

Africa's political and economic problems and how to eliminate them

[Economics](#)



The picture of Africa has long been depicted as one with Africans who are malnourished and dying from disease and starvation. This is in irony for Africa being the second largest and second most populous continent in the world very rich in minerals, gold, diamonds and other natural resources. Much of these unsightly images of Africa can be attributed to the political and economic factors that attributed much to its poverty and political unrest.

As such, Africa's political and economic problems are herein enumerated and discussed so as to be able to evaluate and eliminate the aforementioned factors that contribute to Africa's plight as a continent in poverty and distress. This, with the objective of determining the best possible solutions so as to give sustainability, if not prosperity to Africa that has long been needed and sought for by its people.

Africa's Political Problems

Africa has been suffering from the turmoil of instability, corruption, violence and authoritarianism since colonial period. Although there are a number of African nations today that are under republic governance with forms of presidential rule, only a few have been able to take advantage and sustain democratic governments.

This can be attested by several leaderships that failed to give the people their power of sovereignty and freedom in what can be called misguided democracies. An example of such leadership abuse happened during the 35-year-rule of Mobutu Sese Seko as head of a “ democratic” government in Zaire (renamed Congo in 1997) when he and his ministers sold and pocketed

the lucrative mining rights to Zaire's substantial cobalt, nickel, and diamond mines (Payne & Lee).

Africa's Political and Economic Problems

Africa has also been suffering from civil wars, violence and crimes as violence is being used as a mechanism for resolving disputes and for bringing about change. Both colonial and apartheid regimes used violence and repression to maintain power and some degree of social order, and on the other hand, opposition movements resorted to violent tactics as a means to attain political change (Rauch).

Moreover, violence and crimes have been resorted to during transition periods of repressive, authoritarian governments to more democratic forms of government. For example, following the dramatic reform announcement of State President F. W. De Klerk, the transition in South Africa was marked by extreme social conflict and violence which can be attested by statistics of more than eight South Africans dying daily as a result of political violence (Rauch).

Conflicts and political violence are also triggered or aggravated by poverty in Africa, along with racial and ethnic division, and a culture of political intolerance. Many African states have also cycled through series of brutal coups and military dictatorships. The number of coups and politically motivated crimes are appalling. The period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s for example, saw more than 70 coups and 13 presidential assassinations in Africa.