessful military coups motivated primarily by ideological reasons. We've discovered connections between coups and issues including nationalism, the Cold War, political instability, and economic performance. During the 1970s and 1980s, military coups were more common, but by the mid-1990s and early 2000s, they had receded drastically. Many African nations have made significant progress in strengthening governance and revamping their economies, which has contributed to this. Indeed, the 1990s saw the greatest expansion of democratization in Africa. Many African countries saw the rise of a free press, multipartyism, autonomous unions, and a range of civil society groups for the first time as a result of the winds of political upheaval that swept over the continent. By the year 2000, Africa had already had its first free and fair multiparty elections, with over 30 member nations having done so. According to a McKinsey report, Africa's real GDP increased at a pace of 4.9 percent per year between 2000 and 2008, more than double the rate of growth in the 1980s and 1990s. African nations have experienced profound political transitions after more than 50 years of independence – many are now democracies - and their thriving economies make them one of the world's fastest-growing regions. However, some people have fallen back into the trap of political instability marked by the re-emergence of military coups. Has the restructured and more transparent political climate successfully reduced the number of military coups? What has been the economic consequence of African democratization? Is there a link (good or negative) between the political and economic development processes in African countries? It's critical to try to understand the core causes of military coups in countries that were regarded politically stable at the time because they had strong economic policies and growth rates. In the West African area, the Republic of Mali has been characterized as a state that effectively moved from autocracy to democratic administration in the early 1990s, achieving and maintaining strong levels of economic growth. However, as we previously stated, it shockingly lost that distinction in March 2012, when middle-ranking soldiers revolting against resurgent Tuareg rebels stormed the presidential palace, captured the state television station, declared the Constitution suspended, and expelled President Amadou Toumani Touré just weeks before his second term ended. There are plenty of more instances. Mamadou Tanja, the democratically elected President of Niger, had been ousted in a military coup two years before, on February 18, 2010. This was in response to President Obama's plan to amend the Constitution to prolong his second five-year term by three years. To use another example, on August 6, 2008, Mauritania's first democratically elected President, Sidi Mohamed

Ould Cheikh Abdallahi, was deposed by a group of senior military officers who claimed their actions were motivated by the country's deteriorating social, economic, and security conditions.

A purported coup attempt against Madagascar's democratically elected President, Marc Ravalomanana, who was seeking for re-election, failed in December 2006. However, following a lengthy power struggle with the opposition, President Ravalomanana was forced to retire two years later (in March 2008). While all of these nations have had more than one military coup d'état or attempted coup since their independence (as have many other African countries), the remarkable point of similarity is that they all had some level of political stability and good economic growth at the time of the coups. Military coups d'état or attempted coups have occurred in 15 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa over the last decade, including Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, S. Tomé and Prncipe, and Sierra Leone. Our task is to figure out why coups d'état and attempted coups have resurfaced in democratic nations like Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Gabon, and Niger.

The ruling elites in Guinea, Gabon, Niger, Mali, and Chad are mainly distinct or alienated from the people they allegedly lead. They are under threat from a variety of sources, including popularly supported radical Islamist reform movements, COVID-19 depredations, and the effects of climate change. Transfers of power in the most recent wave of coups have tended to occur inside governing cliques—a personnel reshuffle that has largely gone unnoticed by the general public. They are marked by anti-corruption rhetoric and little change in behaviour on the part of those in power. Coups have not been the vehicle for social upheaval, with the exception of Ghana's 1979 coup, which brought Jerry Rawlings to power.

Conclusion

External actors have been accused of working with the military, according to critics. Tensions between civilian and military factions are rising, as the economic crisis that led to Bashir's resignation in April 2019 remains unsolved. Sudan's overall debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is largely in the form of arrears and fines, has pushed the Sudanese government to decrease subsidies, exacerbating the country's tough economic realities. Furthermore, the severe economic consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic have exacerbated Sudan's economic profile, making it one of the world's poorest countries. Approximately 6.01 million Sudanese, or 14% of the country's 44.17 million people, live in abject poverty. Following the revelation of the thwarted coup, the citizenry remained eerily quiet, reinforcing the belief that a successful military coup would be

accepted without public resistance. This is a negative indicator for Sudan's democratic consolidation.

Military administrations in Africa have done worse than civilian counterparts, according to research; moreover, performance should not come at the price of legitimacy. Despite the fact that civilian governments have continually failed the African people, military engagement in politics remains an anomaly that must be opposed.

Another tragic example is Guinea's recent military insurgency. Despite President Alpha Condé's public statements that a coup would be impossible under his leadership, the 83-year-old leader was detained by Guinea's military forces during a coup in the capital city of Conakry on September 5. The coup, orchestrated by Special Forces leader Mamady Doumbouya, drove the world's largest supplier of bauxite - used to make aluminium- into chaos. Doumbouya, as predicted, dissolved the constitution and the government right away. He declared the military's goodwill, laid out a transition plan, and took office as president. He formed the National Rallying Committee for Development (CNRD), which he led, and became the military's commander-in-chief, while a civilian prime minister led the government. His proposal also proposed the formation of the National Transition Council, a legislative (CNT). Doumbouya seemed to be in complete command. He blamed the country's poor infrastructure, corruption, and economic stagnation on the deposed president. Military administrations in Africa have done worse than civilian counterparts, according to research; moreover, performance should not come at the price of legitimacy. Despite the fact that civilian governments have continually failed the African people, military engagement in politics remains an anomaly that must be opposed.

The world community has condemned the two countries' takeover of power. Guinea has been suspended from all decision-making venues of the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Guineans, who had been frustrated by two successive post-independence leaders - Sékou Touré and Lansana Conté - who stayed in power for 26 and 24 years, respectively, were surprised by Condé's manipulation of the constitution to allow for his third term in office and perplexed by his disputed victory in the October 2020 elections.

In Chad, Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno's military administration is more interested in power consolidation than a democratic transition, while in Mali, the temporary military junta is making no meaningful progress toward achieving the 18-month power disengagement deadline. ECOWAS and the African Union are going through a difficult period.

Indeed, national, regional, and international players have "refused" to take long-term, multi-faceted approaches to addressing the structural roots of Africa's instability and underdevelopment. Instead, both parties have continued to make empty promises about African security and economic initiatives.

Why is Africa experiencing a return of military coups? Something inherently wrong with Africa's current socio-political institutions. On the continent, the liberal peace architecture has failed. Within the broader discourse on effective "internal mechanisms," which encompasses peace, negotiation, accountability, and reconciliation, proponents of this school of thought have continued to celebrate the democratic peace theory, which is based on the "so-called" resilience of political and representative institutions, as well as institutional constraints. These characteristics are absent from the brand of democracy that has been conveyed to Africa. Any attempt by people to examine the nature of their relationships with the state, based on shared identity, common values, and aims, has been met with opposition by Africa's ruling class and political entrepreneurs, who have individualized public goods and controlled political forums. African communities have become militarized to the point where they applaud the military's return in politics in West Africa and the Sahel.

While the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) completed the departure of 6,000 troops and police from Darfur by the deadline of June 30, one could question why international forces were deployed in the Sahel. As shown in Mali, Chad, and Guinea, where the military has attacked recently, foreign soldiers have been unable to restore peace in the Sahel and have had little impact on regime stability. Indeed, national, regional, and international players have "refused" to take long-term, multi-faceted approaches to addressing the structural roots of Africa's instability and underdevelopment. Instead, both parties have continued to make empty promises about African security and economic initiatives. This "blind" push for liberal socio-economic and political templates has shortened the era of the ideologically motivated development plan across Africa.

Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, the leader of Guinea's recent coup, reiterated these explanations, claiming "poor and rampant corruption" as reasons for toppling 83-year-old President Alpha Conde. The troops who conducted a coup in neighbouring Mali last year blamed their actions on "stealing" and "poor government." Similar reasons were used by the Sudanese and Zimbabwean generals that deposed Omar al-Bashir in 2019 and Robert Mugabe in 2017.

Afrobarometer, a research network, conducted polls in 19 African nations, finding that 6 out of 10 respondents believe corruption is on the rise in their country (63% in Guinea), and 2 out of 3 believe their governments are failing to combat it. Furthermore, 72% say regular residents face "retaliation or other negative repercussions" if they disclose corruption to authorities, indicating that Africans feel their governments are not just complicit in, but actively defend corrupt systems. When it comes to poverty, Africa's frail economy have been battered by the coronavirus epidemic, exacerbating an already awful situation.

In Nigeria, the largest economy in West Africa, one out of every three people is currently unemployed. South Africa, Africa's most industrialized country, is in the

same boat. The number of severely poor individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa has already surpassed 500 million, accounting for half of the population.

This is happening on the world's youngest continent, with a median age of 20 and a population that is expanding faster than anyplace else, exacerbating an already strong battle for resources.

These conditions are fertile ground for coups, and increasingly desperate young Africans who have lost patience with their corrupt governments are welcoming coupists promising dramatic change, as seen on the streets of Guinea following the takeover, with some ecstatic Guineans kissing the troops.

Recommendations

In the light of the above, the following are recommended:

- (i) The military should focus on their functions and restrain from interventionist move towards state's politics.
- (ii) Democratic leaders should allow for proper participation of the citizenry in political affairs.
- (iii) Democratic leaders should allow the citizenry to participate in the political processes and avoid election rigging that may undermine security that may attract military takeover.
- (iv) Democratic leaders should deliberate efforts to grow the economy to avoid inflationary or deflationary trend. Economic collapse and institutional decay may attract the military to power (Ibrahim, Liman & Mato, 2014).
- (v) ECOWAS and the African Union should unequivocally denounce and reject illegitimate government changes, and be consistent in their implementation of sanctions to prevent aiding illegal regime transitions intentionally or inadvertently.

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