

Madagascar

2016 Country Review

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Chapter 1

Country Overview

Country Overview

MADAGASCAR

Madagascar is located in southern Africa, an island in the Indian Ocean. Its population is predominantly of mixed Asian and African origin, as the first settlers there are thought to be Indonesians who brought African wives and slaves around the first century. Arabs established trading posts along the northwest coast in the 7th century. The Portuguese first sighted the island in the 1500s and other Europeans followed. Madagascar became a French colony in 1896 and gained independence in 1960.

After 12 years of rule by the same president, a coup put the military in power in 1972. A new constitution was adopted in 1975 and the country was renamed the Democratic Republic of Madagascar with Ratsiraka elected president. During the 16 subsequent years of President Ratsiraka's rule, Madagascar continued under a government committed to socialism based on the 1975 constitution. During 1992-93, free presidential and National Assembly elections were held, ending 17 years of single-party rule. Since then, however, the country has seen periods of political crisis caused by contests in presidential elections. In January 2009 political unrest erupted into violence. President Ravalomanana resigned following a fierce power struggle with opposition leader Andry Rajoelina, who then assumed power with military backing. In the following years, the country has been embroiled in political instability with the terms of various reconciliation accords repeatedly being violated. However, the elections of 2013 were intended to return the country to order.

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The country's economy consists mainly of agriculture, including fishing and forestry. Economic development has been hampered by factors including low domestic savings and poor social and economic infrastructure. The economy is also vulnerable to external shocks, such as intermittent cyclones and drought and fluctuations in key commodity prices.

Editor's Note:

Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been

ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013, as discussed above. Impeachment proceedings against the president in 2015 have somewhat marred Madagascar's transition to stability; the court ruling invalidating that move calmed the political landscape.

Key Data

Key Data	
Region:	Africa
Population:	24650868
Climate:	Tropical along coast, temperate inland, arid in south
Languages:	French (official) Malagasy (official)
Currency:	1 Malagasy franc (FMG) = 100 centimes
Holiday:	Independence Day is 26 June (1960), Republic Day is 30 December, Commeration Day is 29 March
Area Total:	587040
Area Land:	581540
Coast Line:	4828

Madagascar

Country Map



Africa

Regional Map



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Chapter 2

Political Overview

History

The written history of Madagascar began in the 7th century C.E. when Arabs established trading posts along the northwest coast. European contact began in the 1500s, when a Portuguese sea captain, Diego Dias, sighted the island after his ship became separated from a fleet bound for India.

In the late 17th century, the French established trading posts along the east coast. From about 1774 to 1824, it was a favorite haunt for pirates, including Americans, one of whom brought Malagasy rice to South Carolina.

Beginning in the 1790s, the Merina King Andrianimpoinimerina began establishing control over the major part of the island. In 1817, his successor, Radama I, and the British governor of Mauritius concluded a treaty abolishing the slave trade, which had been important to Madagascar's economy. In return, the island received British military and financial assistance.

British influence remained strong for several decades, during which the Merina ruling court was converted to Presbyterianism, Congregationalism and Anglicanism.

French influence on the island grew throughout the century, especially in the south and the west. The British accepted the imposition of a French protectorate over Madagascar in 1885 in return for eventual control over Zanzibar (now part of Tanzania), and as part of an overall definition of spheres of influence in the area.

Absolute French control over Madagascar was established by military force from 1895 to 1896, and the Merina monarchy was abolished.

Malagasy troops fought in France, Morocco and Syria during World War I. After France fell to the Germans in 1942, the Vichy government administered Madagascar. Then British troops occupied the strategic island to preclude seizure by the Japanese. The United Kingdom gave the island back to France in 1943.

In 1947, with French prestige at low ebb, a nationalist uprising overtook much of the island. Violent French suppression ultimately quelled the insurgency, but only after an estimated 100,000 Malagasy people, mostly in the east, were killed. Following France's Africa policy shift and the

passage of the "Loi Cadre" (Overseas Reform Act) in 1956, new institutions were created and Madagascar moved toward independence in relative peace.

The Malagasy Republic was proclaimed on Oct. 14, 1958, as an autonomous state within the French community. A period of provisional government ended with the adoption of a constitution in 1959 and full independence on June 26, 1960.

Madagascar's first president, Philibert Tsiranana, was elected with significant French support when his Social Democratic Party gained power at independence in 1960. Tsiranana maintained very close ties with France both politically and economically. His policy initiatives, however, were hardly a success. In May 1969, the Malagasy economy was in shambles and Tsiranana's grasp on power was slipping. In March 1972, he was reelected without opposition, but two months later he succumbed to a coup d'etat by a self-appointed military directorate.

The military junta itself was not well centralized and the unrest continued both in the state house and around the capital. Tsiranana's successor, Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa, was forced to resign on Feb. 5, 1975, handing over executive power to Lt. Col. Richard Ratsimandrava; Ratsimandrava was assassinated six days later. A provisional military directorate then ruled until a new government was formed in June 1975 under Adm. Didier Ratsiraka.

For the political developments from the mid-1970s, see the "Political Conditions" section of this review.

Note on History: In certain entries, open source content from the State Department Background Notes and Country Guides have been used. A full listing of sources is available in the Bibliography.

Political Conditions

Madagascar Under Ratsiraka: Economic Disaster

Shortly after taking power, President Ratsiraka successfully consolidated his military power base and began winning over rural support. He doffed his uniform in favor of a civilian government based on the principals of non-aligned scientific socialism. During the subsequent 16 years of President Ratsiraka's rule, Madagascar continued under a government committed to revolutionary socialism, based on the 1975 constitution.

National elections in 1982 and 1989 returned Ratsiraka for second and third seven-year presidential terms. For much of this period, only limited and restrained political opposition was tolerated, with no direct criticism of the president permitted in the press.

The international community viewed these compulsory elections more as an attempt by Ratsiraka to gain legitimacy under the guise of an opaque democracy, than an attempt to initiate a competitive political process. Despite this questionable participatory process, Ratsiraka's early years did seem to reflect an adherence to his socialist ideology rather than merely the use of socialism as a tool for the princely garnering of power.

As part of his socialist approach, from 1975-1979 Ratsiraka made two significant shifts in the Malagasy economic system. He nationalized all industries, including foreign industries, and he decentralized the base of production to the provinces. Not surprisingly, the immediate effect of his nationalization program was a precipitous drop in the value of the Malagasy franc. He attempted to stem the tide of fiscal collapse by pegging the Malagasy franc to the French franc at 50:1. This infelicitous use of monetary policy to address fiscal shortfalls led to a complete economic collapse. By the middle of 1979, the central bank was completely void of foreign currency and Madagascar was unable to purchase imports on which it was highly dependent.

Concurrent to this monetary disaster, Ratsiraka decentralized production to the provinces. The original intent was to create economic and political opportunities to the benefit of people from other ethnic groups than the Merina, while reducing the significant urbanization pressures felt in Antananarivo.

Madagascar's primary exports are agricultural commodities. Ratsiraka, therefore, created agricultural processing plants in the provinces. Unfortunately, the factory creation was not matched by infrastructure improvements. It was therefore impossible to maintain the factories or to get perishable goods to the export processing zones in the capital in a timely fashion. These provincial factories thus rapidly turned into white elephants, requiring substantial government subsidies for their continued operation. Since the government was in fiscal collapse, it could not provide these inputs and the provincial factory system collapsed.

The economic crisis of 1979 was a turning point in Malagasy politics. Ratsiraka was a believer in the principals of self-reliance and a supporter of the Organization of African Unity's 1981 Lagos Plan of Action advocating collective self-reliance as an alternative to World Bank accelerated growth principals. Yet, the economic crisis forced Ratsiraka to go against his policy of self-reliance and request aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1980-81. The economic mandates of the IMF led to a need for further structural changes and Madagascar was forced to ask for World Bank structural assistance, eventually embarking upon a Structural Adjustment Program.

By the mid-1980s, Ratsiraka had invited a nascent United States Agency for International Development mission, abandoning his non-alignment policies one and for all. For this period between 1981 and 1988, Ratsiraka benefited both from Soviet and Western aid.

With the collapse of Soviet assistance in the late 1980s, Ratsiraka was forced to do what he loathed most - ease restrictions on political expression. The United States and other international powers placed increasing pressure on the Ratsiraka regime for fundamental change. Ratsiraka had already been relaxing socialist dogma to institute some liberal, private-sector reforms. Now, he was forced to introduce political reforms. He eliminated press censorship and compulsory electoral participation in 1989, and he released the ban on competitive political parties in 1990.

Growing Opposition

These actions were insufficient, however, to placate growing opposition forces. The opposition parties united under a common coalition led by former professor of medicine, Zafy Albert. This party coalition came to be known as the "Hery Volona" (Living Forces).

In 1991, the government was crippled by an 80,000 strong eight month civil servants strike. As a remnant of Ratsiraka's socialist policies, an archaic law supporting the right of civil servants to collect pay even when on strike was still in effect. With the economy at a complete stand still and payroll being met, the country once again went into a fiscal crisis and depleted its foreign reserve. This time, the IMF agreements forbade the pegging of the currency, and the Malagasy franc went into a freefall.

Unable to buy basic support, residents in the capital were quick to support the "Hery Velona." Zafy Albert formed a shadow government in the summer of 1991 proclaiming himself head of the "Haute Autorite" (parallel assembly). The "Haute Autorite" immediately gained legitimacy as foreign missions, led by the United States, decided that the best way to stay out of Malagasy politics was to honor both governments. All correspondence was addressed jointly and all state visits were made to both offices.

In a last attempt to regain power, Ratsiraka replaced the prime minister in August 1991. He suffered an irreparable setback soon thereafter, however, when his troops fired on peaceful demonstrators marching on his suburban palace, killing more than 30. In an increasingly weakened position, Ratsiraka acceded to negotiations with the "Haute Autorite" on the formation of a transitional government.

The resulting "Panorama Convention" of Oct. 31, 1991, stripped Ratsiraka of nearly all of his powers, created interim institutions, and set an 18-month timetable for completing a transition to a new form of constitutional government. The High Constitutional Court was retained as the ultimate

judicial arbiter of the process. Ratsiraka maintained his title, but the "Haute Autorite," led by Zafy Albert, maintained most of the authority to govern the affairs of the state.

In March 1992, a widely representative National Forum, organized by the Malagasy Christian Council of Churches, drafted a new constitution. Troops guarding the proceedings killed several pro-Ratsiraka "federalists" who tried to disrupt the forum in protest of draft constitutional provisions that would prevent the incumbent president from running again. The text of the new constitution was put to a nationwide referendum in August 1992 and approved by a wide margin, despite efforts by federalists to disrupt balloting in several coastal areas.

President Zafy and the Early 1990s

Despite objections by the "Hery Velona," the High Constitutional Court ruled that presidential elections could be held and that Ratsiraka could run as a candidate. The election was held on Nov. 25, 1992. Zafy Albert secured 45.1 percent of the votes cast to Ratsiraka's 29.2 percent. Since no candidate won a majority, a runoff election was held in February 1993, wherein Zafy decisively defeated Ratsiraka. Madagascar entered into its Third Republic.

Ratsiraka seemed genuinely surprised; observers estimate he thought he could not lose at the polls. Like Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, Ratsiraka overestimated his rural base of support and underestimated the tide of resentment against him in urban areas. Zafy Albert was sworn in as president on March 27, 1993, accompanied by violent clashes between active forces and federalists in the north.

While Ratsiraka recognized the election results and ceded power, he refused to physically leave the presidential palace. This standoff resulted in President Zafy embarrassingly having to govern from home. Ultimately, the North Korean government intervened with a resolution to the problem, building Ratsiraka an even grander palace 20 kilometers from the capital. In 1996, three years after ceding power, Ratsiraka finally left the presidential palace.

After years of failed socialist economic policies, Madagascar had taken, since 1990, important steps towards economic reforms were taken, by reducing the government's presence in the productive sectors of the economy. Consensus arrived on achieving a structural adjustment program with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank as soon as possible after nearly four years of political dispute. Today there is fairly universal agreement between party platforms on the goals of developing the private sector, improving export volumes, creating jobs, and reducing public sector deficits and debts.

Meanwhile, a nationwide legislative election was held in June 1993 for a new National Assembly, which, under the new constitution, would exercise legislative authority, along with the prime

minister, whom it elected. It appeared that parties supporting Zafy and the "Hery Velona" had won 75 of the 134 seats. Before the first session of the Assembly, however, intensive party realignment occurred in support for candidates who intended to contest the office of the prime minister. By August, Francisque Ravony, a candidate opposed both to Zafy's regime and to Didier Ratsiraka's AREMA Party, was elected by the Assembly as the new prime minister and formed a cabinet.

The redefinition of Madagascar's territorial divisions and the increased devolution of administrative decision-making were on the new National Assembly's legislative agenda. The proportional representation system for the election of legislators contributed to a significant increase in the number of political parties and special-interest groups. For his part, President Zafy was a supporter of a highly centralized unitary state and worked incessantly to reverse movements of federation within the Assembly.

By 1994, it appeared that Ravony no longer commanded a majority in the Assembly, and he and his government were urged to resign. Zafy Albert decided to use the opportunity created by the weakened prime minister. In September 1995, he decided to attempt to undermine parliamentary authority by proposing a referendum on a constitutional amendment that would give the power of appointing the prime minister to the president.

Intensified Presidential Powers

After a campaign of public befuddlement, the measure passed by a narrow margin. This was a critical juncture in Madagascar's Third Republic. The 1992 constitution, which called for a mixed system based on the executive authority of the prime minister, in effect, was shifted to a mixed system in which the president holds not only executive authority, but also substantial legislative authority.

Zafy Albert defended this shift by arguing that France also had a strong presidential system. This measure, however, lent a great deal more power to the presidency than the French equivalent; despite the executive authority of the French president, the French legislature operates completely independent of the executive, reserving the right to select its own prime minister. The international community, thus, saw the passing of this referendum as a step towards the autocratic centralization of power.

Immediately following the referendum, President Zafy replaced Prime Minister Ravony replaced him with Prime Minister Ravotovahiny. Following the installation of the new government, internal dissention over economic austerity measures dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, as well as accusations of mismanagement, led to the resignation of the Ravotovahiny administration.

Zafy reacted by further attempting to centralize power, creating a need to strengthen his lines of patronage. Graft at the highest levels became commonplace. Ultimately, the legislature used Zafy's misappropriation of funds as grounds for impeachment and Zafy was removed from office in June 1996. An interim government (headed by Ratsirahonana) was established, and won a vote of confidence in the legislature in July 1996.

Ratsiraka's Return to Power

A presidential election was held later in 1996. While more than 15 candidates contested, only Ratsiraka and Zafy proved to be viable candidates. Ratsiraka won the first round with a minority of votes. Ratsiraka won the second round of elections and the presidency on Nov. 3, 1996, and was officially inaugurated early the following year. Didier Ratsiraka, returned to power within a political arena that had been constitutionally transformed in terms of political power brokerage

Ratsiraka appointed Pascal Raktamavo as the new prime minister from a list of candidates nominated by the National Assembly, and a new government was formed. In 1997, an extension was granted to the term of the National Assembly.

Constitutional Changes

On March 15, 1998 a national referendum to reform the constitution of Madagascar's Third Republic passed by a narrow margin (52 percent "yes," 48 percent "no"). Broadly viewed as an extension of the 1996-97 presidential elections, this was a significant victory for President Ratsiraka. The constitutional revisions were intended to bring a return to much of the state structure if not the favor of the Second Republic.

In practice, the new constitution would devolve national government institutions to lend both greater autonomy and greater spending power to regional governments. It was widely believed, however, that the institutional vacuum left in Antananarivo would allow President Ratsiraka to take up a great deal more political space. As regional government remained subservient to the national government in Ratsiraka's form of decentralization, and few constitutional guarantees existed to protect regional governments from encroachment from the center, regional governors would have little power to challenge the president's newly expanded authority. As a result, the constitutional revisions offered a great deal more power to a presidency, which already held the power to appoint the prime minister with little question.

In the days leading up to the national referendum, the "Hery Velona" (Living Forces) and other opposition protests coincided with university student protests over fee increases and grant decreases. The two protests merged in the streets of the often-tumultuous Analakely quarter of

Antananarivo. The first day of protests, March 13, was uneventful, but met with government warnings that no right to assemble had been granted.

The government position was taken as a challenge by students as more than 10,000 filled the quarter the following day. A confused set of speeches had opposition leaders and student political groups challenging constitutional reform, while another set of speeches addressed student economic shortfalls. In a Second Republic style event, gendarmes, police and military joined forces in great numbers to disperse the protesters with tear gas and batons. The protest spread up the hill to Antananarivo's wealthy and tourist Antaninarena district before government forces were able to dispel the protesters and the crowds that gathered to watch.

Legislative Elections

Parliamentary elections were then held in 1998. The legislative elections of 1998 did little to restore the flow of Malagasy democracy. Originally called for May 1 by the president, they were postponed for six weeks in an attempt to mollify opposition complaints that notice was too short.

The elections were widely viewed to have been "free and fair" and challenges to the results were limited to a small number of districts. International observers declared the elections free of significant flaws. Still, alternative accounts have pointed to significant patterns of rural vote-buying, national identity card fraud and manipulation, ballot irregularities and intimidation at the polls. At minimum, the dismal voter turnout appeared to have reflected a combination of voter apathy, confusion and frustration.

Ratsiraka's AREMA candidates emerged on top winning 64 of the National Assembly's 150 seats, but leaving him short of an absolute majority. As independents (who tend to follow the president) took a record 31 seats and the LEADER FANILO Party (which commonly votes with AREMA) won 17 seats, President Ratsiraka enjoyed great legislative support for his programs.

Still, while AREMA won 42 percent of the seats in legislature, it only won some 23 percent of the popular vote nationwide. This result demonstrated that while electoral procedures may have been largely followed, the population lines on which the districts are partitioned greatly favored President Ratsiraka's AREMA Party.

In late July, under significant pressure from the president, the popular prime minister resigned. The timing of the legislative elections and the pressure on the prime minister cannot help but lead to speculation that President Ratsiraka was paving the road for a rapid constitutional conventional that would ratify the changes suggested in the March 1998 referendum.

While President Ratsiraka's AREMA Party fared well enough in the legislative elections to avoid a

serious threat to the president's policy initiatives, its failure to capture 51 percent of the vote meant that it had to form a coalition government. As with any coalition government, the leading party must appease the demands of the coalition partners. In the months immediately following the elections, the coalition partners were not overtly demanding. However, by late 1999 significant rifts began to emerge. Prime Minister Tantely Andrianarivo's was unable to command the independent party votes necessary. He was, therefore, forced to turn to the Leader Fanilo Party and the RPSD.

Prime Minister Andranarivo, a close ally of President Ratsiraka, was compelled to make a decision. He had to decide either continue to govern from a minority position, seeking legislative advocates on a case-by-case basis, or he had to opt to enter into a coalition with these hitherto moderate opposition parties.

For their part, the leadership of the Leader Fanilo and the RPSD had been trying to put significant pressure on the Prime Minister to invite them into a coalition with AREMA. However, such a coalition could have quickly turned against the president. Ratsiraka, therefore, made it abundantly clear that he expected the prime minister to turn away from a "suspect" coalition.

Citing a fear of acting as Brutus, Andranarivo fervently closed the door to a coalition government on Aug. 1, 2000. This move did not quell the Leader Fanilo and the RPSD, making the process of legislation action difficult.

Quality of Life

Meanwhile, as a result of the years of poor governance, mismanagement and corruption, health conditions in Madagascar continue to be poor, as judged by the country's relatively high infant mortality rate and long list of endemic diseases. Health facilities are concentrated in urban areas, but a network of local clinics, supplemented by mobile health units, serve the countryside. The quality of health care facilities varies dramatically as medical training in Madagascar often suffers from corruption and professional neglect.

Malaria is still found over much of the island, leprosy and tuberculosis continue to be major diseases, and debilitating parasitic diseases and venereal diseases are widespread. A cholera epidemic claimed 1,800 lives between March 1999 and the end of 2000.

The human, social and environmental situations in Madagascar were negatively affected when two cyclones ravaged the country in quick succession. At the end of February 2000, Cyclone Eline caused massive flooding and left thousands homeless. One week later, Cyclone Gloria compounded the devastation. More than a half million people were affected by the cyclones. A third cyclone hit a month later. The United Nations sent supplies to the area, and urged other countries to follow suit, but the call went largely unheard. Senior humanitarian officials called the

situation "desperate" as much of the northeast city of Antalaha was destroyed and the country's valuable vanilla plants were dessimated.

By December 2000, it became clear that the cereal crop would, in effect, be destroyed by the three cyclones; the growing season was thus a poor one. In addition, severe drought and locusts plagued the southern part of the country, leading an estimated 240,000 people without food. Rice output was also estimated to have dropped 15 percent to around 2.2 million tons. Maize production declined. The international community had a limited response to the food shortages.

The Senate

Following from the 1992 constitution, Madagascar was supposed to have a bicameral legislature, however, a senate was never created. Following the constitutional revisions enacted with the successful constitutional referendum of March 1998, two-thirds of the senators were to be elected by provincial representatives and one-third were to be appointed by the president.

On March 18, 2001, Madagascar held its first senatorial elections. The 1,720 electors comprised of mayors and provincial leaders were challenged with electing 60 of the 90 senators. With strong support in the provincial leadership following the December 2000 elections, AREMA was able to capture 49 of the 60 seats. With the presidential appointments that brought the number of AREMA senators to 79 of 90.

One of the other provisions of Ordinance 98-001 is that the Senate can change the constitution with a two-thirds vote, bypassing the referendum process. Because AREMA dominated the Senate, President Ratsiraka held considerable influence over the Senate to change the constitution as it suited him.

The Elections of 2001 and its Aftermath

Madagascar's presidential elections were scheduled for November 2001. President Ratsiraka lost much of his popularity following negative shifts in the economy. Perhaps more importantly, his traditional base of support, Malagasy federalists, the Catholic Church, even a number of generals and retired generals, joined the opposition in distancing themselves from Ratsiraka following his implementation of Ordinance 98-001.

Ratsiraka's success in the upcoming elections, therefore, would be predicated on his ability to use the new Senate to manipulate the constitution in his favor. The most likely scenario offered in the pre-election period was that he would attempt to change the term of the presidency from five to seven years.

In the election held on Dec. 16, 2001, the two candidates were the incumbent President Ratsiraka and Marc Ravalomanana. Election observers counted Ravalomanana as receiving 53 percent of the vote, enough to declare him the winner of the presidential election. By the government's count, however, Ravalomanana had only won 46.6 percent of the vote, with President Ratsiraka taking 40.59 percent. As neither man won an outright majority according to the government's tally, and although Ravalomanana received a greater totality of votes than Ratsiraka, the incumbent president declared that a run-off election was necessary to determine an outright winner.

For his part, Ravalomanana claimed the government fixed the results of the elections. As such, Ravalomanana proclaimed himself the winner, swore in a new prime minister and named an alternative cabinet, after refusing to participate in Madagascar's run-off election scheduled for March 24, 2002.

For more than two months, Madagascar's capital, Antananarivo, was home to a number of protests and riots against the December 16 election results. Temporarily, President Ratsiraka placed Madagascar under martial law due a number of violent riots that took place in Antananarivo. Ravalomanana's parallel government disregarded the implementation of martial law and began to select a cabinet, including a defense minister. The new minister's acceptance of this position, along with the military's allowance of Ravalomanana to set up the parallel government, indicated that the military, which had previously not taken sides in the election issue, was supporting Ravalomanana.

As the political crisis continued, President Ratsiraka's government was making plans to move the country's capital to Tamatava. Meanwhile, the international community continued to recognize President Ratsiraka as the legal president of Madagascar.

The result of the political deadlock was a deeply divided country, with two governments, two capitals and significant fractures within the armed forces. An economic blockade led by Ratsiraka also resulted in shortages of basic supplies and fuel. The country was also suffering from increasing incidences of violence, characterized by an ever-rising death toll among both the military forces and within the general civilian population.

In April 2002, Marc Ravalomanana and Didier Ratsiraka went to Dakar, the capital of Senegal, to participate in talks aimed at resolving the political crisis on the island. The discussions, initiated by the Senegalese President, Abdoulaye Wade, occurred alongside a development summit in Dakar. Previous discussions were brokered by the Organization of African Unity, however, they did not render any resolution.

Also in April 2002, Madagascar's Supreme Court nullified the election results and ordered a recount, which both candidates agree to accept as a means to resolving the impasse. Following the recount, the Constitutional Court declared Ravalomanana to be the winner. The recount had given

him a decisive 51 percent of the vote and thus, a quantifiable majority, as well as perceived legitimacy as the leader of the country. Despite his previous agreement with the terms of the recount, Ratsiraka said that he would ignore the verdict.

Still, in May 2002, Marc Ravalomanana was sworn in as the new leader of the country in the capital city, Antananarivo. Although Ravalomanana had a prior swearing in ceremony, the contestable results did not accord him full legitimacy. His second swearing in ceremony was generally viewed as both official and binding the second time.

About 100,000 people were present for the ceremony, which was also attended by diplomatic representatives from many Western states. Until this time, the international community had been non-committal about which candidate was supported as legitimate. The presence of many Western diplomats at then ceremony demonstrated a shift in this regard. Significantly absent, however, were diplomatic representatives from Madagascar's former colonial ruler, France, as well as the United States. In June, however, the United States government recognized Marc Ravalomanana as the new president of Madagascar.

Meanwhile, incumbent President Didier Ratsiraka, consistently refused to accept the results of the election and called an unprecedented session of parliament to take place simultaneous with the swearing ceremony of Marc Ravalomanana. In this regard, both the National Assembly and the Senate were invited to meet in the north-west part of the country. The measure suggested that a breakaway administration was being established.

Following previous talks in Senegal about the disputed election, a new round of talks were scheduled for Senegal from May 13 to May 14, 2002. It was hoped that further discussions would resolve the impasse. A month before, both candidates signed an agreement in Senegal during the earlier discussions, however, the details of the concord were not immediately implemented.

In June 2002, Ratsiraka went into exile in France, thus ending the political crisis. At home, President Ravalomanana promised to arrest the former president. Later in the year, Ravalomanana's party won a parliamentary majority in elections. This victory was a tangible one in terms of being able to command policy initiatives at the executive and legislative levels, however, it was also a symbolic victory. Specifically, the parliamentary win was proof of the president's popular support.

Despite this favorable political climate for the new president, in early 2003, the former head of the armed forces was arrested and charged with attempting to launch a coup d'etat against President Ravalomanana.

Later, in August 2003, former president Didier Ratsiraka, now in exile in France (as noted above), was sentenced to 10 years hard labor. His trial and sentencing were carried out *in absentia*. He

was also charged with the embezzlement of public funds.

While continuing to enjoy popular support, the poor economic state of Madagascar has resulted in some problems for President Ravalomanana. With inflation at an average of 6.5 percent in the first half of 2004, students, civil servants and army reservists took to the streets to express their dissatisfaction. In mid-2004, a series of grenade attacks on crowds of civilians left dozens of people injured. Former President Albert Zafy was also the target of an attack when a grenade was hurled at his house. In another incident, a grenade was thrown at a store owned by associates of the president.

Since becoming president, the Ravalomanana government made efforts to address Madagascar's pressing social issues, many of which have been significantly manifest as a result of economic woes.

On the domestic agenda, the president approved a 300 percent pay raise for police officers in September 2003 in an attempt to stem corruption. The World Bank released more than \$100 million dollars in poverty reduction aid in response to Madagascar's efforts to stop corruption. In September 2004, the United Nations' humanitarian information unit reported that Madagascar had made significant progress in reducing child trafficking by cracking down on illegal adoptions.

In October 2004, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank said they would write off \$2 billion in debt -- almost half Madagascar's total debt. Then, in March 2005, Madagascar was the first beneficiary of development aid offered by the United States in a plan aimed at rewarding countries determined by Washington to be putting forth market reforms and advocating democracy. Further debt relief, explained in the "Special Entry" below constituted another infusion of favorable developments for Madagascar.

Attention shifted from the realm of economics to political power in 2005 when the government banned a church that was said to be attracting younger charismatic people. The government said that the church had been shut down because it was a supposed threat to public order. But the fact that President Ravalomanana has functioned as the deputy head of a more traditional church in Madagascar spurred criticisms that the government was over-reaching. Indeed, local media in Madagascar accused the government of violating the country's secular constitution by enacting the move. Regardless, in November 2005, the court responded to the situation saying that it had no authority to deal with the situation and that the ban could only be revoked by the president

Special Entry: International Aid and Debt Relief

On June 11, 2005, at a pre-G8 summit meeting in London, world leaders agreed to write off \$40

billion in debt owed by the world's poorest countries. Under the plan, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund would write off 100 percent of the money owed to them by 18 countries. In about a year to 18 months, another nine countries would also benefit from debt relief. Then, eleven other countries would be eligible for such relief, provided that they successfully dealt with corruption and met targets for good governance. With those additional two phases, the entire plan would involve \$55 billion in debt relief.

The countries benefiting immediately from the plan expressed gratitude that they would no longer be saddled with debilitating debt and that they could, instead, work toward economic development. Anti-poverty activists also expressed support for the plan but said that more countries should also be able to benefit.

With the plan for debt relief agreed upon, British Prime Minister Tony Blair traveled to Moscow on June 12, 2005 for another meeting in a series of pre-G8 summit talks with world leaders. On the agenda were matters such as African aid and development, as well as transnational measures to deal with climate change. The United Kingdom, which holds the presidency of the G8 grouping of the world's eight wealthiest countries, was hoping to advance a significant increase in developmental aid to help benefit the world's most impoverished countries, especially in Africa.

Editor's Note: Twenty-seven countries, which are eligible for debt relief under the HIPC (highly-indebted poor countries initiative), are listed following, with the 18 countries qualifying for immediate debt relief identified by asterisk: Benin*, Bolivia*, Burkina Faso*, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana*, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana*, Honduras*, Madagascar*, Malawi, Mali*, Mauritania*, Mozambique*, Nicaragua*, Niger*, Rwanda*, Sao Tome, Senegal*, Sierra Leone, Tanzania*, Uganda*, and Zambia*

Elections of 2006

Presidential elections were set for early December 2006 following a ruling by the Malagasy High Court to schedule voting a few weeks earlier in order to avoid weather-related obstacles.

In May 2006, in anticipation of presidential elections now set for early December of that year, Madagascar's main opposition parties boycotted talks with President Ravalomanana. The talks were intended to ease political tensions ahead of the presidential poll and the decision by the opposition to refrain from engaging with the president suggested a deep political divide.

But problems for the president were not limited to the opposition factions. Parliamentary Speaker Jean Lahiniriko was sacked from his post in parliament in May 2006 for expressing praise for Iran's burgeoning nuclear program. A full two-thirds of the ruling "I Love Madagascar" or TIM party of President Ravalomanana in parliament voted to dismiss Lahiniriko, who had for some time

been an antagonist within TIM, for deviating from party stances on key issues. For his part, Lahiniriko announced that he intended to contest the presidential elections.

On November 17, 2006, an army general declared military rule over Madagascar. The general also characterized the current government as being "illegitimate" and called on the Malagasy military to assist in establishing a transitional government.

The announcement by General Fidy came ahead of scheduled presidential elections and at a time when democratically-elected President Marc Ravalomanana was returning home from a trip to Europe. The president's aircraft was reportedly diverted to the coastal town of Mahajanga in the west of the country when gunfire erupted close to the airport. Gunfire was also reported just outside a military base, with further gunfire reported the following day elsewhere in the country.

General Fidy had hoped to contest the presidential election, scheduled for December 3, 2006, but his application was rejected. His apparent attempted coup appeared to be in reaction to his failed bid to run as a candidate for the presidency.

For its part, President Ravalomanana's office offered no formal reaction to these developments. The president carried on with pre-election affairs, as the country's security forces searched for the coup leader. The president campaigned on the basis of a pledge to reduce poverty by 50 per cent by 2012. His proposal, dubbed the "Madagascar Action Plan (MAP)," also sought to increase economic growth by eight to ten percent annually.

Despite torrential rainfall plaguing the country, the people of Madagascar went to the polls in early December 2006 to vote in the presidential election. Voter turnout was over 61 percent. There were approximately 12,000 election monitors observing the election, amidst fears of possible vote fraud. Critics of the regime in power had complained that media access had not been equal. Nevertheless, incumbent President Marc Ravalomanana promised that the election would be both transparent and democratic, and he urged people to go to the polls and vote on election day.

Reports stated that voting took place peacefully, despite a failed attempted coup a few weeks earlier. Previous elections of 2001 resulted in massive unrest, and threatened civil war when then-President Didier Ratsiraka refused to accept defeat. Peace talks in Senegal and agreement to abide with the results of a recount resulted in Ravalomanana taking power as the new president in 2002.

Now, four years later, incumbent President Marc Ravalomanana said that he anticipated winning a second term in office. He was being challenged by 13 other presidential candidates, including Roland Ratsiraka, the nephew of the former president. Absent from the list of candidates, however, was Pierrot Rajaonarivelo, an official in the former regime. He had been barred from entering the country and the presidential race. Also absent from the list of candidates was the army general who later launched the attempted coup.

The convention wisdom was consistent with the claim made by President Ravalomanana. It was expected that he would claim a second term in office. The only question was whether he would do so by achieving an outright majority, or, if a second round of voting would be necessitated.

On December 10, 2006, the Interior Ministry said that the president had won re-election with 54.8 percent of the votes cast. His decisive victory and clear majority meant that he would avoid a second round of election. Two of his main rivals -- Jean Lahiniriko, the former speaker of the national assembly, and Roland Ratsiraka, the nephew of ex-president Didier Ratsiraka -- gained 11.68 percent and 10.9 percent respectively.

Just days after the announcement of the election results, General Fidy -- the army general who had attempted to launch a coup ahead of the elections -- was arrested at a hotel in Ankadifotsy. Secretary of State for Public Security, Lucien Victor Razakanirina, said that Fidy did not resist arrest.

Recent Developments

In April 2007, attention moved from the events surrounding the 2006 election to the domestic political landscape. At issue was a referendum to decide on changes to the constitution that would (1) decrease provincial autonomy by replacing the autonomous provinces with non-autonomous regions; (2) increase presidential power, even making it possible for the president to pass legislation during a state of emergency without requiring parliamentary approval, and (3) make English an official language. In the referendum held in April 2007, voters ratified these proposed changes.

Election politics returned to the fore in July 2007 when President Ravalomanana dissolved parliament, paving the way for new elections to the legislative body. The parliamentary elections came less than a year after voters went to the polls to vote in presidential elections and several months ahead of schedule. Needless to say, many questions were evoked about the political issues that may have precipitated the election being called at this time.

Notably, the president's party was suffering from internal fighting, and a reformist wing of the party was reportedly getting ready to call for drastic changes ranging from the establishment of an independent electoral commission to the introduction of possible impeachment proceedings against the president.

For his part, President Ravalomanana said that he was calling new elections at this time because the parliament did not reflect the composition of the country, given citizens' decision to ratify sweeping constitutional changes months earlier. Those sweeping changes included an end to

provincial autonomy and increased presidential power, as noted above. In this way, President Ravalomanana was arguing that he needed a new parliament that would reflect the current will of the people.

At stake were the now reduced seats -- 127 from 160 -- in the National Assembly. While President Marc Ravalomanana's "Tiako I Madagasikara" (TIM, meaning "I Love Madagascar") party was looking to dominate the new parliament, it was not going to do so with its current cast of characters. In fact, it nominated fresh candidates in 80 percent of constituencies. Meanwhile, the disgruntled and reformist elements of TIM or "I Love Madagascar" decided to form another party, known as Solidarity of Malagasy Citizens (SCM), which fielded 50 candidates. Also contesting the election was the opposition Arema party of the exiled party founder and former president, Didier Ratsiraka.

In September 2007, voters went to the polls to cast ballots in that parliamentary election. Election day was peaceful but turnout was a low 30 percent. Monitoring the polls were the African Union (AU) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), both of which issued positive reports of the way the election ensued.

Once the ballots were counted in 125 of the 127 seats (two sets of results were invalidated), it was clear that President Marc Ravalomanana's TIM or "I Love Madagascar" had won a landslide victory with 105 of those 125 seats. As many as 19 seats went to independents and small parties generally allied with the president's party. The lone opposition seat was won by Leader/Fanilo. By-elections in the two constituencies still undecided eventually were won by an independent and a member of the president's party respectively. As such, the 2007 parliamentary elections were a clear victory for the president, his objectives and his mandate. The election results effectively ensured that the executive branch of government would have unprecedented support from the legislative branch.

Special Report: Political Crisis in Madagascar

Summary: President Marc Ravalomanana resigns and military passes power to opposition leader Andry Rajoelina

The year 2009 began with Madagascar devolving into a political crisis. President Marc Ravalomanana -- leader of the Tiako I Madagasikara or "I Love Madagascar" party -- and Andry Rajoelina -- Antananarivo's mayor and leader of the opposition Tanora Gasy Vonona or Madagascar Ready Youth party -- were vying for supremacy.

At issue was President Ravalomanana's decision in late 2008 to close Rajoelina's media station after it broadcast part of a speech by former president Didier Ratsiraka. That closure spurred virulent protests by Rajoelina and his supporters, ultimately leading to a strike in the capital city, followed by violent mass riots. The situation turned deadly with more than 90 people reported to have been killed in a violent rampage, which included attacks on infrastructure as well as widespread looting.

While several diplomatic missions in Madagascar called for dialogue and a peaceful resolution, there was no sign of possible rapprochement between Ravalomanana and Rajoelina. Indeed, President Ravalomanana called for the arrest of Rolland Ratsiraka, the nephew of former President Didier Ratsiraka, as well as the detainment of Dolin Rasolosa, an aide to Mayor Rajoelina. The president accused both individuals of orchestrating the turmoil. The president also called for the restoration of security in the capital city and demanded accountability of the mayor. For his part, Mayor Rajoelina demanded democracy and media freedom, the release of all political prisoners, and the dismissal of all senior justice officials from the ruling "I Love Madagascar party."

By Jan. 29, 2009, Antananarivo mayor Andry Rajoelina called for the establishment of a transitional government. Rajoelina said that dialogue with President Marc Ravalomanana would only be possible pending the establishment of such an interim governing body. He also noted that he could potentially deploy civilians as reinforcements for police, in order to ensure security in the capital city. Two days later, Mayor Rajoelina declared himself to be the new leader of Madagascar. Standing before tens of thousands of supporters in the capital city, he said, "I will take provisionally the power before we set up a transitional government." Rajoelina said he would direct all government ministries and the armed forces new order restored. On that latter matter, he said he had the support of the army. In this way, Rajoelina appeared to be announcing a quasi-coup, although he cast the situation in different terms. Instead, he and the opposition said they were carrying out a democratic movement by the people, who no longer wanted to be ruled by Ravalomanana.

Days after Mayor Rajoelina appointed himself to be transitional leader, he raised an official demand for the dismissal of the president before the High Constitutional Court. The court rejected his demand saying it should be placed before the parliament, both chambers of which were controlled by the ruling party of the president. Soon thereafter, the actual Madagascan government sacked him from his position as mayor of Antananarivo. The decree was dispatched from the Interior Ministry and followed by the deployment of a special team to replace the administration of Antananarivo. Guy Rivo Randrianarisoa was named the team leader.

By Feb. 4, 2009, the political confrontation between the Madagascan government and the opposition was ongoing. In the wake of the presidential decree regarding the firing of the mayor, Rajoelina issued his own statement condemning the actions of the government as illegal. He also warned that he intended to lead protests to force the resignation of President Ravalomanana, who

he described as “a dictator.”

Meanwhile, protests attracted thousands of participants in Antananarivo. The mayor’s boisterous supporters were able to block the president’s special team from taking up positions as the transitional administration of the capital city. Seizing upon the opportunity, Rajoelina indicated that he had municipal matters that required his attention. To that end, he appointed his own special advisor to assist in the handling of daily affairs of the capital city.

In the second week of February 2009, protests turned violent. Twenty-eight of Rajoelina’s supporters died and 200 more were injured during clashes with security forces en route to the presidential compound. Undeterred by the bloodshed, Rajoelina was steadfast in his quest to force the president from power. He said, "I tell the people that their lives, their blood was lost. But we cannot stop. The struggle continues." Rajoelina also laid the blame for the deaths of the protestors upon the president saying, "The people need change. What is Ravalomanana's answer? Shots."

There was a heavy security presence in the streets of the capital city, which contributed to a sense of uneasy calm. In addition, Prime Minister Charles Rabemananjara announced an extension to the night-time curfew that had been placed on the residents of Antananarivo. President Ravalomanana urged the country return to calm and blamed the opposition leader for inciting the violence that had led to the deaths of so many Madagascans.

On Feb. 20, 2009, it was reported that Madagascan security forces retook control of government buildings, a few hours after the opposition claimed to have seized them. Indeed, only hours after the opposition said that it had taken over four government ministries -- namely the ministries of Public Security, Internal Affairs, Education, and Land Reform -- 50 opposition supporters were arrested and the government’s operation to recapture control ended in success.

At the international level, the United Nations, the African Union, the United States and France have all urged the rival parties in Madagascar to seek a peaceful resolution to the political crisis through dialogue. For his part, President Ravalomanana agreed to the notion of talks with the opposition; however, Rajoelina rejected that option, insisting that the only possible outcome must be the resignation of President Ravalomanana.

In March 2009, the ongoing power struggle between President Marc Ravalomanana and opposition leader Andry Rajoelina took a grave turn when officers at a military camp near Antananarivo carried out a mutiny. The soldiers blocked roads around the military base in Soanierana and said they would be supporting the political opposition.

In an interview with Agence France Presse, one soldier was reported to have said, "We no longer take orders from our hierarchy, we are following our hearts. We were trained to protect property and citizens, not to fire at people. We are with the people."

Meanwhile, talks between Ravalomanana and Rajoelina ended in failure. Government security forces tried to arrest Rajoelina after he withdrew from those talks. Rajoelina said the president was not seriously considering the grievances set forth by the opposition and he vowed the resumption of mass action and strikes to register discontent.

These developments came at a time when the government-controlled security shut down rallies by the opposition, ultimately contributing to violent clashes between security forces and opposition supporters. Several deaths occurred as a result and Rajoelina went into hiding as security forces loyal to the president were on the hunt to arrest him.

Soon thereafter, Defense Minister Mamy Ranaivoniarivo resigned from office amidst the chaos, which analysts feared was the onset of a civil war. Then, Andre Andriarijaona ousted the head of the army, Edmond Rasolofomahandry, who had been appointed by the president. Andriarijaona declared himself to be the new army chief saying, "I replace the army chief of staff. From now on, we shall no longer receive orders issued from the president of the Republic." As well, Pily Gilbain, the military police chief said he was no longer taking orders from the president and joined forces with the opposition. Earlier, the leader of the aforementioned mutinying troops, Colonel Noel Rakotonandrasa, called on the president to resign immediately. He said, "We want the president to go, so he should resign at once."

For his part, President Ravalomanana indicated that he was attempting to re-establish law and order but noted that his own life was at risk. He said, "My assassination would not be in your interest. The people would suffer, and the international community would not accept it." He continued, "Once again, I call on the army and the forces of order to remain united, and remain neutral."

But the security forces of Madagascar were moving in the political direction of the opposition. Indeed, by March 12, 2009, the Madagascan opposition had taken over control of the Ministry of Finance and Budget with the support of the armed forces.

Then on March 14, 2009, Madagascan opposition leader Andry Rajoelina called on President Ravalomanana to resign peacefully. If the president failed to comply, the opposition leader declared he would go to the presidential palace to take over the presidential power. Speaking before a mass gathering and flanked by armed troops, Rajoelina said that if Ravalomanana did not resign, he would go to the presidential palace, not for negotiation, but to bid farewell to President Marc Ravalomanana. The opposition leader also noted that as a Christian, he would not support the killing of Ravalomanana.

Rajoelina's declaration came on the same day that Madagascan Prime Minister Charles Rabemananjara's office was taken over by the opposition. Rajoelina's appointment in a parallel cabinet, Monja Roindefo, said the opposition takeover of the office of the head of government had taken place in a calm manner since outgoing Prime Minister Rabemananjara agreed to leave his

office without protest.

In other developments, the Madagascan opposition asked the High Constitutional Court (HCC) to recognize its transitional government and to dismiss President Marc Ravalomanana, the parliament and the government. In an appeal to the high court, the opposition called on the judicial body to take charge of the situation as it was the only guarantor of the rule of law capable of restoring law, order and peace to Madagascar. The opposition also submitted a four-page document claiming that President Ravalomanana had clearly breached constitutional obligations and his presidential commitments when he took the oath of office.

Meanwhile, Madagascar's President Marc Ravalomanana tried to hold on to power by saying that he would be willing to hold a referendum to end the country's political crisis. He said, "We must follow democratic principles. If we have to, we will organize a referendum." The actual nature of the referendum was unspecified but advisers to the president indicated to the international media that it would be intended to ratify Ravalomanana's presidential authority.

By March 16, 2009, the military, which now appeared to be backing Rajoelina, had surrounded one of the presidential compounds and Ravalomanana was under siege in his residence. But a day later, President Marc Ravalomanana said he was stepping down from office in the face of massive protests by the opposition and an armed revolt. In a national radio broadcast, Ravalomanana said: "After deep reflection, I have decided to dissolve the government and give up power so that a military directorate can be established."

Ravalomanana had earlier said that he would not voluntarily relinquish power. . But faced with intensifying opposition, mass protests, opposition takeovers of the prime minister's office and a presidential compound, loss of support from the country's military, and the threat of armed revolt, Ravalomanana finally issued a decree to transfer his political power to a military directorate.

But military leaders seemed to have little interest in establishing such a body; instead, it oversaw a direct transfer of power to opposition leader. Soon thereafter, Madagascar's Constitutional Court ruled that the military's transfer of power to Rajoelina was legal, effectively declaring him to be the interim leader of Madagascar.

For his part, Rajoelina had already installed himself in the presidential compound that had been taken over by the opposition. He soon emerged to participate in a spontaneous victory rally with thousands of supporters. He also announced that a new constitution would be promulgated and that fresh elections would be held within 24 months. One key provision in a new constitution would be a lower age threshold for contesting the presidential election, thus enabling Rajoelina himself to be a candidate in a forthcoming election for the country's highest post.

Regardless of the ruling by the Constitutional Court, the international community reacted negatively

to what it deemed to be an illegal transfer of power. The African Union suspended Madagascar from its body, arguing that while the military had not overtly seized control of the country, the transfer of power had nonetheless been unconstitutional. Meanwhile, the Southern African Development Community indicated that it might impose sanctions if constitutional rule was not restored. France -- Madagascar's former colonial power -- condemned the military-backed seizure of power by the opposition while the United States reacted by suspending non-humanitarian aid.

Madagascar's acting Prime Minister Roindifo Monja rejected the international criticism explaining, "The people demanded liberty and the military rallied to the popular movement, but it did not seize power... We are confident the international community will understand."

In other developments, Madagascar's transitional government suspended the functioning of the two houses of the parliament -- the National Assembly and the Senate --and confirmed members of a transitional cabinet.

The momentary winners and losers of the power struggle notwithstanding, the emergence of Rajoelina as a political force in Madagascar was a significant consideration in the current Malagasy political landscape. In an interview with IRIN (the news and analysis service operating under the aegis of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), Richard Marcus points to the source of Rajoelina's support. Marcus notes: "Rajoelina's base of support is created in the belly of President Ravalomanana's. This is true, ethnically, but perhaps more importantly, it is true geographically. Rajoelina has been effective at marshalling disaffected former Ravalomanana supporters within the political sphere."

Marcus also observes that Ravalomanana's economic program may have factored into the growing sense of disenchantment from within his own base. He says, "The MAP [Madagascar Action Plan -- the country's poverty reduction strategy] was a platform item for the TIM [Ravalomanana's 'Tiako-I-Madagasikara' or 'I love Madagascar' party] and a hallmark program for Ravalomanana. This sort of top-down approach can make a president a hero if he succeeds. However, where the results are perceived as slow in coming, particularly as key individuals and private sector interests are perceived as getting rich, discontent will grow. Ravalomanana had a very long honeymoon. That is over. There are no significant results for the average citizen, and they are grievously unhappy about it."

As a political and social critic, Rajoelina has enjoyed certain appeal and has tapped into a growing sense of anti-government sentiment, manifested by economic disenchantment and frustration over Ravalomanana's autocratic tendencies. As Marcus observes, regardless of Rajoelina's political fate, the current situation in Madagascar has illuminated a sense of popular discontent that is unlikely to quickly dissipate.

Developments 2009-2010

In the first week of June 2009, a court in Madagascar court sentenced former President Marc Ravalomanana in absentia to four years in jail for abuse of office. The former leader was also fined \$70 million. At issue was the apparent purchase of a presidential jet. The Justice Ministry said that he was guilty of mixing public and private interests. For his part, Ravalomanana argued that the jet was intended to facilitate travel to other countries in search of aid and foreign investment.

Meanwhile, Ravalomanana was in South Africa seeking support that would allow him to return home to Madagascar. He has been out of the country in the aftermath of a violent power struggle some months earlier, which resulted in his ousting from office when the military-backed opposition, led by Andry Rajoelina, launched something of a coup. The court ruling has made it highly unlikely that Ravalomanana will be easily able to return to Madagascar without risking detainment.

At the same time, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unresolved. Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections had seen no progress. One of the key sticking points in the negotiations was the matter of amnesty.

In June 2009, leaders in southern Africa appointed the former president of Mozambique, Joaquim Chissano, to mediate the ongoing political crisis in Madagascar. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted earlier in 2009, ultimately resulting in President Marc Ravalomanana being ousted from office when the military-backed opposition, led by Andry Rajoelina, launched something of a coup and proclaimed himself to be the country's new leader. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unresolved. Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections have seen no progress. One of the key sticking points in the negotiations has been the matter of amnesty.

The United Nations and France have both warned against the use of military intervention to end the political crisis plaguing that country, while the regional trade bloc, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), has argued that such action might be necessary in order to re-establish constitutional order in Madagascar. France and the United Nations said that dialogue, perhaps brokered by the African Union, should be used to resolve the situation. French Foreign Ministry spokesman Eric Chevallier said, "We feel that military intervention is not the right idea." Meanwhile, Tiebile Drame, a United Nations envoy, decried Comesa's suggestion saying, "This sort of statement does not help. We don't need this kind of declaration. The appointment of Chissano appeared to be a compromise move aimed at resolving the crisis in a manner acceptable to all stakeholders.

On July 11, 2009, interim Madagascan president Andry Rajoelina announced that he was ready to hold a national election before the end of 2009, in order to shorten the transitional period. In a

debate on Madagascar television, Rajoelina said, "The high transitional authority agreed to shorten the transitional period and to hold a national election before the end of 2009 due to difficulties to reach a compromise between Madagascan stakeholders." Rajoelina also said that he had informed officials from the European Union (EU) of his proposal to shorten the transitional period, with a likely election in December 2009, rather than the December 2010 date that had been earlier set. Rajoelina maintained his insistence that a national referendum on a new constitution be held prior to elections with a likely date for September 2009.

The announcement came at a time when the special envoy appointed by the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Joachim Chissano, was in Madagascar trying to forge a peaceful solution to the country's political crisis. Chissano, the former Mozambican president, held for closed-door meetings with Rajoelina as well as representatives of former president Marc Ravalomanana.

By August 2009, fractious debate and several days of difficult negotiations among the key players in Madagascar's political crisis gave way to a succession plan. The negotiations were mediated by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The main participants from Madagascar were opposition figure and self-appointed leader, Andry Rajoelina, ousted President Marc Ravalomanana, as well as two former presidents -- Didier Ratsiraka and Albert Zafy.

The agreement, which was forged in the Mozambican capital of Maputo, provided for the formation of a transitional power-sharing government, as well as a pathway for legislative and presidential elections within 15 months. The agreement would allow ousted President Marc Ravalomanana to return to Madagascar from exile, but it would not permit him to be involved in the political process. The four presidents, including Rajoelina, soon thereafter signed the transitional charter, which made clear that elections would be held in October 2010. Not included in the charter, however, was a closed-door agreement that Rajoelina would remain as interim leader until the October 2010 elections. The new transitional government would also include representation from the four main political camps although there was no easy resolution at the time as to how that would be accomplished.

On Sept. 4, 2009, Andry Rajoelina, Madagascar's High Transitional Authority leader, ordered Prime Minister Monja Roindefo to establish a consensus government within 72 hours, rather than relinquishing either his transitional presidency or control over the post of prime minister. This declaration was a violation of the power-sharing deal forged by the main political players of Madagascar a month prior. Indeed, Rajoelina and his predecessors, Marc Ravalomanana, Didier Ratsiraka and Albert Zafy, signed on to a transitional charter in Maputo, Mozambique, in August 2009. Ensclosed within the agreement was a provision for sharing power during the 15-month transition period.

It should be noted that there had been little concurrence on the three main transitional posts for the president, the vice president and the prime minister, during a second round of talks, which were held several weeks later. While the political cadre made up of Ravalomanana, Ratsiraka and Zafy insisted on an equal share of the key transitional posts, Rajoelina and his political allies were not keen to give up power. The lack of concurrence contributed to two related developments. First, Zafy -- in consultation with representatives of Ravalomanana and Ratsiraka -- asked the armed forces of Madagascar to take over the transitional presidency and the prime minister due to Rajoelina's intransigence. Then, Rajoelina -- after meeting with political allies and regional representatives -- rejected Zafy's proposal and refused to hand over either the presidency or the prime minister to other political forces. As noted above, he then began to make preparations to create a consensus government.

Meanwhile, international mediators, who backed the two rounds of talks in Mozambique aimed at ending the extended political crisis, warned that failure to form a final agreement on the shape of the power-sharing government would result in the suspension of all international financial assistance.

Subsequently, the issue of the transitional government, which was supposed to include representation from the four main political camps, was somewhat resolved when it was decided that Dr. Emmanuel Rakotovahiny, prime minister in Zafy's regime from 1993 to 1996, would be vice president, and Eugene Mangalaza, former dean of Toamasina University, would become prime minister.

But this internationally supported peace deal aimed at ending the political crisis plaguing Madagascar hit a snag on October 8, 2009, when former President Marc Ravalomanana backed out of the agreement, saying that he rejected the proposal on the transitional presidency. Speaking to his supporters from South Africa, he said: "We could not legitimate that a sponsor of a coup would be president, I would not sign any agreement in this context."

At issue was the prevailing succession plan, which had been mediated by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It was this agreement that was now in jeopardy due to Ravalomanana's refusal to accept Rajoelina in the post of interim leader.

Fetison Rakoto Andrianirina, a representative of Ravalomanana clarified this position by noting that while his camp agreed that the transitional president could be from the Rajoelina's camp, it could not be opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, himself, since he was responsible for ousting Ravalomanana from power in a coup. It was not known how Ravalomanana's declaration would affect the peace process. Representatives of the camps led by Ratsiraka, Rajoelina and Zafy, respectively said that they believed the deal to be alive regardless of Ravalomanana's objections.

On Dec. 18, 2009, the reconciliation and power-sharing deal aimed at bringing Madagascar's political crisis to an end was at risk of collapse when the president dismissed the transitional prime minister. As noted above, the October 2009 power-sharing deal included the naming of Eugene Mangalaza as transitional prime minister. Mangalaza, a professor of philosophy at the University of Madagascar, had been jointly appointed by the four rival political camps, led by Rajoelina and three former presidents, Marc Ravalomanana, Didier Ratsiraka and Albert Zafy. Now, months later, Rajoelina had decided to dismiss Mangalaza from that post. The statement from the president's office effectively cancelled Mangalaza's appointment to that post. While Rajoelina did not offer a specific rationale for the dismissal of Mangalaza, it appeared that the overall lack of concurrence on matters of governance may have played a role. Mangalaza certainly never was able to move forward with the creation of a cabinet since the four parties could find no agreement on the power sharing divisions for the government positions at stake. Moreover, Rajoelina reportedly noted that cohabitation with the rival parties was simply impossible.

By Dec. 20, 2009, Rajoelina had declared the internationally-mediated power-sharing deal to be null and void, effectively dissolving all institutions stipulated in the accords, including the presidential council, the National Committee for Reconciliation (CNR) and the National Assembly. He also warned the three opposition camps, led by the three former presidents, against trying to install their representatives in parliament. The situation turned violent in the capital of Antananarivo as security forces fired tear gas at protestors and several people were arrested. One day later, Rajoelina named Col. Albert Camille Vital to be the new prime minister. The move to now select a military leader as prime minister appeared to be intended as a show of force against the three rival political camps. With the reconciliation deal nullified, all eyes were now on March 2010 as the date for general elections unilaterally declared by Rajoelina.

In March 2010, the African Union imposed sanctions on Madagascar's leader, Andry Rajoelina, after he missed the deadline for establishing a unity government. More than 100 of his supporters would also be subject to the sanctions, which included travel restrictions and the freezing of foreign assets. The move was aimed at forcing Rajoelina back to the negotiating table, which he has apparently abandoned in favor of holding onto solitary power. African Union security commissioner Ramtane Lamamra explained: "We believe that the sanctions are the way that will help the authorities to come back to the virtues of dialogue and negotiation." Also echoing the call for a return to dialogue was former President Ravalomanana who said, "I hope that these targeted sanctions will spur Andry Rajoelina into cooperating with the international community and that they serve as a wake-up call." However, Evariste Marson, a member of Rajoelina's government said in an interview with Agence France Press that the sanctions would have "no effect."

In April 2010, several weeks after Madagascar's Prime Minister Camille Vital sacked Noel Rakotonandrasana, the cabinet minister in charge of the armed services, authorities in that country said that police had foiled an attempted coup d'etat. At issue was the claim that a cadre of military officers, reservists and civilians were plotting to carry out an attack on Madagascar's leadership in

the period between the night of April 18 and the morning of April 19 in 2010. Many of the apparent coup plotters were reportedly arrested and taken to a brigade of the gendarmerie stationed at Betongolo, in close proximity to the Ministry of Defense. Army chief Andre Ndriarijaona said that despite the actions of this limited group of military officers, the overall armed forces remained united. Meanwhile, President Andry Rajoelina offered no comments as to these developments.

Nevertheless, the possible involvement of Rakotonandrasana in these events was a matter of significance since he was also an integral actor in the transfer of power to Andry Rajoelina -- the head of Madagascar's transitional authority -- a year earlier. That transfer of power, which involved the ousting of former President Marc Ravalomanana from power, was generally regarded as unconstitutional by regional and international power brokers, ultimately leading to the call for the formation of some sort of unity government. But in recent times, the African Union was moving to institute sanctions against Rajoelina and 108 other officials for failing to form that new unity government, in violation of a power sharing agreement forged during the previous year. As of April 21, 2010, however, Rajoelina was saying that he was ready to move forward with a new peace initiative, including talks with former President Ravalomanana in South Africa at the end of the month. It was not known how the new thrust for peace would be impacted, given the emerging rumors that Ravalomanana may have been behind the coup attempt. However, there were other rumors circulating that the attempted coup was not planned by Ravalomanana at all, but rather by extremists in his own camp who were opposed to the aforementioned summit in South Africa.

Madagascar's political crisis continued unabated in May 2010 more than a year after former president Marc Ravalomanana was ousted from office, with the help of the military. Since then, Andry Rajoelina has been at the helm of the country as the president of Madagascar's Highest Transitional Authority. However, Rajoelina has been under pressure from regional and international powers to form a unity government and place the country back on constitutional footing. Despite multilateral talks, such attempts have ended in failure. Indeed, talks were held in South Africa in late April 2010 between Rajoelina and Ravalomanana aimed at ending the political impasse. In effect, the talks failed to generate a plan for a unity government involving the main rival factions of the political sphere. There were indications that Rajoelina was not really interested in finding a resolution with Ravalomanana, preferring to chart a course that would exclude his political nemesis.

Meanwhile, the military which had earlier backed Rajoelina was now indicating frustration and impatience with the situation in Madagascar. It was also dismayed by the international isolation and the sanctions imposed by the African Union. With the political stakes so high and with political progress so elusive, the military finally issued an ultimatum to Rajoelina, compelling him to craft a roadmap to peace and effectively bringing an end to the non-stop political saga that has paralyzed the country.

On May 6, 2010, reports emerged that Rajoelina, had not yet received backing from the country's armed forces for his future government plan. Those reports surfaced ahead of an actual meeting between Rajoelina and senior officials of the armed forces. After that meeting, national radio in Madagascar reported that concurrence was, indeed, reached and the only question at stake involved the positions to be occupied by members of the military. However, rumors continued to spread that while the police had agreed to Rajoelina's proposal, the army was not quite so sanguine. The state of unease in the country gave rise to anxieties of further destabilization in Madagascar.

By May 11, 2010, however, the new government lineup was released showing that although Prime Minister Camille Vital would continue on in that capacity, the vast majority of serving cabinet ministers were to be relieved of their posts. In fact, only three out of the current 30 ministers in the government would be retained -- Minister of Decentralization and Territorial Administration Hajo Andrianainarivelo, Minister of Economy and Industry Fienena Richard, and Minister of Population and Social Protection Nadine Ramaroson. In the new government of national unity, 18 new ministers would be from the country's armed forces. In this way, the new cabinet would be composed of more military personnel than civilians. Clearly, in an effort to advance a new government that could exclude his key rivals, Rajoelina opted to rely heavily on the participation by and support of the armed forces.

Two days later on May 13, 2010, Rajoelina delivered a national speech in which he promised not to contest the forthcoming presidential election in Madagascar. The new date for the presidential poll was set for November 26, 2010; another crucial date was September 30, 2010 when parliamentary elections would be held. Ahead of those two dates, the country would undergo a national dialogue in late May 2010, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification on August 12, 2010. In fact, these dates all passed without any such action. Instead, attention was on the referendum to ratify the new constitution, which was now expected to take place in November 2010. But as discussed below, that threshold moment became mired by further political chaos.

On November 17, 2010, military officers reportedly staged a coup d'etat. Colonel Charles Andrianasoavina -- a former stalwart of President Andry Rajoelina, who seized power in 2009 -- announced from a military base close to the airport that his military cadre was now in control of the government. Andrianasoavina said his cadre of dissident soldiers had dissolved the government and formed a military committee aimed with the goals of national reconciliation, freedom for political prisoners, and the return of exiles. President Rajoelina and other factions of the military disputed this claim, dismissed the efforts of the military rebels, and asserted that they remained in control of the government. As well, Prime Minister Camille Vital, warned that the government had the power to crush any revolt by the rebel military officers.

The events transpired as citizens cast votes aimed at ratifying a new constitution for the country.

That new draft was backed by 35-year old President Rajoelina, who said that it would stabilize the country and ensure the resumption of the flow of foreign aid, which had been stymied since the coup d'etat of 2009 that ousted then-President Marc Ravalomanana from power. Opposition parties, including those aligned with former President Ravalomanana and other former heads of states, have all called for a boycott of the referendum, which they have argued would only reify President Rajoelina's power. In fact, a core aspect of the draft constitution was a provision to lower the minimum age for a president to 35, therefore legitimizing Rajoelina as president until he could to contest future elections -- potentially on May 4, 2011.

All expectations were that the draft constitution would be ratified and early results pointed to more votes for the "yes" votes compared with the "no" votes. However, with a significant boycott from the opposition parties, and reflected in low voter turnout of less than 50 percent, it would be difficult for President Rajoelina to claim that the new draft constitution was indeed backed by the people. For his part, President Rajoelina was himself casting a ballot in the referendum and made a point of noting that military mutineers did not pose a serious threat to his regime.

By November 18, 2010, the attempted coup was losing steam. Of note was the fact that the rebel soldiers had not managed to take control of the presidential palace. General Randrianazary, a military leader still loyal to the president, claimed that talks were taking place between the military and the dissident factions. He said that the talks were aimed at ensuring that there was no outbreak of violence. Meanwhile, the identified coup leader, Andrianasoavina, said in an interview with Reuters, "There are no negotiations. It isn't us who will make the first steps."

Another dissident officer, General Noel Rakotonandrasana, who was fired from his role in April 2010 under suspicion that he was involved in an attempted coup d'etat at the time, emerged again as these developments were taking place. Rakotonandrasana said that even if the rest of the military ranks did not join their cause, the coup would go on. To this end, he said, "Nothing is going well in Madagascar. This cannot continue anymore."

But in actuality, business appeared to be functioning as usual on November 18, 2010. Even though there was no visible increased security presence on the streets of the capital city, the government warned that it would take firm action against the dissident soldiers if negotiations ended in failure.

By November 20, 2010, the government made good on its promise to take firm action as troops stormed the army barracks housing the rebel soldiers. With the rebel soldiers surrendering after the exchange of gunfire, the three-day mutiny came to a close. According to Alain Ramaroson, the head of the Senate defense council, the entire operation took less than half an hour. In an interview with Agence France Press, he said, "The operation is over. They gave themselves up. It has ended without bloodshed."

The success of the attempted coup notwithstanding, it was apparent that pressure was building

against President Rajoelina. Indeed, the situation underscored the fact that since the 2009 military-backed coup that drove former President Ravalomanana from power and into exile, there was an emerging internal schism within the military ranks. Should this dissident cadre maintain its position in opposition to President Rajoelina, was the rest of the military willing to take forceful action against them, perhaps risking a violent confrontation? Or would the situation lead to calls for President Rajoelina to resign from office. Already, former President Albert Zafy had expressed support for the rebel soldiers and demanded that Rajoelina step down from office.

Thirty-five year old Rajoelina had served as the mayor of the capital city of Antananarivo. Backed by the military, Rajoelina seized power from former President Ravalomanana, who had been accused of increasingly autocratic rule. Since coming to power, however, Rajoelina has demonstrated little urgency in returning the country to democratic rule and his actions have not coincided with his populist rhetoric. Indeed, Rajoelina has become increasingly isolated in the international sphere due to his lack of cooperation with regional mediators and the opposition to broker a political resolution to the crisis plaguing the country.

Recent Developments (in 2011)

On Feb. 18, 2011, ousted Madagascan President Marc Ravalomanana said he would return from home exile in South Africa. Ravalomanana said that he hoped his return to Madagascar would herald a transition for the country towards peaceful, democratic, governance. Stated differently, the former Madagascan leader was hoping that his return would facilitate negotiations aimed at establishing a legitimate government.

Ravalomanana, who has lived in the South African city of Johannesburg since he was overthrown in a coup d'etat by Andry Rajoelina in 2009, spoke of the events that led to his exile as follows: "The illegal regime grabbed power in an unconstitutional manner." He continued, "Declaring it an illegal coup is not based on my opinion," as he then went on to note that various regional bodies suspended the new regime (now under rule by Rajoelina) and also imposed sanctions on Madagascar.

While his assessment of the international community's view of the coup in Madagascar was faithful to the record, Ravalomanana was not free of criticism himself. In 2010, he was sentenced in absentia to 20 years in prison in connection with the deaths of 30 protestors who died at the hands of the presidential guard. It should, however, be noted that this ruling was nullified by the International Court of Justice in The Hague. That being said, it was unlikely that Madagascar's authorities would heed that court's ruling and instead, speculation ran high that Ravalomanana would be arrested upon arrival.

On March 3, 2011, the president of Madagascar's Highest Transitional Authority (HAT), Andry

Rajoelina, survived an assassination attempt in the capital city of Antananarivo. Just as Rajoelina's motorcade was entering his residence, there was the sound of an explosion attributed by some sources to a grenade. No injuries ensued as a result of the apparent attack. There were no arrests made at the time although Prime Minister Camille Vital said that there would be an investigation and encouraged the public to report any information that might lead to the arrest of potential suspects.

A year prior, Rajoelina was targeted in yet another assassination attempt when bullets were shot at his car. This latest incident occurred at a time when a triad of former presidents -- Didier Ratsiraka, Marc Ravalomanana, and Zafy Albert -- was in discussions to establish an alternative transitional government. All three former presidents -- now in opposition -- have attempted to form a power-sharing government with Rajoelina, who took power with the support of the military in March 2009. Various reconciliation plans have called for the formation of such a power-sharing government, however, Rajoelina has repeatedly eschewed such moves (see Editor's Note below). Now, in 2011, Rajoelina was continuing along this path of shutting out the other political players, instead touting the fact that he had the backing of 50 political groups and would move on his own to organize elections to be held in September 2011. He seemed undeterred by the prospect of the main opposition forces staying outside of the political process.

On March 10, 2011, the Madagascan government resigned in anticipation of the establishment of a new government. By March 16, 2011, Camille Vital had been named to resume his post as prime minister at the helm of a new administration.

In the background of these developments, an international mediation team, led by Southern African Development Community (SADC) envoy, Leonardo Simao, submitted a new reconciliation plan, aimed at bringing the respective political camps together. According to Simao, the new road map for peace would stand as the foundation for a transitional government, facilitate the appointment of a consensus prime minister, and set the path for credible elections in the future.

It was unclear if this blueprint would coincide with Rajoelina's decision to form a new government without the participation of the main opposition leaders, as discussed above.

In mid-September 2011, an agreement was signed by a group of political parties in Madagascar, effectively paving the way for ousted leader, Marc Ravalomanana, to return home from exile, and for the holding of future elections. It should be noted that provisions of this deal would allow President Andry Rajoelina to retain the presidency until elections could be held in March 2012.

The deal had been brokered by the South African Development Community (SADC). It was hoped that the agreement would function as a road map for peace and a legal framework to transition to democratic rule, finally bringing an end to the political instability plaguing Madagascar since 2009 when Ravalomanana was ousted from office by current President Andre Rajoelina in a military coup d'etat. There were high hopes that the agreement would also end the political

isolation of Madagascar, which has been subject to rebuke from the international community since the time of the coup. In addition to being suspended from the African Union, the European Union also froze aid to Madagascar.

Several previous peace deals and stabilization agreements have been advanced since 2009 and ultimately faded away before being implemented. Repeatedly, Rajoelina breached those agreements. It was hoped that this concord would not end in the same manner, and the sense of optimism was helped by Rajoelina's explicit declaration that he had, indeed, accepted the peace and stability agreement. In a national address, he said, "I accept the amended road map. This road map which was amended during the extraordinary summit of heads of state and governments of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) on June 12 will be the only way that will help us to organize elections that will be recognized by the international community."

A few days after news percolated about the likely return of Ravalomanana, political tensions heightened when Justice Minister Christine Razanamahasoa warned that he could be arrested due to a prevailing arrest warrant. Razanamahasoa said, "An arrest warrant was issued against Ravalomanana when he was sentenced in absentia on Aug. 28, 2010, over the massacre that happened at the presidential palace during the last moments of his regime. This arrest warrant is still valid and could be executed anytime." Of course, stalwarts of Ravalomanana pointed to the provisions of the new peace and stabilization deal, which allows for the "unconditional return" of those in exile, and also arguing that Ravalomanana was not convicted of any crimes.

The SADC issued a statement in which it noted that although there were provisions for "unconditional return," it did not condone impunity. The clarification read as follows : "The term 'unconditional' is applied to mean the freedom to return to the country by all Madagascan citizens who are in exile due to political reasons. This implies that no political and administrative restrictions will be used to prohibit them from returning to their country. However, 'unconditional' does not imply that all Madagascan citizens who return to the county should be pardoned if they committed crimes."

Note that on Oct. 18, 2011, Madagascar's transitional government, led by Albert Camille Vital, dispatched a letter of resignation letter to President Rajoelina. While the president accepted the government's resignation, the prime minister and the members of his government would continue to carry out their daily duties until the formation of a new national unity transitional government. This arrangement was part of the resolution process, which allows Rajoelina to remain in place as president on an interim basis (as noted above), but also requires the appointment of a new consensus prime minister by Nov. 1, 2011, followed by the appointments of a new transitional government and a new transitional parliament by the close of November 2011. Elections would take place in 2012, with an eye on returning Madagascar to democratic government. Note that in late 2011, Jean Omer Beriziky became the new prime minister of Madagascar.

Update

In the early hours of July 22, 2012, soldiers at an army base close to the airport in Madagascar's capital of Antananarivo staged a mutiny. No reason was given for the move, although army rebellions have occurred in recent history with President Andry Rajoelina himself coming to power in 2009 following violent protests that were backed by soldiers from the army. Now, in 2012, the authorities in Madagascar were responding to this recent outburst of unrest by closing the airport and launching an assault on the army barracks where the mutiny was taking place. Police and soldiers surrounded the army base, while gun battles were reported from inside the barracks, and went on for several hours. There were also periods of attempted negotiations, although Madagascan authorities said that one of the negotiators had been shot during this effort and as many as three people had died, including the leader of the mutiny. Finally, as the day drew to a close, the Madagascan army had regained control of the base.

Primer on 2013 presidential and parliamentary elections

Introduction

A presidential election in Madagascar was set to be held in 2013. The first round was initially scheduled to be held on July 24, 2013, but was subsequently postponed until Aug. 23, 2013. The country's election commission then delayed the first round of voting until later in the year, with a schedule set for the first round on Oct. 25, 2013. Should a second round of the presidential race be needed, it would be held in the rough period from November through December 2013, with a schedule set for Dec. 20, 2013.

Parliamentary elections were expected to be held alongside the second round of the presidential vote on Dec. 20, 2013.

Typically, the president is popularly elected for a five-year term and limited to two terms. Meanwhile, the main voting at the parliamentary level would be in the National Assembly where members are elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms. These elections -- presidential and parliamentary -- were intended to bring an end to the political crisis gripping Madagascar.

Background

At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that

Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013.

In June 2013, the country's election commission warned that with tense election atmosphere in Madagascar, the election would be postponed until August 2013. But in July 2013, there was no consensus on when the elections would actually be held although United Nations representatives urged that the people of Madagascar go to the polls at some point in 2013. The August 2013 timeline passed and as noted above, the first round of the presidential election in Madagascar was rescheduled to be held in October 2013. Should a second round of the presidential race be needed, it would be held in the rough period from November through December 2013. Parliamentary elections were expected to be held alongside the presidential vote.

More than 40 individuals were reported to be contesting the presidential race. The three leading presidential candidates were: interim leader Andry Rajoelina, former president Didier Ratsiraka, and Lalao Ravalomanana, the wife of deposed former president, Marc Ravalomanana. But all three of these individuals were imbued by controversy. The SADC-brokered agreement had included the urging that Rajoelina refrain from the polls to end the crisis; Ratsiraka was himself a controversial figure due to his political history in Madagascar and the fact that he had not lived "in country" recently, as required by law to contest the presidency; Ravalomanana was obviously

linked with her husband and his legacy in Madagascar and also subject to the same residency problem as Ratsiraka.

Accordingly, the African Union warned that the candidacies of Rajoelina, Ratsiraka, and Ravalomanana were all "illegitimate" and indicated that the regional bloc would not recognize any of the three individuals as the legitimate leader of Madagascar. Meanwhile, the European Union and the United Nations respectively registered their concerns about the candidacies of these three individuals and urged them all to withdraw from the race. Then, at the start of June 2013, the call for the "problematic" three candidates to withdraw was echoed by Madagascar's cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Omer Beriziky, following a 16-hour closed door session. It was to be seen if Rajoelina, Ratsiraka, and Ravalomanana would heed the calls.

It should be noted that in August 2013 -- ahead of the new date for the elections in October 2013 -- the country's electoral commission nullified the candidacies of eight presidential contenders. Included in the list of cancelled candidacies were the three most controversial options -- transitional President Rajoelina, former President Ratsiraka, and former first lady, Lalao Ravalomanana. The electoral commission instructed all the nullified candidates to select alternate candidates to replace them to contest the presidential election, the first round of which was now set for October 2013.

Thus, the main candidates who would actually be contesting these elections included former cabinet minister Jean Louis Robinson, former cabinet minister Hery Rajaonarimampianina, former cabinet minister Hajo Andrianainarivelo, former diplomat Pierrot Rajaonarivelo, businessman Edgard Razafindravahy, former Prime Minister Camille Vital, and Rolland Ratsiraka.

Many of these candidates were proxies for the former presidents and their stalwarts who were prohibited from contesting the elections. Indeed, Rajaonarimampianina -- a former finance minister under the outgoing president -- was backed by Rajoelina himself. Rajaonarimampianina indicated that, if he won the presidency, there would be a continuing role for Rajoelina in government. While Edgard Razafindravahy was not expressly backed by Rajoelina or his inner cadre, he has been supported by Rajoelina's party. Robinson -- a health minister during Ravalomanana's presidency -- was predictably backed by Ravalomanana since his wife was disqualified from the contest. Robinson's campaign was quite literally a tribute to the presidency of Marc Ravalomanana and he went so far as to indicate that, if he won the presidency, he would appoint Lalao Ravalomanana as the prime minister. As the nephew of the former president, Rolland Ratsiraka commanded the support of the older Ratsiraka.

It should be noted that the electoral commission confirmed that the first round would go forward on Oct. 25, 2013, with a second round on Dec. 20, 2013 -- the date when the parliamentary elections would also take place.

The Elections

The highly-anticipated elections in Madagascar commenced on Oct. 25, 2013, with the first round of the presidential contest. Citizens of Madagascar went to the polls to cast their ballots. When the polls closed, election monitors reported that the election had gone off in a smooth and calm manner.

Vote counting was expected to take some time and results would not be known for several days after the first round was held. That being said, initial results indicate that the two front runners were Jean Louis Robinson (backed by former President Marc Ravalomanana, as discussed above) and Hery Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina, as discussed above).

Since no one individual was expected to win an outright majority in this first round of voting, a second round was to be held in December 2013. At that time, voters would also cast their ballots in the parliamentary elections.

The second round of elections went forward, as scheduled on Dec. 20, 2013, with international monitors from the Indian Ocean Commission commending Madagascar for the successful polls. The Indian Ocean Commission said that the elections went off in a peaceful manner as voters made their selection between the two second round candidates -- Jean Louis Robinson (backed by Ravalomanana) and Hery Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina). No election results were immediately available, instead the outcome was expected to be announced until early 2014.

In January 2014, it was announced that Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina) had won the second round of the presidential election against Robinson (backed by Ravalomanana). According to Madagascar's electoral commission, turnout exceeded 50 percent in the runoff, and Rajaonarimampianina secured 53.5 percent while Robinson garnered 46.5 percent of the vote share. This provisional result by the electoral commission would have to be ratified by the Special Electoral Court, effectively formalizing the election outcome.

For his part, Rajaonarimampianina claimed victory saying, "I thank God for leading us in this process and I thank the people of Madagascar to be very active in participating in this process. I'm sure each of Malagasy people aspires development of the country and a life full of wisdom and full of hope." Robinson had a very different response to the election results, charging massive fraud. However, Rajaonarimampianina noted that the results were tabulated by an official institution and monitored by international observers.

Note that a transition of power was in the works for Madagascar. Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina was set to transfer power to President-elect Hery Rajaonarimampianina on Jan. 24, 2014 at the State palace of Iavoloha. The power transfer would be followed by the investiture of the new president a day later on Jan. 25, 2014 at Mahamasina stadium in Antananarivo.

Why are these elections important?

These elections in Madagascar have been highly anticipated since 2009 when the country was subject to an unconstitutional transfer of power, and have since been mired by political crisis. Accordingly, these 2013 elections, in many senses, constituted the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance.

Note:

Note that in April 2014, Dr. Roger Laurent Christophe Kolo became the country's new prime minister.

Power cuts and frustrations over lack of progress drive resignation of Madagascar government

In mid-January 2015, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Roger Kolo and the entire government. At issue was the public's frustration over regular power cuts (rolling electricity blackouts), the government's lack of responsiveness over an outbreak of the plague, and a lack of progress on improvements to the quality of life.

Since a coup d'etat in 2009, Madagascar has been mired by turmoil. There were high hopes that elections in 2013, together with an ensuing burst of foreign investment, would return the country to stability. However, the slow pace of improvements to the quality of life fueled public discontent, ultimately ending in the resignation of Prime Minister Kolo's government, as discussed here. For his part, outgoing Prime Minister Kolo said, "We must take account of the interests of the 20 million Malagasy. Some things have been successful, other have not been."

Now the task before the parliament would be to consider who might be called on to form a new government. According to Deputy Parliamentary Speaker Freddie Mahazoasy, a list of 14 potential candidates had been composed. Included on the list was former President Marc Ravalomanana who was deposed in the 2009 coup d'etat by Andry Rajoelina. But it was not Ravalomanana but air force commander and businessman Jean Ravelonarivo whom the president ultimately named to be the new head of government. This move was quickly opposed by coup leader and former President Rajoelina, who argued that Ravelonarivo's appointment was not constitutional. Indeed, the the appointment of Prime Minister Jean Ravelonarivo was soon facing a challenge within the country's constitutional court.

Court dismisses impeachment proceedings against president in Madagascar

In late May 2015, Madagascar was returned to a state of political tumult as members of parliament voted to impeach President Hery Rajaonarimampianina. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of impeachment with 121 of 151 members of parliament voting to end the tenure of the president. Dissatisfaction with the president, who came to power in 2013 in the aftermath of a 2009 coup, has marked the political landscape in Madagascar in recent times. The president's political critics pointed to problems of corruption, his poor economic stewardship and an ineffectual response to an outbreak of the plague in 2014, as being the primary reasons for their disapproval. They have also made negative note of Rajaonarimampianina's recent penchant for introducing religiosity to the political sphere.

The various causes of the political animosity towards the president notwithstanding, it was clear that Rajaonarimampianina had few fans in the legislative branch of government. With the impeachment vote securing the required two-thirds threshold, the motion to impeach would be moved to the Constitutional Court for legal review. For his part, President Rajaonarimampianina decried the attempt to remove him from office, dismissing the proceedings as he declared in a national address: "I'm still there. I'm still standing." He also warned that his impeachment, if upheld by the court, would only drag the country back into a state of unrest and instability.

Note: At the start of June 2015, the president had launched a legal challenge to the impeachment proceedings. By mid-June 2015, Madagascar's constitutional court invalidated the parliament's impeachment of President Rajaonarimampianina. While the court ruling was sure to anger members of parliament, the move nonetheless helped to smooth over the burgeoning political crisis -- at least for the moment.

Madagascar president names new prime minister following resignation confusion

In April 2016, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar announced that Prime Minister Jean Ravelonarivo and his cabinet had resigned from office. This news was almost immediately met with confusion as Prime Minister Ravelonarivo denied the move. Nevertheless, the president soon appointed the interior minister, Solonandrasana Olivier Mahafaly, as the new prime minister and head of government.

Editor's Note:

Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people

dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013, as discussed above. Impeachment proceedings against the president in 2015 have somewhat marred Madagascar's transition to stability; the court ruling invalidating that move calmed the political landscape.

-- April 2016

Written by: Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief of CountryWatch Inc. See Bibliography for list of general research sources.

Additional analysis provided by: Richard Marcus, the Director of the International Studies Program at California State University and former Africa Editor for CountryWatch.

Other supplementary sources: Midi-Madagasikara; Madagascar Tribune; Dans la Media

Demain; Razafimpahanana; Razafindambo, Jean; Africa Confidential; the World Bank; the International Monetary Fund; All Africa, Lexis-Nexis; Reliefweb; Mad-on-line; Bertin, Covell; Maureen and Tronchon, Jacques; and Marcus, Richard.

Political Risk Index

Political Risk Index

The **Political Risk Index** is a proprietary index measuring the level of risk posed to governments, corporations, and investors, based on a myriad of political and economic factors. The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on varied criteria* including the following consideration: political stability, political representation, democratic accountability, freedom of expression, security and crime, risk of conflict, human development, jurisprudence and regulatory transparency, economic risk, foreign investment considerations, possibility of sovereign default, and corruption. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the highest political risk, while a score of 10 marks the lowest political risk. Stated differently, countries with the lowest scores pose the greatest political risk. A score of 0 marks the most dire level of political risk and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the lowest possible level of political risk, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater risk.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4

Algeria	6
Andorra	9
Angola	4
Antigua	8
Argentina	4
Armenia	4-5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	4
Bahamas	8.5
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	3.5
Barbados	8.5-9
Belarus	3
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5
Bhutan	5

Bolivia	5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	4
Botswana	7
Brazil	7
Brunei	7
Bulgaria	6
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	3
Cambodia	4
Cameroon	5
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7
China: Hong Kong	8

China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3
Congo RC	4
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4-4.5
Cyprus	5
Czech Republic	8
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5
Dominica	7
Dominican Republic	6
East Timor	5
Ecuador	6
Egypt	5

El Salvador	7
Equatorial Guinea	4
Eritrea	3
Estonia	8
Ethiopia	4
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Fr.YugoslavRep.Macedonia	5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4
Georgia	5
Germany	9.5
Ghana	6
Greece	4.5-5
Grenada	8
Guatemala	6
Guinea	3.5

Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5
Haiti	3.5
Holy See (Vatican)	9
Honduras	4.5-5
Hungary	7
Iceland	8.5-9
India	7.5-8
Indonesia	6
Iran	3.5-4
Iraq	2.5-3
Ireland	8-8.5
Israel	8
Italy	7.5
Jamaica	6.5-7
Japan	9
Jordan	6.5
Kazakhstan	6

Kenya	5
Kiribati	7
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	8
Kosovo	4
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4.5
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	6
Liberia	3.5
Libya	2
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9
Madagascar	4
Malawi	4

Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5
Mali	4
Malta	8
Marshall Islands	6
Mauritania	4.5-5
Mauritius	7
Mexico	6.5
Micronesia	7
Moldova	5
Monaco	9
Mongolia	5
Montenegro	6
Morocco	6.5
Mozambique	4.5-5
Namibia	6.5-7
Nauru	6
Nepal	4

Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7
Pakistan	3.5
Palau	7
Panama	7.5
Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6.5-7
Peru	7
Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5
Qatar	7.5
Romania	5.5

Russia	5.5
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	8
Samoa	7
San Marino	9
Sao Tome and Principe	5.5
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	6
Serbia	5
Seychelles	7
Sierra Leone	4.5
Singapore	9
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8
Slovenia	8
Solomon Islands	6
Somalia	2

South Africa	7
Spain	7.5
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3.5
Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6.5
Togo	4.5
Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	6
Turkey	7
Turkmenistan	4.5

Tuvalu	7
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7
United Kingdom	9
United States	9.5
Uruguay	8
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	7
Venezuela	4
Vietnam	5
Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5
Zimbabwe	3

*Methodology

The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. political stability (record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of government to stay in office and carry out policies as a result of productive executive-legislative relationship, perhaps with

popular support vis a vis risk of government collapse)

2. political representation (right of suffrage, free and fair elections, multi-party participation, and influence of foreign powers)
3. democratic accountability (record of respect for political rights, human rights, and civil liberties, backed by constitutional protections)
4. freedom of expression (media freedom and freedom of expression, right to dissent or express political opposition, backed by constitutional protections)
5. security and crime (the degree to which a country has security mechanisms that ensures safety of citizens and ensures law and order, without resorting to extra-judicial measures)
6. risk of conflict (the presence of conflict; record of coups or civil disturbances; threat of war; threats posed by internal or external tensions; threat or record of terrorism or insurgencies)
7. human development (quality of life; access to education; socio-economic conditions; systemic concern for the status of women and children)
8. jurisprudence and regulatory transparency (the impartiality of the legal system, the degree of transparency within the regulatory system of a country and the durability of that structure)
9. economic conditions (economic stability, investment climate, degree of nationalization of industries, property rights, labor force development)
10. corruption (the degree of corruption in a country and/or efforts by the government to address graft and other irregularities)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world.

North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) -- retain their low rankings.

Several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), [Libya](#), [Syria](#), [Iraq](#) and [Yemen](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. The worst downgrades affected [Syria](#) where civil war is at play, along with the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamist

terrorists who have also seized control over part of Syrian territory. [Iraq](#) has been further downgraded due to the rampage of Islamist terrorists and their takeover of wide swaths of Iraqi territory. [Libya](#) has also been downgraded further due to its slippage into failed state status; at issue in [Libya](#) have been an ongoing power struggle between rival militias. [Yemen](#) continues to hold steady with a poor ranking due to continued unrest at the hands of Houthi rebels, secessionists, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, and Islamic State. Its landscape has been further complicated by the fact that it is now the site of a proxy war between [Iran](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#). Conversely, [Tunisia](#) and [Egypt](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, [Zimbabwe](#) continues to be one of the bleak spots of the world with the Mugabe regime effectively destroying the country's once vibrant economy, and miring [Zimbabwe](#) with an exceedingly high rate of inflation, debilitating unemployment, devolving public services, and critical food shortages; rampant crime and political oppression round out the landscape. [Somalia](#) also sports a poor ranking due to the continuing influence of the terror group, al-Shabab, which was not operating across the border in [Kenya](#). On the upside, [Nigeria](#), which was ineffectively dealing with the threat posed by the terror group, Boko Haram, was making some strides on the national security front with its new president at the helm. [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels and a continued state of lawlessness in that country. [South Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Burkina Faso](#), [Burundi](#) and [Guinea](#) have been downgraded due to political unrest, with [Guinea](#) also having to deal with the burgeoning Ebola crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. Strains on the infrastructure of southern and eastern European countries, such as [Serbia](#), [Croatia](#), and [Hungary](#), due to an influx of refugees was expected to pose social and economic challenges, and slight downgrades were made accordingly. So too, a corruption crisis for the Romanian prime minister has affected the ranking of that country. Meanwhile, the rankings for [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were maintained due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was earlier downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, no further downgrade was added since the country was able to successfully forge a bailout rescue deal with creditor institutions. Cyprus' exposure to Greek banks yielded a downgrade in its case.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability and a constitutional crisis that prevails well after landmark elections were held. Both [India](#) and China retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic

representation and accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating. Meanwhile, [Singapore](#) retained its strong rankings due to its continued effective stewardship of the economy and political stability.

In the Americas, ongoing political and economic woes, as well as crime and corruption have affected the rankings for [Mexico](#) , [Guatemala](#), and [Brazil](#). [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to its mix of market unfriendly policies and political oppression. For the moment, the [United States](#) maintains a strong ranking along with [Canada](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean; however, a renewed debt ceiling crisis could cause the [United States](#) to be downgraded in a future edition. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Political Stability

Political Stability

The **Political Stability Index** is a proprietary index measuring a country's level of stability, standard of good governance, record of constitutional order, respect for human rights, and overall strength of democracy. The [Political Stability](#) Index is calculated using an established methodology* by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse. Threats include coups, domestic violence and instability, terrorism, etc. This index measures the dynamic between the quality of a country's government and the threats that can compromise and undermine stability. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of political stability and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of political stability possible, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries

contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater stability.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4.5-5
Algeria	5
Andorra	9.5
Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5-9
Argentina	7
Armenia	5.5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	4.5

Barbados	9
Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5
Bhutan	5
Bolivia	6
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5
Botswana	8.5
Brazil	7
Brunei	8
Bulgaria	7.5
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5-5
Cameroon	6
Canada	9.5

Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4.5
Chile	9
China	7
China: Hong Kong	8
China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7.5
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	9.5
Cote d'Ivoire	3.5
Croatia	7.5
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	8
Czech Republic	8.5
Denmark	9.5

Djibouti	5
Dominica	8.5
Dominican Republic	7
East Timor	5
Ecuador	7
Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	7.5-8
Equatorial Guinea	4.5
Eritrea	4
Estonia	9
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Fr.YugoslavRep.Macedonia	6.5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4.5
Georgia	5

Germany	9.5
Ghana	7
Greece	6
Grenada	8.5
Guatemala	7
Guinea	3.5-4
Guinea-Bissau	4
Guyana	6
Haiti	3.5-4
Holy See (Vatican)	9.5
Honduras	6
Hungary	7.5
Iceland	9
India	8
Indonesia	7
Iran	3.5
Iraq	2.5
Ireland	9.5

Israel	8
Italy	8.5-9
Jamaica	8
Japan	9
Jordan	6
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	8
Korea, North	2
Korea, South	8.5
Kosovo	5.5
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	5
Laos	5
Latvia	8.5
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	5
Liberia	3.5-4

Libya	2
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	9
Luxembourg	9.5
Madagascar	4
Malawi	5
Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5-5
Mali	4.5-5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	8
Mauritania	6
Mauritius	8
Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	8
Moldova	5.5
Monaco	9.5
Mongolia	6.5-7

Montenegro	8
Morocco	7
Mozambique	5
Namibia	8.5
Nauru	8
Nepal	4.5
Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	6
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7
Pakistan	3
Palau	8
Panama	8.5
Papua New Guinea	6
Paraguay	8

Peru	7.5
Philippines	6
Poland	9
Portugal	9
Qatar	7
Romania	7
Russia	6
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	9
Saint Lucia	9
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	9
Samoa	8
San Marino	9.5
Sao Tome and Principe	7
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	7.5
Serbia	6.5
Seychelles	8

Sierra Leone	4.5
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	9
Solomon Islands	6.5-7
Somalia	2
South Africa	7.5
Spain	9
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3
Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6

Togo	5
Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	5
Turkey	7.5
Turkmenistan	5
Tuvalu	8.5
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	8.5
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	8.5
Venezuela	4.5-5
Vietnam	4.5
Yemen	2.5

Zambia	5
Zimbabwe	3

*Methodology

The Political Stability Index is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. record of peaceful transitions of power (free and fair elections; adherence to political accords)
2. record of democratic representation, presence of instruments of democracy; systemic accountability
3. respect for human rights; respect for civil rights
4. strength of the system of jurisprudence, adherence to constitutional order, and good governance
5. ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse (i.e. government stability versus a country being deemed "ungovernable")
6. threat of coups, insurgencies, and insurrection
7. level of unchecked crime and corruption
8. risk of terrorism and other threats to national security
9. relationship with regional powers and international community; record of bilateral or multilateral cooperation
10. degree of economic strife (i.e. economic and financial challenges)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world. The usual suspects -- North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), and [Somalia](#) -- retain their low rankings. The reclusive and ultra-dictatorial North

Korean regime, which has terrified the world with its nuclear threats, has exhibited internal instability. Of note was a cut-throat purge of hundreds of high ranking officials deemed to be a threat to Kim Jung-un. Despite their attempts to recover from years of lawlessness, war, and warlordism, both [Afghanistan](#) and [Somalia](#) continue to be beset by terrorism and turmoil. In [Afghanistan](#), while international forces have seen success in the effort against the terror group, al-Qaida, the other Islamist extremist group, the Taliban, continues to carry out a vicious insurgency using terrorism. In [Somalia](#), while the government attempts to do the nation's business, the terror group, al-Shabab continues to make its presence known not only in [Somalia](#), but across the border into [Kenya](#) with devastating results/ Also in this category is [Iraq](#), which continues to be rocked by horrific violence and terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, which has taken over wide swaths of Iraqi territory.

Syria, [Libya](#), and [Yemen](#) have been added to this unfortunate echelon of the world's most politically unstable countries. [Syria](#) has been mired by the twin hazards of 1. a civil war as rebels oppose the Assad regime; and 2. the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamic State, which also seized control over vast portions of Syrian territory. Meanwhile, the post-Qaddafi landscape of [Libya](#) has devolved into chaos as rival militias battle for control -- the elected government of the country notwithstanding. Rounding out this grim triad is [Yemen](#), which was dealing with a Houthi rebellion, secessionists in the south, as well as the threat of terrorism from al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula as well as Islamic State, while also being the site of a proxy war between Shi'a [Iran](#) and Sunni [Saudi Arabia](#).

Meanwhile, several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. All three of these countries have stabilized in recent years and have been upgraded accordingly. In [Bahrain](#), the landscape had calmed. In [Egypt](#), the secular military-backed government has generated criticism for its crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood; however, the country had ratified the presidency via democratic elections and were on track to hold parliamentary elections as the country moved along the path of democratization. Perhaps the most impressive story was coming out of [Tunisia](#) -- the country whose Jasmine Revolution sparked the entire Arab Spring -- and where after a few years of strife, a new progressive constitution was passed into law and a secular government had been elected to power. [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded the previous year due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels. Although the country has been trying to emerge from this crisis, the fact of the matter was that it was difficult to halt the precipitous decline into lawlessness in that country. [Zimbabwe](#) has maintained its consistently poor ranking due to the dictatorial regime of Mugabe, who continues to hold a tight grip on power, intimidates the opposition, squashes dissent, and oppresses the white farmer population of the country. Moving in

a slightly improved direction is [Nigeria](#), which has sported abysmal ratings due to the government's fecklessness in dealing with the threat posed by the Islamist terror group, Boko Haram. Under its newly-elected government, there appears to be more of a concerted effort to make national security a priority action item. [Mali](#) was also slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Political instability has visited [Burkina Faso](#) and [Burundi](#) as the leaders of those countries attempted to side-step constitutional limits to hold onto power. In [Burundi](#), an attempted coup ensued but quelled, and the president won a (questionable) new term in office; unrest has since punctuated the landscape. In [Burkina Faso](#), the political climate has turned stormy as a result of a successful coup that ended the rule of the president, and then a putsch against the transitional government. These two African countries have been downgraded as a result.

It should be noted that the African country of South [Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Guinea](#) has endured poor rankings throughout, but was slightly downgraded further over fears of social unrest and the Ebola heath crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. [Serbia](#) and [Albania](#) were slightly downgraded due to eruptions of unrest, while [Romania](#) was slightly downgraded on the basis of corruption charges against the prime minister. [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were downgraded due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was downgraded the previous year due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, the country successfully forged a rescue deal with international creditors and stayed within the Euro zone. Greek voters rewarded the hitherto unknown upstart party at the polls for these efforts. As a result, [Greece](#) was actually upgraded slightly as it proved to the world that it could endure the political and economic storms. Meanwhile, [Germany](#), [France](#), [Switzerland](#), the [United Kingdom](#), the [Netherlands](#), and the Scandinavian countries continue to post impressive ranking consistent with these countries' strong records of democracy, freedom, and peaceful transfers of power.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability well after landmark elections that prevails today. [Cambodia](#) was very slightly downgraded due to post-election instability that has resulted in occasional flares of violence. Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and China retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and

accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating.

In the Americas, [Haiti](#) retained its downgraded status due to ongoing political and economic woes. [Mexico](#) was downgraded due to its alarming rate of crime. [Guatemala](#) was downgraded due to charges of corruption, the arrest of the president, and uncertainty over the outcome of elections. [Brazil](#) was downgraded due to the corruption charges erupting on the political landscape, the stalling of the economy, and the increasingly loud calls for the impeachment of President Rousseff. [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to the fact that the country's post-Chavez government is every bit as autocratic and nationalistic, but even more inclined to oppress its political opponents. [Colombia](#) was upgraded slightly due to efforts aimed at securing a peace deal with the FARC insurgents. A small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States. Meanwhile, the [United States](#), [Canada](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Panama](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean retain their strong rankings due to their records of stability and peaceful transfers of power.

In the Pacific, [Fiji](#) was upgraded due to its return to constitutional order and democracy with the holding of the first elections in eight years.

In Oceania, [Maldives](#) has been slightly downgraded due to the government's continued and rather relentless persecution of the country's former pro-democracy leader - former President Nasheed.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Freedom Rankings

Freedom Rankings

Freedom in the World

Editor's Note: This ranking by Freedom House quantifies political freedom and civil liberties into a single combined index on each sovereign country's level of freedom and liberty. The initials "PR" and "CL" stand for Political Rights and Civil Liberties, respectively. The number 1 represents the most free countries and the number 7 represents the least free. Several countries fall in the continuum in between. The freedom ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Afghanistan	6 ?	6	Not Free	
Albania*	3	3	Partly Free	
Algeria	6	5	Not Free	
Andorra*	1	1	Free	
Angola	6	5	Not Free	
Antigua and Barbuda*	3 ?	2	Free	
Argentina*	2	2	Free	
Armenia	6	4	Partly Free	
Australia*	1	1	Free	
Austria*	1	1	Free	
Azerbaijan	6	5	Not Free	

Bahamas*	1	1	Free	
Bahrain	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Bangladesh*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Barbados*	1	1	Free	
Belarus	7	6	Not Free	
Belgium*	1	1	Free	
Belize*	1	2	Free	
Benin*	2	2	Free	
Bhutan	4	5	Partly Free	
Bolivia*	3	3	Partly Free	
Bosnia-Herzegovina*	4	3	Partly Free	
Botswana*	3 ?	2	Free	
Brazil*	2	2	Free	
Brunei	6	5	Not Free	
Bulgaria*	2	2	Free	
Burkina Faso	5	3	Partly Free	
Burma	7	7	Not Free	
Burundi*	4	5	Partly Free	↑

Cambodia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Cameroon	6	6	Not Free	
Canada*	1	1	Free	
Cape Verde*	1	1	Free	
Central African Republic	5	5	Partly Free	
Chad	7	6	Not Free	
Chile*	1	1	Free	
China	7	6	Not Free	
Colombia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Comoros*	3	4	Partly Free	
Congo (Brazzaville)	6	5	Not Free	↓
Congo (Kinshasa)	6	6	Not Free	↓
Costa Rica*	1	1	Free	
Cote d'Ivoire	6	5	Not Free	
Croatia*	1 ?	2	Free	
Cuba	7	6	Not Free	
Cyprus*	1	1	Free	
Czech Republic*	1	1	Free	

Denmark*	1	1	Free	
Djibouti	5	5	Partly Free	
Dominica*	1	1	Free	
Dominican Republic*	2	2	Free	↓
East Timor*	3	4	Partly Free	
Ecuador*	3	3	Partly Free	
Egypt	6	5	Not Free	
El Salvador*	2	3	Free	
Equatorial Guinea	7	7	Not Free	
Eritrea	7	7 ?	Not Free	
Estonia*	1	1	Free	
Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free	↓
Fiji	6	4	Partly Free	
Finland*	1	1	Free	
France*	1	1	Free	
Gabon	6	5 ?	Not Free ?	
The Gambia	5	5 ?	Partly Free	
Georgia	4	4	Partly Free	

Germany*	1	1	Free	
Ghana*	1	2	Free	
Greece*	1	2	Free	
Grenada*	1	2	Free	
Guatemala*	4 ?	4	Partly Free	
Guinea	7	6 ?	Not Free	
Guinea-Bissau*	4	4	Partly Free	
Guyana*	2	3	Free	
Haiti*	4	5	Partly Free	
Honduras	4 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Hungary*	1	1	Free	
Iceland*	1	1	Free	
India*	2	3	Free	
Indonesia*	2	3	Free	
Iran	6	6	Not Free	↓
Iraq	5 ?	6	Not Free	
Ireland*	1	1	Free	
Israel*	1	2	Free	

Italy*	1	2	Free	
Jamaica*	2	3	Free	
Japan*	1	2	Free	
Jordan	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Kazakhstan	6	5	Not Free	↓
Kenya	4	4 ?	Partly Free	
Kiribati*	1	1	Free	
Kosovo	5 ?	4 ?	Partly Free ?	
Kuwait	4	4	Partly Free	
Kyrgyzstan	6 ?	5 ?	Not Free ?	
Laos	7	6	Not Free	
Latvia*	2	1	Free	
Lebanon	5	3 ?	Partly Free	
Lesotho*	3 ?	3	Partly Free ?	
Liberia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Libya	7	7	Not Free	
Liechtenstein*	1	1	Free	
Lithuania*	1	1	Free	

Luxembourg*	1	1	Free	
Macedonia*	3	3	Partly Free	↑
Madagascar	6 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Malawi*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Malaysia	4	4	Partly Free	
Maldives*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Mali*	2	3	Free	
Malta*	1	1	Free	↓
Marshall Islands*	1	1	Free	
Mauritania	6	5	Not Free	
Mauritius*	1	2	Free	
Mexico*	2	3	Free	
Micronesia*	1	1	Free	
Moldova*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Monaco*	2	1	Free	
Mongolia*	2	2	Free	↑
Montenegro*	3	2 ?	Free ?	
Morocco	5	4	Partly Free	↓

Mozambique	4 ?	3	Partly Free	
Namibia*	2	2	Free	
Nauru*	1	1	Free	
Nepal	4	4	Partly Free	
Netherlands*	1	1	Free	
New Zealand*	1	1	Free	
Nicaragua*	4	4 ?	Partly Free	
Niger	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Nigeria	5	4	Partly Free	↓
North Korea	7	7	Not Free	↓
Norway*	1	1	Free	
Oman	6	5	Not Free	
Pakistan	4	5	Partly Free	
Palau*	1	1	Free	
Panama*	1	2	Free	
Papua New Guinea*	4	3	Partly Free	
Paraguay*	3	3	Partly Free	
Peru*	2	3	Free	

Philippines	4	3	Partly Free	↓
Poland*	1	1	Free	
Portugal*	1	1	Free	
Qatar	6	5	Not Free	
Romania*	2	2	Free	
Russia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Rwanda	6	5	Not Free	
Saint Kitts and Nevis*	1	1	Free	
Saint Lucia*	1	1	Free	
Saint Vincent and Grenadines*	2	1	Free	
Samoa*	2	2	Free	
San Marino*	1	1	Free	
Sao Tome and Principe*	2	2	Free	
Saudi Arabia	7	6	Not Free	
Senegal*	3	3	Partly Free	
Serbia*	2 ?	2	Free	
Seychelles*	3	3	Partly Free	
Sierra Leone*	3	3	Partly Free	

Singapore	5	4	Partly Free	
Slovakia*	1	1	Free	↓
Slovenia*	1	1	Free	
Solomon Islands	4	3	Partly Free	
Somalia	7	7	Not Free	
South Africa*	2	2	Free	
South Korea*	1	2	Free	
Spain*	1	1	Free	
Sri Lanka*	4	4	Partly Free	
Sudan	7	7	Not Free	
Suriname*	2	2	Free	
Swaziland	7	5	Not Free	
Sweden*	1	1	Free	
Switzerland*	1	1	Free	↓
Syria	7	6	Not Free	
Taiwan*	1 ?	2 ?	Free	
Tajikistan	6	5	Not Free	
Tanzania	4	3	Partly Free	

Thailand	5	4	Partly Free	
Togo	5	4 ?	Partly Free	
Tonga	5	3	Partly Free	
Trinidad and Tobago*	2	2	Free	
Tunisia	7	5	Not Free	
Turkey*	3	3	Partly Free	↓
Turkmenistan	7	7	Not Free	
Tuvalu*	1	1	Free	
Uganda	5	4	Partly Free	
Ukraine*	3	2	Free	
United Arab Emirates	6	5	Not Free	
United Kingdom*	1	1	Free	
United States*	1	1	Free	
Uruguay*	1	1	Free	
Uzbekistan	7	7	Not Free	
Vanuatu*	2	2	Free	
Venezuela	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Vietnam	7	5	Not Free	↓

Yemen	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Zambia*	3	4 ?	Partly Free	
Zimbabwe	6 ?	6	Not Free	

Methodology:

PR and CL stand for political rights and civil liberties, respectively; 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating. The ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

? ? up or down indicates a change in political rights, civil liberties, or status since the last survey.

↑ ↓ up or down indicates a trend of positive or negative changes that took place but that were not sufficient to result in a change in political rights or civil liberties ratings of 1-7.

* indicates a country's status as an electoral democracy.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2010 edition.

Available at URL: <http://www.freedomhouse.org>

Updated:

Reviewed in 2015

Human Rights

Human Rights in Madagascar

Overview

The Republic of Madagascar is officially a multiparty democracy; however, there was a violent power struggle that erupted in 2009, and an ongoing political impasse has marked the Malagasy

landscape from that time to the present. Widespread poverty, frequent political instability, as well as corruption, do not allow for a good human rights record.

In recent years, there have been reports of brutality, abuse, and kidnappings by security forces recruited by the government. Police are known to abuse detainees and prisoners. Arbitrary arrest and detention of demonstrators and opposition politicians are also problems. Prison conditions are harsh and life threatening. Women in prison are susceptible to physical abuse, including rape.

The government restricts the freedoms of speech, press, and religion. At times, the government limits freedom of assembly and movement as well. Child labor remains a problem.

The government continues its efforts to combat human trafficking and to curb widespread corruption in its own ranks.

Human Development Index (HDI) Rank:

See full listing of the Human Development Index located in the Social Overview of this report for this country's current rank.

Human Poverty Index Rank:

63rd out of 103

Gini Index:

47.5

Life Expectancy at Birth (years):

62.5 years

Unemployment Rate:

N/A

Population living on \$1 a day (%):

61.0%

Population living on \$2 a day (%):

85.1%

Population living beneath the Poverty Line (%):

71.3%

Internally Displaced People:

N/A

Total Crime Rate (%):

N/A

Health Expenditure (% of GDP):

Public: 1.2%

% of GDP Spent on Education:

2.9%

Human Rights Conventions Party to:

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Signed but not yet ratified)
- Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

*Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life-expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the United Nation's Human Development Report since 1993.

*Human Poverty Index Ranking is based on certain indicators used to calculate the Human Poverty Index. Probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, adult literacy rate, population without sustainable access to an improved water source, and population below income poverty line are the indicators assessed in this measure.

*The Gini Index measures inequality based on the distribution of family income or consumption. A value of 0 represents perfect equality (income being distributed equally), and a value of 100 perfect inequality (income all going to one individual).

*The calculation of the total crime rate is the % of the total population which has been effected by property crime, robbery, sexual assault, assault, or bribery (corruption) related occurrences.

Government Functions

Editor's Note:

Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013, as discussed above. Impeachment proceedings against the president in 2015 have somewhat marred Madagascar's transition to stability; the court ruling invalidating that move calmed the political landscape.

Constitution

In the aftermath of the turmoil discussed above, Madagascar promulgated a new constitution in 2010.

Branches of Government

The principal institutions of the Republic of Madagascar are a presidency, a parliament, a prime ministry and cabinet, and an independent judiciary. The president is elected by direct universal suffrage for a five-year term, renewable twice.

Executive Branch

The President, who is popularly elected for a five-year term is limited to two terms. A Prime Minister and council of ministers carries out day-to-day management of government. The President appoints the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister and members of Parliament initiate legislation and the government executes it. The President can dissolve the National Assembly.

Legislative Branch

Technically, the parliament consists of the "Sénat" (Senate) and the "Antanimieram-Pirenena / Assemblée Nationale" (National Assembly). Functionally, however, it is a unicameral body with the action ensuing in the National Assembly, which was convened in 2014 following the 2013 elections. While the country's new constitution of 2010 provides for Senate, the legal proceedings to bring this chamber into force are pending. As such, the National Assembly has been operating in recent years as the only functional legislative body.

Judiciary

The Constitutional Court approves the constitutionality of new laws.

Administration

In an effort to decentralize administration, the constitution calls for the six provinces (faritany) to be autonomous.

Government Structure

Names:

conventional long form:

Republic of Madagascar

conventional short form:

Madagascar

local long form:

Republique de Madagascar

local short form:

Madagascar

Type:

Republic

Editor's Note:

Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

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Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013, as discussed above. Impeachment proceedings against the president in 2015 have somewhat marred Madagascar's transition to stability; the court ruling invalidating that move calmed the political landscape.

See "Political Conditions" of *Country Review: Madagascar* for details.

Executive Branch:

Note on chief of state:

President Hery Martial RAJAONARIMAMPIANINA Rakotoarimana (since 2013). Typically, the president is popularly elected for a five-year term; limited to two terms.

Note on elections :

Held in 2013; see "Note" above, "Primer" below, " " and "Political Conditions" elsewhere in this Country Review for details.

Note on impeachment in 2015:

In late May 2015, Madagascar was returned to a state of political tumult as members of parliament voted to impeach President Hery Rajaonarimampianina. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of impeachment with 121 of 151 members of parliament voting to end the tenure of the president. Dissatisfaction with the president, who came to power in 2013 in the aftermath of a 2009 coup, has marked the political landscape in Madagascar in recent times. The president's political critics pointed to problems of corruption, his poor economic stewardship and an ineffectual response to an outbreak of the plague in 2014, as being the primary reasons for their disapproval. They have also made negative note of Rajaonarimampianina's recent penchant for introducing religiosity to the political sphere.

The various causes of the political animosity towards the president notwithstanding, it was clear

that Rajaonarimampianina had few fans in the legislative branch of government. With the impeachment vote securing the required two-thirds threshold, the motion to impeach would be moved to the Constitutional Court for legal review. For his part, President Rajaonarimampianina decried the attempt to remove him from office, dismissing the proceedings as he declared in a national address: "I'm still there. I'm still standing." He also warned that his impeachment, if upheld by the court, would only drag the country back into a state of unrest and instability.

At the start of June 2015, the president had launched a legal challenge to the impeachment proceedings. By mid-June 2015, Madagascar's constitutional court invalidated the parliament's impeachment of President Rajaonarimampianina. While the court ruling was sure to anger members of parliament, the move nonetheless helped to smooth over the burgeoning political crisis -- at least for the moment.

Note on head of government:

In mid-January 2015, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Roger Kolo and the entire government. At issue was the public's frustration over regular power cuts (rolling electricity blackouts), the government's lack of responsiveness over an outbreak of the plague, and a lack of progress on improvements to the quality of life.

Since a coup d'etat in 2009, Madagascar has been mired by turmoil. There were high hopes that elections in 2013, together with an ensuing burst of foreign investment, would return the country to stability. However, the slow pace of improvements to the quality of life fueled public discontent, ultimately ending in the resignation of Prime Minister Kolo's government, as discussed here. For his part, outgoing Prime Minister Kolo said, "We must take account of the interests of the 20 million Malagasy. Some things have been successful, other have not been."

Now the task before the parliament would be to consider who might be called on to form a new government. According to Deputy Parliamentary Speaker Freddie Mahazoasy, a list of 14 potential candidates had been composed. Included on the list was former President Marc Ravalomanana who was deposed in the 2009 coup d'etat by Andry Rajoelina. But it was not Ravalomanana but air force commander and businessman Jean Ravelonarivo whom the president ultimately named to be the new head of government. This move was quickly opposed by coup leader and former President Rajoelina, who argued that Ravelonarivo's appointment was not constitutional. Indeed, the the appointment of Prime Minister Jean Ravelonarivo was soon facing a challenge within the country's constitutional court.

In April 2016, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar announced that Prime Minister Jean Ravelonarivo and his cabinet had resigned from office. This news was almost immediately met with confusion as Prime Minister Ravelonarivo denied the move. Nevertheless, the president soon appointed the interior minister, Solonandrasana Olivier Mahafaly. as the new

prime minister and head of government.

Cabinet:

Council of Ministers; appointed by the Prime Minister; since 2009, Madagascar's transitional government confirmed members of a transitional cabinet.

NOTE:

See Primer below for information on 2013 elections.

Legislative Branch:

Note on Parliament:

In 2009, following President Ravalomanana's decision to relinquish power, Madagascar's transitional government suspended the functioning of the two houses of the parliament -- the National Assembly and the Senate. See "Political Conditions" for details.

Parliament:

Technically, the parliament consists of the "Sénat" (Senate) and the "Antanimieram-Pirenena / Assemblée Nationale" (National Assembly). Functionally, however, it is a unicameral body with the action ensuing in the National Assembly, which was convened in 2014 following the 2013 elections. While the country's new constitution of 2010 provides for Senate, the legal proceedings to bring this chamber into force are pending. As such, the National Assembly has been operating in recent years as the only functional legislative body, as described directly below.

"Antanimieram-Pirenena / Assemblée Nationale" (National Assembly):

151 seats; 87 members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 64 directly elected in two-seat constituencies by proportional representation vote; members serve 4-year terms

Elections to National Assembly:

Held in 2013; see "Primer" below, and "Political Conditions" for details. Election results are as follows --

Percent of vote by party - MPAR 17.3%, MR 10.8%, VPM MMM 8.2%, independent and other 63.7%

seats by party - MPAR 49, MR 20, VPM MMM 13, PHI 5, other 35, independent 25, seats with delayed elections 4

Primer on presidential and parliamentary elections:

first round already held on Oct. 25, 2013; second round Dec. 20, 2013

-- Note that this primer covers the presidential and parliamentary contests --

Introduction

A presidential election in Madagascar was set to be held in 2013. The first round was initially scheduled to be held on July 24, 2013, but was subsequently postponed until Aug. 23, 2013. The country's election commission then delayed the first round of voting until later in the year, with a schedule set for the first round on Oct. 25, 2013. Should a second round of the presidential race be needed, it would be held in the rough period from November through December 2013, with a schedule set for Dec. 20, 2013.

Parliamentary elections were expected to be held alongside the second round of the presidential vote on Dec. 20, 2013.

Typically, the president is popularly elected for a five-year term and limited to two terms. Meanwhile, the main voting at the parliamentary level would be in the National Assembly where members are elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms. These elections -- presidential and parliamentary -- were intended to bring an end to the political crisis gripping Madagascar.

Background

At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa

paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013.

In June 2013, the country's election commission warned that with tense election atmosphere in Madagascar, the election would be postponed until August 2013. But in July 2013, there was no consensus on when the elections would actually be held although United Nations representatives urged that the people of Madagascar go to the polls at some point in 2013. The August 2013 timeline passed and as noted above, the first round of the presidential election in Madagascar was rescheduled to be held in October 2013. Should a second round of the presidential race be needed, it would be held in the rough period from November through December 2013. Parliamentary elections were expected to be held alongside the presidential vote.

More than 40 individuals were reported to be contesting the presidential race. The three leading presidential candidates were: interim leader Andry Rajoelina, former president Didier Ratsiraka, and Lalao Ravalomanana, the wife of deposed former president, Marc Ravalomanana. But all three of these individuals were imbued by controversy. The SADC-brokered agreement had included the urging that Rajoelina refrain from the polls to end the crisis; Ratsiraka was himself a controversial figure due to his political history in Madagascar and the fact that he had not lived "in country" recently, as required by law to contest the presidency; Ravalomanana was obviously linked with her husband and his legacy in Madagascar and also subject to the same residency problem as Ratsiraka.

Accordingly, the African Union warned that the candidacies of Rajoelina, Ratsiraka, and Ravalomanana were all "illegitimate" and indicated that the regional bloc would not recognize any of the three individuals as the legitimate leader of Madagascar. Meanwhile, the European Union and the United Nations respectively registered their concerns about the candidacies of these three individuals and urged them all to withdraw from the race. Then, at the start of June 2013, the call for the "problematic" three candidates to withdraw was echoed by Madagascar's cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Omer Beriziky, following a 16-hour closed door session. It was to be seen if Rajoelina, Ratsiraka, and Ravalomanana would heed the calls.

It should be noted that in August 2013 -- ahead of the new date for the elections in October 2013 - - the country's electoral commission nullified the candidacies of eight presidential contenders. Included in the list of cancelled candidacies were the three most controversial options -- transitional President Rajoelina, former President Ratsiraka, and former first lady, Lalao Ravalomanana. The electoral commission instructed all the nullified candidates to select alternate candidates to replace them to contest the presidential election, the first round of which was now set for October 2013.

Thus, the main candidates who would actually be contesting these elections included former cabinet minister Jean Louis Robinson, former cabinet minister Hery Rajaonarimampianina, former cabinet minister Hajo Andrianainarivelo, former diplomat Pierrot Rajaonarivelo, businessman Edgard Razafindravahy, former Prime Minister Camille Vital, and Rolland Ratsiraka.

Many of these candidates were proxies for the former presidents and their stalwarts who were prohibited from contesting the elections. Indeed, Rajaonarimampianina -- a former finance minister under the outgoing president -- was backed by Rajoelina himself. Rajaonarimampianina indicated that, if he won the presidency, there would be a continuing role for Rajoelina in government. While Edgard Razafindravahy was not expressly backed by Rajoelina or his inner cadre, he has been supported by Rajoelina's party. Robinson -- a health minister during Ravalomanana's presidency -- was predictably backed by Ravalomanana since his wife was disqualified from the contest. Robinson's campaign was quite literally a tribute to the presidency of Marc Ravalomanana and he went so far as to indicate that, if he won the presidency, he would appoint Lalao Ravalomanana as the prime minister. As the nephew of the former president, Rolland Ratsiraka commanded the support of the older Ratsiraka.

It should be noted that the electoral commission confirmed that the first round would go forward on Oct. 25, 2013, with a second round on Dec. 20, 2013 -- the date when the parliamentary elections would also take place.

The Elections

The highly-anticipated elections in Madagascar commenced on Oct. 25, 2013, with the first round of the presidential contest. Citizens of Madagascar went to the polls to cast their ballots. When the polls closed, election monitors reported that the election had gone off in a smooth and calm manner.

Vote counting was expected to take some time and results would not be known for several days after the first round was held. That being said, initial results indicate that the two front runners were Jean Louis Robinson (backed by former President Marc Ravalomanana, as discussed above) and Hery Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina, as discussed above).

Since no one individual was expected to win an outright majority in this first round of voting, a

second round was to be held in December 2013. At that time, voters would also cast their ballots in the parliamentary elections.

The second round of elections went forward, as scheduled on Dec. 20, 2013, with international monitors from the Indian Ocean Commission commending Madagascar for the successful polls. The Indian Ocean Commission said that the elections went off in a peaceful manner as voters made their selection between the two second round candidates -- Jean Louis Robinson (backed by Ravalomanana) and Hery Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina). No election results were immediately available, instead the outcome was expected to be announced until early 2014.

In January 2014, it was announced that Rajaonarimampianina (backed by Rajoelina) had won the second round of the presidential election against Robinson (backed by Ravalomanana). According to Madagascar's electoral commission, turnout exceeded 50 percent in the runoff, and Rajaonarimampianina secured 53.5 percent while Robinson garnered 46.5 percent of the vote share. This provisional result by the electoral commission would have to be ratified by the Special Electoral Court, effectively formalizing the election outcome.

For his part, Rajaonarimampianina claimed victory saying, "I thank God for leading us in this process and I thank the people of Madagascar to be very active in participating in this process. I'm sure each of Malagasy people aspires development of the country and a life full of wisdom and full of hope." Robinson had a very different response to the election results, charging massive fraud. However, Rajaonarimampianina noted that the results were tabulated by an official institution and monitored by international observers.

Note that a transition of power was in the works for Madagascar. Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina was set to transfer power to President-elect Hery Rajaonarimampianina on Jan. 24, 2014 at the State palace of Iavoloha. The power transfer would be followed by the investiture of the new president a day later on Jan. 25, 2014 at Mahamasina stadium in Antananarivo.

Why are these elections important?

These elections in Madagascar have been highly anticipated since 2009 when the country was subject to an unconstitutional transfer of power, and have since been mired by political crisis. Accordingly, these 2013 elections, in many senses, constituted the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance.

*** See above for details related to the post-election turbulence facing Madagascar, including the unrest that led to the change of head of government, as well as impeachment proceedings against the president. ***

Judicial Branch:

"Cour Supreme" (Supreme Court); "Haute Cour Constitutionnelle" (High Constitutional Court); Court of Appeal

Constitution:

Aug. 19, 1992, approved by national referendum; revised in 1998; further constitutional changes ratified in 2007; national dialogue produced the new constitution of 2010.

Legal System:

Based on French civil law system and traditional Malagasy law; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Administrative Divisions:

Six provinces (faritany): Antananarivo, Antsiranana, Fianarantsoa, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Toliary

Political Parties and Leaders:

AVANA Party [Jean-Louis ROBINSON]

Economic Liberalism and Democratic Action for National Recovery/LEADER Fanilo or LF [Manasse ESOAVELOMANDROSO]

Green Party/Parti Vert or AMHM [Sarah Georget RABEHARISOA]

National Unity, Freedom, and Development or FFF [Andriamparany Benjamin RADAVIDSON]

New Force for Madagascar or FIDIO [Hery RAJAONARIMAMPIANINA]

Parti Hiaraka Isika or PHI [Albert Camille VITAL]

Party of Andry Rajoelina or MPAR [Andry RAJOELINA]

Pillar of Madagascar or AIM [Andry RAKOTOVAO]

Ravlomanana Movement or MR [Marc RAVALOMANANA]

Sambo Fiaran'i Noe or SFN

Union Party or Tambahatra [Pety RAKOTONIAINA]

Vondrona Politika Miara dia Malagasy Miara Miainga or VPM MMM [Milavonjy ANDRIASY]

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Principal Government Officials

Leadership and Cabinet of Madagascar

Pres. Hery Martial RAJAONARIMAMPIANINA Rakotoarimanana
Prime Min. Jean RAVELONARIVO, Gen.
Min. of Agriculture & Rural Development Roland RAVATOMANGA
Min. of Commerce & Consumer Affairs Henri RABESAHALA
Min. of Communication, Information, & Relations With Institutions Vonison Razafindambo
ANDRIANJATO
Min. of Culture & Handicrafts Brigitte Rabemanantsoa RASAMOELINA
Min. of Economy & Planning Herilanto RAVELOHARISON, Gen.
Min. of Employment & Technical & Professional Training Benjamina Ramarcel
RAMANANTSOA
Min. of Energy & Hydrocarbons Horace GATIEN
Min. of Environment, Ecology, Maritime Affairs, & Forests Ralava BEBOARIMISA
Min. of Finance & Budget Francois Marie Maurice Gervais RAKOTOARIMANANA
Min. of Fisheries & Fishery Resources AHMADE
Min. of Foreign Affairs Beatrice ATALLAH
Min. of Higher Education & Scientific Research Monique RASOAZANAERA
Min. of Interior & Decentralization Oliver Mahafaly SOLONANDRASANA
Min. of Industry, Private-Sector Development, & Small & Medium Business Narson
RAFIDIMANANA
Min. of Justice & Keeper of the Seals Noeline RAZAFINDRAVONONA
Min. of Livestock Anthelme RAMPARANY
Min. of National Defense Dominique Jean Oliver RAKOTOZAFY, Gen.
Min. of National Education Paul Andrianaina RABARY
Min. of Population, Social Protection, & Protection of Women Onitiana REALY
Min. of Posts, Telecommunications, & New Technology Neypatraike Andre
RAKOTOMAMONJY
Min. of Public Health Mamy Lalatiana ANDRIAMANARIVO
Min. of Public Security Blaise Richard RANDIMBISOA
Min. of Public Service, Labor, & Social Law Jean de Dieu MAHARANTE
Min. of Public Works & Meteorology Roland Irovana RATSIRAKA
Min. of Tourism, Transport, & Meteorology Ulrich Jacques ANDRIANTIANA
Min. of Water, Hygiene, & Sanitation Johannita Benedicte NDAHIMANANJARA, Dr.
Min. of Youth & Sports Jean Anicet RANDRIAMOSARISOA
Sec. of State in Charge of the National Gendarmerie Didier Gerard PAZA, Gen.

Min. of State in Charge of Infrastructure & Territorial Planning Rivo RAKOTOVAO
Min. in the Office of the Pres. in Charge of Mines & Oil Valarien Joeli LALAHARISAINA
Governor, Central Bank Gaston RAVELOJAONA
Ambassador to the US Jocelyn Bertin RADIFERA
Permanent Representative to the UN, New York Zina ANDRIANARIVELO-RAZAFY

-- as of 2015

Update --

Madagascar president names new prime minister following resignation confusion

In April 2016, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar announced that Prime Minister Jean Ravelonarivo and his cabinet had resigned from office. This news was almost immediately met with confusion as Prime Minister Ravelonarivo denied the move. Nevertheless, the president soon appointed the interior minister, Solonandrasana Olivier Mahafaly, as the new prime minister and head of government.

-- as of 2016

Leader Biography

Leader Biography

Leader

Editor's Note:

Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the

Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

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The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013, as discussed above. Impeachment proceedings against the president in 2015 have somewhat marred Madagascar's transition to

stability; the court ruling invalidating that move calmed the political landscape.

See "Political Conditions" of *Country Review: Madagascar* for details.

Executive Branch:

Note on chief of state:

President Hery Martial RAJAONARIMAMPIANINA Rakotoarimana (since 2013). Note that in May 2015, the president was being subject to impeachment proceedings. Typically, the president is popularly elected for a five-year term; limited to two terms.

Note on elections :

Held in 2013; see "Note" above, "Primer" below, " " and "Political Conditions" elsewhere in this Country Review for details.

Note on impeachment of 2015:

In late May 2015, Madagascar was returned to a state of political tumult as members of parliament voted to impeach President Hery Rajaonarimampianina. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of impeachment with 121 of 151 members of parliament voting to end the tenure of the president. Dissatisfaction with the president, who came to power in 2013 in the aftermath of a 2009 coup, has marked the political landscape in Madagascar in recent times.

The various causes of the political animosity towards the president notwithstanding, it was clear that Rajaonarimampianina had few fans in the legislative branch of government. With the impeachment vote securing the required two-thirds threshold, the motion to impeach would be moved to the Constitutional Court for legal review.

At the start of June 2015, the president had launched a legal challenge to the impeachment proceedings. By mid-June 2015, Madagascar's constitutional court invalidated the parliament's impeachment of President Rajaonarimampianina. While the court ruling was sure to anger

members of parliament, the move nonetheless helped to smooth over the burgeoning political crisis -- at least for the moment.

Foreign Relations

General Relations

From 1975 to 1988 Madagascar's closest relations were with the Soviet Union first and France second. President Ratsiraka's "all points" policy also stressed ties with other socialist and radical regimes, including North Korea, Cuba, Libya and Iran.

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of Madagascar's Third Republic, the country's alignment changed. Ratsiraka's successor, President Zafy Albert, expressed his desire for diplomatic relations with all countries. Early in his tenure, he established formal ties with South Korea and sent emissaries to Morocco.

Since his election in 2002, President Ravalomanana has made efforts to broaden international relations by working against corruption and the trafficking of drugs and humans.

In recent years, Madagascar's standing in the world has been influenced by the power struggle that ultimately ousted Marc Ravalomanana and put opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, into power in his place. The international community, led by the African Union, excoriated the opposition forces for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Multilateral negotiations and elections have moved Madagascar back onto the path of good governance and improved standing internationally.

Regional Relations

Madagascar historically has remained outside the mainstream of African affairs, although it is a member of the Indian Ocean Commission, the Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement. Madagascar was admitted to the Southern African Development Community in 2004.

Other Significant Relations

Active diplomatic relationships are maintained with Europe, especially the U.K., France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland, as well as with Russia, Japan, India, Indonesia, Egypt and China. Madagascar also maintains good relations with the United States. Good foreign relations certainly helped Madagascar receive recent aid packages.

International Aid

The World Bank had a \$600 million commitment to Madagascar through 21 active International Development Association projects.

On June 23, 2000, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a \$41 million disbursement of its new three year \$141 million Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility. This money is intended to secure Malagasy credit, and to cover additional financing gaps caused by recent natural disasters.

In 2003, the World Bank released more than \$100 million dollars in poverty reduction aid in response to Madagascar's efforts to stop corruption. Then, in October 2004, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank said they would write off \$2 billion in debt -- almost half Madagascar's total debt.

In March 2005, Madagascar was the first beneficiary of development aid offered by the United States in a plan aimed at rewarding countries determined by Washington to be putting forth market reforms and advocating democracy.

Further debt relief constituted another infusion of favorable developments for Madagascar when on June 11, 2005, at a pre-G8 summit meeting in London, world leaders agreed to write off \$40 billion in debt owed by the world's poorest countries. Under the plan, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Fund would write off 100 percent of the money owed to them by 18 countries

Madagascar and International Aid for the Environment

Since the mid-1980s, the donor community, led by the World Bank and the USAID, has recognized that Madagascar is one of the world's most unique natural wonders. As such, it has committed a tremendous investment into Malagasy conservation efforts. At \$18 million per annum the environment program of USAID/Madagascar is the second largest American program in Madagascar, and one of the largest programs of its kind in the world. The World Bank further supported this environmental effort with an additional \$180 million. Other bilateral donors including

France, Germany and others have funded specific project initiatives in coordination with the World Bank and the USAID.

Eighty percent of the flora and fauna are endemic. The problem recognized by the international community is that this unique and valuable land has proven fragile. The bulk of the rainforests have already been destroyed causing significant erosion and a threat to water sources in arid areas. The international community has recognized this environmental catastrophe in progress and has responded in force by supporting and guiding the Malagasy government in its conservation program. Research has demonstrated that tavy, a form of slash and burns agriculture, has been the largest contributor to environmental degradation in Madagascar. As a result, the 1990s have seen both a prohibition on tavy in many places and an acceleration in the creation of national parks and protected areas that are off limits to agriculture. The goal has been to establish more than 50 such parks and protected areas in a 15-year period.

Even while Madagascar's conservation crisis remains high, its economic crisis remains still higher. With a population that is more than 80 percent agrarian, limiting resource through the creation of parks and farming restrictions is economically devastating to a significant percentage of the rural population. The need for economic development is thus exacerbated by the rapid growth of environmental policies and institutions.

The USAID and the World Bank worked together with the Malagasy government in the late 1980s to try to find a way to reconcile these two difficult and seemingly mutually-exacerbating problems. The result of these discussions was the creation of the Malagasy Office of the Environment and the signing of a National Environmental Action Plan.

The National Environmental Action Plan was intended to be implemented in three phases. The first phase of Madagascar's Environment Plan (EP1, 1990-1996) was marked by the creation of Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDP). These ICDPs were intended to offer farmers economic alternatives ecologically unsound environmental practices. This phase also focused on establishing an institutional environment. The USAID funded the creation of the ANGAP (National Association for the Management of Protected Areas - the national park service), employing consultants to model an institutional structure based upon a modified version of the South African and American national parks and protected areas systems.

The second phase (1997-2002) focused on the implementation of a larger "landscape approach" to conservation and development, and the transference of conservation and development project ownership from international non-government organizations to the Malagasy national parks association (ANGAP). The focus of the third phase (2003-2008) is on strengthening the results of the program's previous two phases. It will expand Madagascar's protected areas network to include key missing habitats, establish conservation sites in natural forests and transfer forest management responsibilities to communities. These will be complemented by measures aimed at

reducing existing pressures on natural forests, including reforestation and the scaling-up of the usage of efficient wood-fuel technologies.

Early evaluations of the donor programs have criticized the integrated conservation and development approach for paying no more than lip service to development. Biological conservation has been prioritized at the cost of local livelihoods. Further, the development initiatives that have been implemented are not well integrated. Most local recipients of development aid do not connect the aid to the agricultural and land restrictions. Local animosity towards these programs is thus commonly high.

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See "Political Conditions" of *Country Review: Madagascar* for details.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief at www.countrywatch.com. See Bibliography for list of research sources.

Supplementary sources: The World Bank, the IMF, the U.S. Agency for International Development, Marcus, Richard R. (c), Gezon, Lisa.

National Security

External Threats

No foreign power poses an immediate threat to the Madagascar's national security. As of 2005, Madagascar claims several territories that are currently under French administration, including: Bassas da India, Europa Island, Glorioso Islands, and Juan de Nova Island.

Crime

The U.S. Department of State reports a low incidence of violent crime in Madagascar. Theft is a relatively common occurrence there, however, particularly in the capital of Antananarivo. Kidnapping, though rare, also occurs here. Madagascar serves as a transshipment point for heroin. Cannabis is produced there, as well, but mostly for domestic consumption.

Insurgencies

There are no insurgent movements operating inside or outside of Madagascar that directly threaten its government or general population. It does have a history of political instability, however. During the 1970s, there was a rapid succession of turnovers in Madagascar's central government. The former French colony received its independence in 1960. In the wake of anti-government demonstrations, its first president, Philibert Tsiranana, resigned in March 1972. Three years later

and under similar conditions, so did his successor, Gen. Gabriel Ramanantsoa. Madagascar's next head of state, Lt. Col. Richard Ratsimandrava, was assassinated after only six days in office. In June 1975, Didier Ratsiraka assumed the presidency. He remained in office for the next 16 years.

Opposition to Ratsiraka's autocratic style of governance prematurely ended his third term in office. His unwillingness to fade quietly from political life precipitated another turbulent period in Madagascar's short history of self-rule, however. Ratsiraka was stripped of his executive powers in October 1991. He was allowed to run in the subsequent 1992 presidential election, but lost to Albert Zafy, whose 1996 impeachment essentially paved the way for Ratsiraka's return to office. In the 1997 presidential election, he defeated Albert Zafy, who, despite his impeachment, was permitted to participate. The December 2001 presidential election was hotly contested. Both Ratsiraka and opponent Marc Ravalomanana claimed victory. During the ensuing political crisis, backers of the two candidates clashed. Beyond their political differences, ethnic tension also played a role in the conflict. Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana derived support from their respective tribes, the Betsimisaraka and the Merina. Sporadic violence and significant defacement of property continued until July 2002, when Ratsiraka was forced into exile in France. Ravalomanana has retained the presidency and a general state of order has returned to Madagascar.

Terrorism

There is no specific threat of terrorism against Madagascar, nor has it been a traditional target of terrorist violence. Madagascar is party to four of the 19 regional or global conventions pertaining to terrorism.

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Madagascar has been in a state of political crisis for some time. At issue was the violent power struggle that erupted in Madagascar in 2009 and the ongoing political impasse that has marked the Malagasy landscape from that time to the present. Since March 2009, when opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina, forced Marc Ravalomanana to resign as president, Madagascar has been ensconced in a political crisis. The power struggle turned violent and left more than 100 people dead. While Rajoelina and his allies have charged that Ravalomanana used autocratic means of governance and wasted government funds, the opposition has nonetheless been excoriated by the African Union for using non-democratic means to seize power. Accordingly, foreign aid to Madagascar was frozen and the country's tourism industry was badly hurt. Meanwhile, the political situation in Madagascar has remained unstable.

Negotiations brokered by the United Nations to form some sort of consensus government pending fresh presidential elections saw little immediate progress. A 2009 agreement that was brokered by

former Mozambican leader, Joaquim Chissano, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was viewed as the sign of an impending breakthrough. Such hope eroded when Rajoelina breached the agreement and Ravalomanana then decided to retrench from the agreement. Later in 2009, a new power-sharing deal was advanced but it was also breached by Rajoelina in December 2009. In 2010, the failure of talks between rival factions in South Africa paved the way for the formation of a new government, backed by the military. As well, a timetable was established for a national dialogue, aimed at drafting a new constitution, which would be put to a referendum for ratification at some point in the future, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections to be held at a later date.

The latest attempt to end the political instability in Madagascar came in the form of the SADC-brokered agreement of 2011, which was signed by eight political parties, as well as Rajoelina. The deal confirmed Rajoelina's position as president, allowed for the return of Ravalomanana from self-imposed exile (although the actual terms of that return were not found), and recommended that elections be held within a year. It was yet to be seen if this agreement was the actionable springboard to stability in Madagascar and a return to democratic governance. The army mutiny in 2012 suggested that Madagascar remained mired by episodes of political turbulence. That being said, elections were finally scheduled to be held in 2013.

See "Political Conditions" of *Country Review: Madagascar* for details.

Defense Forces

Military Data

Military Branches:

People's Armed Forces: Intervention Force, Development Force, and Aeronaval Force (navy and air); National Gendarmerie

Eligible age to enter service:

18-25 years of age for male-only voluntary

Mandatory Service Terms:

Service obligation is 18 months for military or equivalent civil service; 20-30 years of age for

National Gendarmerie recruits and 35 years of age for those with military experience

Manpower in general population-fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 3,390,071

females age 16-49: 3,682,180

Manpower reaching eligible age annually:

males: 248,184

females: 246,769

Military Expenditures-Percent of GDP:

0.69%

Chapter 3

Economic Overview

Economic Overview

Overview

Madagascar is one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The country's economy consists mainly of agriculture, including fishing and forestry, which accounts for about 30 percent of GDP and employs 80 percent of the population. Economic development has been hampered by factors including low domestic savings and poor social and economic infrastructure. The economy is also vulnerable to external shocks, such as intermittent cyclones and drought and fluctuations in key commodity prices.

The end of the political crisis in mid-2002 led to the restoration of political stability and economic recovery. Reflecting the important progress being made in macroeconomic policy implementation and structural reform, economic growth increased and inflation declined in the years that followed. However, since the beginning of 2009, Madagascar's economy has been adversely affected by both the global economic crisis and the domestic political crisis. In March 2009, former President Marc Ravalomanana was ousted from office by opposition leader Andry Rajoelina with the help of the military. Since then, Andry Rajoelina has been at the helm of the country as the president of Madagascar's Highest Transitional Authority. President Rajoelina has been under pressure from regional and international powers to form a unity government and place the country back on constitutional footing, but such attempts have ended in failure despite multilateral talks. Madagascar's failure to comply with the requirements of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) led to the termination of the country's duty-free access in January 2010. In June 2010, EU ministers agreed in to extend the financial sanctions against the Malagasy regime, after President Rajoelina declined to implement the agreements signed with other key members of four other political parties, notably former Presidents. In December 2011, international donors agreed to lift an aid blockade against Madagascar, following the progress made in efforts to return to civilian rule. The International Contact Group (ICG) on Madagascar said it would unfreeze about \$738 million in aid that had been blocked by the European Union after President Rajoelina seized power in the wake of violent street protests. Deforestation and erosion, aggravated by the use of firewood as the primary source of fuel, remain serious concerns.

In late July 2012, soldiers at an army base close to the airport in Madagascar's capital of Antananarivo staged a mutiny. The Madagascan army squashed the uprising, regaining control of the base and killing the mutiny's leader. In early August 2012, The United Nations said it would allocate US\$55 million to bolster operations in eight countries with neglected humanitarian emergencies, including Madagascar. Overall, Madagascar's key tourism industry has suffered

terribly from the ongoing political turmoil. Foreign investors considering its oil, gold and chrome have been reluctant to get involved with the impoverished nation.

Overall, growth was anemic during 2010 to 2012 although expansion in mining and agricultural sectors was expected to contribute to more growth in 2013. In September 2012, Canada's Sherritt International Corp and its partners got the green light to begin output at what was expected to be one of the world's biggest nickel mines, with a production capacity of 60,000 tonnes of refined nickel annually for the next three decades. Then, in October 2012, the World Bank noted that the country's ongoing political crisis had cost the island \$6.3 billion since 2009, based on an assumption that the economy would have grown 5 percent a year if it were politically stable.

In 2013, observers noted that Madagascar's presidential candidates vowed to restore mining, which in 2008 attracted \$8 out of every \$10 in foreign direct investment to the Indian Ocean island. International organizations and foreign donors were expected to resume development aid to Madagascar once a new government was appointed. President Hery Rajaonarimampianina took office in January 2014 after a peaceful vote in December 2013 and pledged to woo foreign investors and alleviate poverty. Indeed, the World Bank and other donors have since re-established ties and resumed aid flows to the country.

For example, in June 2014, the IMF approved US\$47.1 million in emergency financial assistance under the Rapid Credit Facility for Madagascar so that authorities could meet their urgent balance of payment needs. Supported by large mining projects that were reaching commercial production, recovering rice production, and a less uncertain political environment, growth was projected to increase to 3 percent in 2014. In mid-October 2014, Madagascar unveiled plans to issue licenses for three onshore and up to 50 offshore exploration blocks in 2015 once parliament approved a new petroleum law.

Expansion in mining and agricultural sectors contributed to growth in 2014. Madagascar regained AGOA access in January 2015 following the democratic election of a new president the previous year. International organizations and foreign donors resumed development aid to Madagascar after Rajaonarimampianina appointed a new government in mid-2014, however full-scale assistance will require further policy reforms, particularly on addressing rampant corruption.

In June 2015, Air Madagascar workers went on strike to protest what they described as poor governance and mismanagement of the airline, leading to a 65-70 percent cancellation of flights. They resumed work a month later after union officials and the carrier signed a deal. Then in September 2015, Reuters reported that Madagascar's economy was expected to grow by 3.2 percent in 2015, according to the International Monetary Fund. This was slower than its previous 3.5 percent forecast as falling commodity prices, a slowing tourism sector and power cuts hurt output.

“Sharply falling commodity prices are holding back mining revenues, while private investment

remains weak in the context of the poor business climate,” the IMF said in a statement. “Tourism has been hampered by difficulties at Air Madagascar, while recurring power cuts at JIRAMA, the public utility, continue to constrain economic activity.”

The IMF said it also approved Madagascar to access an equivalent of \$47.4 million under its Rapid Credit Facility.

Economic Performance

After favorable performance in 2007 and 2008, economic growth turned to substantial contractions in 2009 and 2010 as a result of the global economic crisis and the domestic political crisis. Export receipts declined in textiles, shrimp farming and tourism, while construction activity slowed owing to lower public investment.

According to CountryWatch estimated calculations for 2014:

Real GDP growth rate was: 4.8 percent

The fiscal deficit/surplus as percent of GDP (%) was: -1.2 percent

Inflation was measured at: 7.3 percent

Updated in 2015

**Please note that the figures in our Economic Performance section are estimates or forecasts based on IMF-based data that are formulated using CountryWatch models of analysis.*

Supplementary Sources: Panafrican News Agency, Reuters and Xinhua

Nominal GDP and Components

Nominal GDP and Components					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (LCU billions)	20,033.88	21,773.59	23,423.03	25,580.46	28,695.00
Nominal GDP Growth Rate (%)	9.804	8.684	7.575	9.211	12.175

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Consumption (LCU billions)	17,588.23	19,156.22	20,751.59	22,662.96	25,287.25
Government Expenditure (LCU billions)	2,041.30	2,099.76	2,019.34	2,205.33	2,460.70
Gross Capital Formation (LCU billions)	3,527.81	3,774.24	3,678.48	4,017.30	4,665.52
Exports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	5,357.62	6,316.51	7,042.58	7,691.25	8,649.01
Imports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	8,481.08	9,573.14	10,068.96	10,996.38	12,367.48

Population and GDP Per Capita

Population and GDP Per Capita					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Population, total (million)	21.679	22.294	22.925	23.572	24.235
Population growth (%)	2.842	2.837	2.830	2.822	2.813
Nominal GDP per Capita (LCU 1000s)	924,114.80	976,656.81	1,021,724.15	1,085,205.17	1,184,031.36

Real GDP and Inflation

Real GDP and Inflation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Real Gross Domestic Product (LCU billions 2005 base)	6,873.14	7,081.21	7,249.53	7,425.26	7,736.07
Real GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.455	3.027	2.377	2.424	4.186
GDP Deflator (2005=100.0)	291.481	307.484	323.097	344.506	370.925
Inflation, GDP Deflator (%)	8.230	5.490	5.078	6.626	7.669

Government Spending and Taxation

Government Spending and Taxation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Government Fiscal Budget (billions)	2,816.90	2,926.80	3,482.60	3,796.90	4,789.50
Fiscal Budget Growth Rate (percentage)	9.945	3.901	18.990	9.025	26.142
National Tax Rate Net of Transfers (%)	11.675	10.830	10.885	12.524	12.303
Government Revenues Net of Transfers (LCU billions)	2,338.88	2,358.13	2,549.61	3,203.71	3,530.24
Government Surplus(-) Deficit(+) (LCU billions)	-478.0150	-568.6710	-932.9910	-593.1930	-1259.2600
Government Surplus(+) Deficit(-) (%GDP)	-2.3860	-2.6117	-3.9832	-2.3189	-4.3884

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Money and Quasi-Money (M2) (LCU billions)	4,996.32	5,350.56	5,577.60	6,230.01	6,988.55
Money Supply Growth Rate (%)	16.727	7.090	4.243	11.697	12.175
Lending Interest Rate (%)	52.500	60.000	60.000	60.000	15.810
Unemployment Rate (%)	1.208	1.300	1.296	1.289	1.176

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Official Exchange Rate (LCU/\$US)	2,025.06	2,194.92	2,209.30	2,396.52	3,016.08
Trade Balance NIPA (\$US billions)	-1.5424	-1.4837	-1.3698	-1.3791	-1.2329
Trade Balance % of GDP	-15.5909	-14.9568	-12.9205	-12.9205	-12.9586
Total Foreign Exchange Reserves (\$US billions)	1.135	1.053	0.7761	0.7738	0.8974

Data in US Dollars

Data in US Dollars					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (\$US billions)	9.893	9.920	10.602	10.674	9.514
Exports (\$US billions)	2.646	2.878	3.188	3.209	2.868
Imports (\$US billions)	4.188	4.362	4.558	4.588	4.101

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (TBPD)	12.118	12.118	12.000	12.347	12.571
Petroleum Production (TBPD)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Petroleum Net Exports (TBPD)	-12.1183	-12.1183	-12.0000	-12.3465	-12.5709
Natural Gas Consumption (bcf)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Production (bcf)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Net Exports (bcf)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Consumption (1000s st)	16.535	16.535	20.160	21.502	21.964
Coal Production (1000s st)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Net Exports (1000s st)	-16.5347	-16.5347	-20.1600	-21.5017	-21.9636
Nuclear Production (bil kwh)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Hydroelectric Production (bil kwh)	0.6900	1.335	1.395	1.454	1.526
Renewables Production (bil kwh)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (Quads)	0.0259	0.0259	0.0256	0.0264	0.0268
Petroleum Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Petroleum Net Exports (Quads)	-0.0259	-0.0259	-0.0256	-0.0264	-0.0268
Natural Gas Consumption (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Natural Gas Net Exports (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Consumption (Quads)	0.0003	0.0003	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004
Coal Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Net Exports (Quads)	-0.0003	-0.0003	-0.0004	-0.0004	-0.0004
Nuclear Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Hydroelectric Production (Quads)	0.0069	0.0134	0.0139	0.0145	0.0153
Renewables Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

World Energy Price Summary

World Energy Price Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum-WTI (\$/bbl)	95.054	94.159	97.943	93.112	48.709
Natural Gas-Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	3.999	2.752	3.729	4.369	2.614
Coal Thermal-Australian (\$/mt)	121.448	96.364	84.562	70.130	57.511

CO2 Emissions

CO2 Emissions					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Based (mm mt C)	0.5781	0.5781	0.5724	0.5890	0.5997
Natural Gas Based (mm mt C)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Based (mm mt C)	0.0095	0.0095	0.0116	0.0123	0.0126
Total CO2 Emissions (mm mt C)	0.5876	0.5876	0.5840	0.6013	0.6123

Agriculture Consumption and Production

Agriculture Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	437.216	458.793	398.073	391.261	358.245
Corn Production (1000 metric tons)	427.596	446.586	379.448	371.599	346.333
Corn Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-9.6200	-12.2073	-18.6253	-19.6621	-11.9127
Soybeans Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	0.1510	0.0470	0.0440	0.0400	0.0357
Soybeans Production (1000 metric tons)	0.0421	0.0449	0.0437	0.0394	0.0357
Soybeans Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-0.1089	-0.0021	-0.0003	-0.0006	0.0001
Rice Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	4,300.18	4,550.65	3,610.63	3,978.11	3,547.63
Rice Production (1000 metric tons)	4,303.08	4,550.57	3,609.04	3,976.44	3,762.98
Rice Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	2.900	-0.0744	-1.5830	-1.6767	215.349

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Coffee Total Consumption (metric tons)	62,988.00	64,592.00	53,053.00	54,062.13	50,734.92
Coffee Production (metric tons)	64,828.98	64,771.35	62,673.12	65,414.48	60,823.12
Coffee Net Exports (metric tons)	1,840.98	179.351	9,620.12	11,352.35	10,088.20
Cocoa Beans Total Consumption (metric tons)	2,452.50	2,452.50	2,452.50	2,452.50	2,452.50
Cocoa Beans Production (metric tons)	6,572.17	8,303.98	9,547.81	9,063.21	9,182.97
Cocoa Beans Net Exports (metric tons)	4,119.67	5,851.48	7,095.31	6,610.71	6,730.47
Wheat Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	35.061	35.302	38.570	43.853	36.819
Wheat Production (1000 metric tons)	9.978	10.053	4.992	5.016	4.175
Wheat Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-25.0832	-25.2491	-33.5778	-38.8368	-32.6435

World Agriculture Pricing Summary

World Agriculture Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	291.684	298.417	259.389	192.881	169.750
Soybeans Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	540.667	591.417	538.417	491.771	390.417
Rice Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	458.558	525.071	473.989	425.148	386.033
Coffee Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	5.976	4.111	3.076	4.424	3.526
Cocoa Beans Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	2.980	2.392	2.439	3.062	3.135
Wheat Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	316.264	313.242	312.248	284.895	203.177

Metals Consumption and Production

Metals Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper Consumption (1000 mt)	0.4006	0.4006	0.4006	0.4006	0.4006
Copper Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Copper Net Exports (1000 mt)	-0.4006	-0.4006	-0.4006	-0.4006	-0.4006
Zinc Consumption (1000 mt)	9.513	2.155	12.005	7.891	7.891
Zinc Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Zinc Exports (1000 mt)	-9.5130	-2.1550	-12.0050	-7.8910	-7.8910
Lead Consumption (1000 mt)	3.324	3.324	3.324	3.324	3.324
Lead Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Lead Exports (1000 mt)	-3.3236	-3.3236	-3.3236	-3.3236	-3.3236
Tin Consumption (1000 mt)	0.2330	0.2640	0.2500	0.5291	0.4907
Tin Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Tin Exports (1000 mt)	-0.2330	-0.2640	-0.2500	-0.5291	-0.4907

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nickel Consumption (1000 mt)	1,655.12	1,655.12	1,655.12	1,655.12	1,655.12
Nickel Production (1000 mt)	5,651.12	5,641.30	5,663.66	5,634.64	5,292.80
Nickel Exports (1000 mt)	3,996.00	3,986.18	4,008.54	3,979.52	3,637.68
Gold Consumption (kg)	1.000	157.000	160.000	242.423	213.373
Gold Production (kg)	6.019	160.703	164.473	247.457	248.699
Gold Exports (kg)	5.019	3.703	4.473	5.034	35.326
Silver Consumption (mt)	95.000	78.000	4.000	6.000	4.951
Silver Production (mt)	1.950	2.046	2.079	2.152	1.977
Silver Exports (mt)	-93.0501	-75.9540	-1.9209	-3.8484	-2.9736

World Metals Pricing Summary

World Metals Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper (\$/mt)	8,828.19	7,962.35	7,332.10	6,863.40	5,510.46
Zinc (\$/mt)	2,193.90	1,950.41	1,910.26	2,160.97	1,931.68
Tin (\$/mt)	26,053.68	21,125.99	22,282.80	21,898.87	16,066.63
Lead (\$/mt)	2,400.81	2,064.64	2,139.79	2,095.46	1,787.82
Nickel (\$/mt)	22,910.36	17,547.55	15,031.80	16,893.38	11,862.64
Gold (\$/oz)	1,569.21	1,669.52	1,411.46	1,265.58	1,160.66
Silver (\$/oz)	35.224	31.137	23.850	19.071	15.721

Economic Performance Index

Economic Performance Index

The Economic Performance rankings are calculated by CountryWatch's editorial team, and are based on criteria including sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus, unemployment and structural imbalances. Scores are assessed from 0 to 100 using this aforementioned criteria as well as CountryWatch's proprietary economic research data and models.

	Bank stability risk	Monetary/ Currency stability	Government Finances	Empl./ Unempl.	Econ.GNP growth or decline/ forecast
	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	%
North Americas					
Canada	92	69	35	38	3.14%
United States	94	76	4	29	3.01%
Western Europe					
Austria	90	27	30	63	1.33%
Belgium	88	27	19	23	1.15%
Cyprus	81	91	16	80	-0.69%
Denmark	97	70	45	78	1.20%
Finland	89	27	41	33	1.25%

France	87	27	18	27	1.52%
Germany	86	27	22	21	1.25%
Greece	79	27	5	24	-2.00%
Iceland	90	17	2	34	-3.04%
Italy	85	27	37	24	0.84%
Ireland	92	27	11	10	-1.55%
Luxembourg	99	27	28	66	2.08%
Malta	77	27	41	51	0.54%
Netherlands	91	27	26	74	1.30%
Norway	98	44	10	76	1.08%
Portugal	77	27	13	20	0.29%
Spain	83	27	9	3	-0.41%
Sweden	94	72	54	32	1.23%
Switzerland	97	86	55	77	1.53%
United Kingdom	85	12	9	37	1.34%
Central and Eastern Europe					
Albania	44	60	33	6	2.30%
Armenia	45	59	49	30	1.80%

Azerbaijan	56	4	84	99	2.68%
Belarus	59	21	83	98	2.41%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34	68	69	N/A	0.50%
Bulgaria	58	75	88	49	0.20%
Croatia	69	68	94	9	0.18%
Czech Republic	80	89	29	70	1.67%
Estonia	72	90	66	92	0.80%
Georgia	36	60	53	56	2.00%
Hungary	70	66	26	54	-0.16%
Latvia	67	100	65	44	-3.97%
Lithuania	65	91	87	79	-1.65%
Macedonia (FYR)	53	69	56	2	2.03%
Moldova	23	36	81	67	2.50%
Poland	74	74	38	12	2.72%
Romania	62	56	70	62	0.75%
Russia	73	18	90	8	4.00%
Serbia	48	49	52	5	1.97%

Montenegro	39	27	73	1	-1.70%
Slovak Republic	80	62	30	14	4.06%
Slovenia	81	27	36	65	1.12%
Ukraine	41	11	57	N/A	3.68%
Africa					
Algeria	57	18	96	7	4.55%
Angola	49	1	97	N/A	7.05%
Benin	19	91	20	N/A	3.22%
Botswana	68	58	76	N/A	6.33%
Burkina Faso	16	91	13	N/A	4.41%
Burundi	2	91	6	N/A	3.85%
Cameroon	26	91	91	N/A	2.58%
Cape Verde	52	87	4	N/A	4.96%
Central African Republic	9	91	32	N/A	3.18%
Chad	22	91	89	N/A	4.42%
Congo	52	87	87	N/A	12.13%
Côte d'Ivoire	25	91	82	28	2.98%
Dem. Republic					

Congo	4	91	47	N/A	5.44%
Djibouti	31	76	50	N/A	4.47%
Egypt	37	20	24	69	5.01%
Equatorial Guinea	82	91	85	N/A	0.94%
Eritrea	1	3	1	18	1.81%
Ethiopia	6	45	8	N/A	6.96%
Gabon	64	91	96	N/A	5.36%
Gambia	8	48	86	N/A	4.82%
Ghana	9	11	69	N/A	4.50%
Guinea	10	7	91	N/A	3.03%
Guinea-Bissau	5	91	46	N/A	3.47%
Kenya	20	41	59	N/A	4.11%
Lesotho	13	40	12	N/A	2.98%
Liberia	12	73	74	N/A	5.92%
Libya	73	2	94	N/A	5.22%
Madagascar	4	22	24	N/A	-1.02%
Malawi	7	25	55	N/A	5.96%
Mali	20	91	82	N/A	5.12%

Mauritania	15	13	93	N/A	4.58%
Mauritius	65	52	56	55	4.10%
Morocco	37	72	48	26	3.23%
Mozambique	12	23	71	N/A	6.45%
Namibia	40	39	62	N/A	1.70%
Niger	10	91	21	N/A	4.41%
Nigeria	30	6	61	N/A	6.98%
Rwanda	21	40	68	N/A	5.39%
Sao Tome & Principe	1	61	100	N/A	3.40%
Senegal	24	91	63	N/A	3.44%
Seychelles	60	67	97	N/A	4.01%
Sierra Leone	5	10	39	N/A	4.77%
Somalia	2	38	59	N/A	3.19%
South Africa	61	37	70	N/A	2.59%
Sudan	16	5	73	N/A	5.52%
Swaziland	32	44	79	N/A	1.09%
Tanzania	15	45	32	N/A	6.17%
Togo	8	91	92	N/A	2.56%

Tunisia	50	61	44	39	4.00%
Uganda	11	17	54	N/A	5.59%
Zambia	29	20	49	N/A	5.84%
Zimbabwe	0	8	16	N/A	2.24%
South and Central America					
Argentina	66	3	80	36	3.50%
Belize	47	76	80	N/A	1.00%
Bolivia	32	51	61	81	3.99%
Brazil	71	47	78	11	5.50%
Chile	78	25	92	73	4.72%
Columbia	47	52	34	47	2.25%
Costa Rica	60	42	39	57	3.45%
Ecuador	43	76	75	64	2.51%
El Salvador	35	76	67	N/A	1.04%
Guatemala	46	59	58	N/A	2.52%
Honduras	27	47	58	N/A	2.00%
Mexico	69	42	52	61	4.07%
Nicaragua	23	49	42	N/A	1.75%

Panama	66	76	72	45	5.00%
Paraguay	35	46	66	16	5.27%
Peru	59	66	75	22	6.33%
Suriname	58	26	81	59	4.02%
Uruguay	70	26	27	N/A	5.71%
Venezuela	55	1	28	13	-2.63%
Caribbean					
Antigua & Barbuda	72	76	15	N/A	-2.01%
Bahamas	74	76	45	87	-0.50%
Barbados	67	76	33	15	-0.50%
Bermuda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cuba	45	76	18	95	0.25%
Dominica	53	76	65	N/A	1.40%
Dominican Republic	54	39	43	4	3.50%
Grenada	63	76	48	N/A	0.80%
Guyana	28	56	17	N/A	4.36%
Haiti	11	27	89	N/A	-8.50%
Jamaica	42	9	85	19	-0.28%

St Lucia	55	76	67	N/A	1.14%
St Vincent & Grenadines	49	76	95	N/A	0.50%
Trinidad & Tobago	82	37	77	72	2.13%
Middle East					
Bahrain	84	76	62	91	3.48%
Iran	51	19	40	58	3.01%
Iraq	48	9	8	N/A	7.27%
Israel	87	62	12	48	3.20%
Jordan	41	51	3	N/A	4.10%
Kuwait	96	4	99	N/A	3.10%
Lebanon	63	54	2	N/A	6.00%
Oman	76	16	88	N/A	4.71%
Qatar	99	16	83	N/A	18.54%
Saudi Arabia	76	8	98	N/A	3.70%
Syria	61	24	40	N/A	5.00%
Turkey	75	23	27	60	5.20%
United Arab Emirates	96	24	98	94	1.29%

Yemen	28	2	78	N/A	7.78%
Asia					
Afghanistan	17	70	74	N/A	8.64%
Bangladesh	13	43	25	N/A	5.38%
Bhutan	24	55	5	N/A	6.85%
Brunei	78	19	99	75	0.48%
Cambodia	18	67	42	N/A	4.77%
China	54	90	19	68	11.03%
Hong Kong	89	76	14	82	5.02%
India	31	38	34	35	8.78%
Indonesia	42	46	37	31	6.00%
Japan	88	89	6	71	1.90%
Kazakhstan	62	13	76	42	2.40%
Korea North	18	65	23	N/A	1.50%
Korea South	83	63	22	85	4.44%
Kyrgyz Republic	24	15	84	88	4.61%
Laos	17	54	7	N/A	7.22%
Macao	91	76	14	82	3.00%

Malaysia	68	65	44	90	4.72%
Maldives	44	55	17	N/A	3.45%
Mongolia	33	5	77	93	7.22%
Myanmar	3	41	72	N/A	5.26%
Nepal	3	14	25	N/A	2.97%
Pakistan	19	15	31	41	3.00%
Papua New Guinea	75	50	11	N/A	7.96%
Philippines	30	48	53	43	3.63%
Singapore	93	75	63	40	5.68%
Sri Lanka	38	22	10	N/A	5.50%
Taiwan	84	88	35	89	6.50%
Tajikistan	6	6	60	97	4.00%
Thailand	56	64	90	96	5.46%
Turkmenistan	51	53	68	N/A	12.00%
Uzbekistan	40	10	60	100	8.00%
Vietnam	25	12	20	N/A	6.04%
Pacific					
Australia	96	63	31	46	2.96%

Fiji	46	53	3	N/A	2.06%
Marshall Islands	27	76	46	N/A	1.08%
Micronesia (Fed. States)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Caledonia	96	73	51	52	2.00%
New Zealand	98	73	51	52	2.00%
Samoa	34	88	64	N/A	-2.77%
Solomon Islands	14	71	1	N/A	3.36%
Tonga	26	57	38	N/A	0.60%
Vanuatu	33	58	47	N/A	3.80%

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

This material was produced in 2010; it is subject to updating in 2012.

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Chapter 4

Investment Overview

Foreign Investment Climate

Background

After discarding socialist economic policies in the mid-1990s, Madagascar has followed a World Bank- and IMF-led policy of privatization and liberalization. This strategy placed the country on a slow and steady growth path from an extremely low level. Agriculture, including fishing and forestry, is a mainstay of the economy, accounting for more than one-fourth of GDP and employing 80% of the population. Exports of apparel have boomed in recent years primarily due to duty-free access to the US. However, Madagascar's failure to comply with the requirements of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) led to the termination of the country's duty-free access in January 2010. Deforestation and erosion, aggravated by the use of firewood as the primary source of fuel, are serious concerns. The ongoing current political crisis which began in early 2009 and has continued through 2011 has dealt additional blows to the economy (see Political Conditions for details).

Foreign Investment Assessment

Openness to Foreign Investment

Madagascar is very open to foreign investments and has established a system of export processing zones (EPZ), through which qualifying export firms can gain significant tax advantages. Nevertheless, administrative procedures and formalities can be time consuming. Potential foreign investors are compelled to deal with a thicket of bureaucratic obstacles as they seek the necessary permits and approvals. Ministerial overlap and bureaucratic struggles for dominance are serious problems. Often, investors have no idea which ministries to approach, or where to start. While there has been a recent move to simplify, the process is still lacking in transparency and corruption is a persistent problem.

In September 1994, the government of Madagascar (GOM) introduced a "guichet unique" or "one-stop office" to serve as the coordinating body for new project proposals. This office does not have decision-making authority, but is responsible for transmitting proposals to the relevant technical ministries and following up with them. The "guichet unique" claims a 45-60 day processing time, though delays are frequent. Investors who have used it say that it is helpful in centralizing the application process, but could be quicker and more responsive.

In addition, to promote foreign investments, in 1999 the GOM created an office called "Espace

Promotion des Investissements" (Investment Promotion Space) within the Ministry of Industry to assist foreign investors with administrative formalities, information requests, and work permit procedures.

Since 1996, structural adjustment programs with the World Bank and the IMF have been in place. The government has made an effort to reform the business and investment environment by dismantling some of the regulatory and tax constraints impeding private sector development, particularly for small and medium-sized local enterprises and foreign investors.

Since 1998, the government has adopted a series of legal reforms to eliminate public enterprise monopolies in the energy, mining, hydrocarbon, telecommunication, and air transportation sectors. The following measures were taken in 1998-99 to promote foreign investments:

- Long-term leasing of land by foreign investors (operational);
- Relaxation of visa regulations for foreign investors and tourists (operational);
- Abolition of prior approval for equity capital contributions by foreign investors (operational);
- Simplification of procedures for registering corporations (operational);
- Adoption of a legal and institutional framework to combat anti-competitive practices (approval pending);
- Signature of accords eliminating double taxation with countries that are potential
- Sources of private capital (operational. One example is the OPIC Investment Incentive Agreement);
- Adoption of a modern arbitration law and the private- sector led creation of the Malagasy Center for Arbitration and Mediation (not yet operational);
- Adoption of a new mining law (operational) and preparation of a legal framework to promote mining projects with investment of more than 200 million dollars (completion expected before end 2000).

The passage of these laws is a positive development, but it is important to underline that many of these laws are not yet effectively implemented. For example, screening mechanisms, such as refusal to issue licenses, are sometimes used to protect already established local businesses. The telecommunications, mining, tourism and fishing sectors are the major sectors in which foreign investors are sometimes denied national treatment.

During the privatization process, public bids have been transparent, and foreign investors are free to participate. In some cases, there are discrepancies between stated government policies and their implementation. As mentioned, foreign companies sometimes encounter discriminatory measures (e.g., non-delivery of licenses) by the government.

Transparency of Regulatory System

Since 1996, the GOM has made an effort to increase transparency in the investment approval process. However, as bureaucratic procedures are not sufficiently streamlined and transparent, red tape is a common problem. In its 1999-2000 program, the government commits to reforming public administration in order to create a favorable environment for business and investment. The reforms are intended to simplify procedures for registering companies and establishing a legal and institutional framework to fight against anti-competitive practices.

Labor Force

Total: 7.3 million

By occupation: 80% agriculture

Agriculture and Industry

Agriculture products: coffee, vanilla, sugarcane, cloves, cocoa, rice, cassava (tapioca), beans, bananas, peanuts; livestock products

Industries: meat processing, soap, breweries, tanneries, sugar, textiles, glassware, cement, automobile assembly plant, paper, petroleum, tourism

Import Commodities and Partners

Commodities: capital goods, petroleum, consumer goods, food

Partners: China 15.5%, France 14.4%, South Africa 6.9%, Iran 6.8%, India 4.1%

Export Commodities and Partners

Commodities: coffee, vanilla, shellfish, sugar; cotton cloth, chromite, petroleum products

Partners: France 37.4%, US 29.2%, Germany 5.5%, Mauritius 5.2%

Telephone System

Telephones- main lines in use: 59,600

Telephones- mobile cellular: 279,500

General Assessment: system is above average for the region

Domestic: open-wire lines, coaxial cables, microwave radio relay, and tropospheric scatter links connect regions

International: country code - 261; submarine cable to Bahrain; satellite earth stations - 1 Intelsat (Indian Ocean) and 1 Intersputnik (Atlantic Ocean region)

Internet

Internet Hosts: 773

Internet users: 70,500

Roads, Airports, Ports and Harbors

Railways: 732 km

Highways: 49,827 km

Ports and harbors: Antsiranana, Antsohimbondrona, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Toliara

Airports: 116; w/paved runways: 29

Legal System and Considerations

Madagascar's legal system is based on the French civil law system and traditional Malagasy law. The government has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Dispute Settlement

Investors in Madagascar face a legal environment in which the security of private property and the enforcement of contracts are inadequately protected by the judicial system. Government interference in the court system is not uncommon. In order to secure the business and investment environments, the private sector, with the assistance of USAID, set up on June 20, 2000 an operational system of arbitration and mediation called "Centre d'Arbitrage et de Médiation de Madagascar" (CAMM), designed to provide an alternative to litigation for commercial conflicts through implementation of the new arbitration law.

The government, through the Malagasy Office of Industrial Property (OMAPI) and through the Malagasy Copyright Office (OMDA), supervises all aspects of copyright and trademark protection. By law, judgments of foreign courts can be accepted and enforced by the Malagasy justice system. The Malagasy law governing corporations is very old, but a revised Code is expected to be adopted soon.

Monetary judgments are usually made both in the investor's and in local currencies.

Under the privatization law, the government, can agree to binding international arbitration of

investment disputes between foreign investors and the state. While efforts are being made to improve it, the legal framework in which the private sector operates still suffers from:

- Inadequate content of the law as written;
- Insufficient dissemination and knowledge of laws;
- Inconsistent application and enforcement of the laws.

Madagascar is not a member of the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), nor of the New York Convention of 1958 on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards.

Corruption Perception Ranking

See Corruption Perception index reported by Transparency International elsewhere in this report, from least to most corrupt countries.

Cultural Considerations

Visitors in Madagascar may never quite know the specific cultural "do's and don'ts" because of the diverse range of taboos that differ from village to village. It has been suggested that the foreigner will most likely break a taboo during his or her stay. When the taboo occurs just apologize and explain that your lack of manners is not meant to offend, but rather, you had the best of intentions in mind. They should forgive you after a sincere apology provided that the taboo is not too serious. Also, be aware of the cultural and ethnic differences within Madagascar. Sensitivity to these differences is advisable.

For More information see:

United States' State Department Commercial Guide

Foreign Investment Index

Foreign Investment Index

The Foreign Investment Index is a proprietary index measuring attractiveness to international investment flows. The Foreign Investment Index is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's economic stability (sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus), economic risk (risk of non-servicing of payments for goods or services, loans and trade-related finance, risk of sovereign default), business and investment climate (property rights, labor force and laws,

regulatory transparency, openness to foreign investment, market conditions, and stability of government). Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of foreign investment viability, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of foreign investment viability, according to this proprietary index.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4.5
Algeria	6
Andorra	9
Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5
Argentina	5
Armenia	5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9-9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	7.5

Bangladesh	4.5
Barbados	9
Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	7.5
Benin	5.5
Bhutan	4.5
Bolivia	4.5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5
Botswana	7.5-8
Brazil	8
Brunei	7
Bulgaria	5.5
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5
Cameroon	5

Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7.5
China: Hong Kong	8.5
China: Taiwan	8.5
Colombia	7
Comoros	4
Congo DRC	4
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	7
Czech Republic	8.5

Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5
Dominica	6
Dominican Republic	6.5
East Timor	4.5
Ecuador	5.5
Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	6
Equatorial Guinea	4.5
Eritrea	3.5
Estonia	8
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	5
France	9-9.5
Gabon	5.5
Gambia	5

Georgia	5
Germany	9-9.5
Ghana	5.5
Greece	5
Grenada	7.5
Guatemala	5.5
Guinea	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5
Haiti	4
Holy See (Vatican)	n/a
Hong Kong (China)	8.5
Honduras	5.5
Hungary	8
Iceland	8-8.5
India	8
Indonesia	5.5
Iran	4

Iraq	3
Ireland	8
Israel	8.5
Italy	8
Jamaica	5.5
Japan	9.5
Jordan	6
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	5.5
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	9
Kosovo	4.5
Kuwait	8.5
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5

Lesotho	5.5
Liberia	3.5
Libya	3
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9-9.5
Madagascar	4.5
Malawi	4.5
Malaysia	8.5
Maldives	6.5
Mali	5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	5
Mauritania	4.5
Mauritius	7.5-8
Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	5
Moldova	4.5-5

Monaco	9
Mongolia	5
Montenegro	5.5
Morocco	7.5
Mozambique	5
Namibia	7.5
Nauru	4.5
Nepal	4
Netherlands	9-9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9-9.5
Oman	8
Pakistan	4
Palau	4.5-5
Panama	7

Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6
Peru	6
Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5-8
Qatar	9
Romania	6-6.5
Russia	6
Rwanda	4
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	7
Samoa	7
San Marino	8.5
Sao Tome and Principe	4.5-5
Saudi Arabia	7
Senegal	6

Serbia	6
Seychelles	5
Sierra Leone	4
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	8.5-9
Solomon Islands	5
Somalia	2
South Africa	8
Spain	7.5-8
Sri Lanka	5.5
Sudan	4
Suriname	5
Swaziland	4.5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2.5
Tajikistan	4

Taiwan (China)	8.5
Tanzania	5
Thailand	7.5-8
Togo	4.5-5
Tonga	5.5-6
Trinidad and Tobago	8-8.5
Tunisia	6
Turkey	6.5-7
Turkmenistan	4
Tuvalu	7
Uganda	5
Ukraine	4.5-5
United Arab Emirates	8.5
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	6.5-7
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	6

Venezuela	5
Vietnam	5.5
Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5-5
Zimbabwe	3.5

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the global economic crisis (emerging in 2008) had affected many countries across the world, resulting in changes to their rankings. Among those countries affected were top tier economies, such as the [United Kingdom](#), [Iceland](#), [Switzerland](#) and [Austria](#). However, in all these cases, their rankings have moved back upward in the last couple of years as anxieties have eased. Other top tier countries, such as [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#), suffered some effects due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. Greece, another euro zone nation, was also downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, Greece's position on the precipice of default incurred a sharper downgrade than the other four euro zone countries mentioned above. Cyprus' exposure to Greek bank yielded a downgrade in its case. Slovenia and [Latvia](#) have been slightly downgraded due to a mix of economic and political concerns but could easily be upgraded in a future assessment, should these concerns abate. Meanwhile, the crisis in eastern [Ukraine](#) fueled downgrades in that country and neighboring [Russia](#).

Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and China retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability.

There were shifts in opposite directions for [Mali](#) and [Nigeria](#) versus the [Central African Republic](#), [Burkina Faso](#), and [Burundi](#). [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Likewise, a new government in [Nigeria](#) generated a slight upgrade as the country attempts to confront corruption, crime, and terrorism. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the

takeover of the government by Seleka rebels and the continued decline into lawlessness in that country. Likewise, the attempts by the leaders of [Burundi](#) and [Burkina Faso](#) to hold onto power by by-passing the constitution raised eyebrows and resulted in downgrades.

Political unrest in [Libya](#) and [Algeria](#) have contributed to a decision to marginally downgrade these countries as well. [Syria](#) incurred a sharper downgrade due to the devolution into de facto civil war and the dire security threat posed by Islamist terrorists. [Iraq](#) saw a similar downgrade as a result of the takeover of wide swaths of territory and the threat of genocide at the hands of Islamist terrorists. [Yemen](#), likewise, has been downgraded due to political instability at the hands of secessionists, terrorists, Houthi rebels, and the intervention of external parties. Conversely, [Egypt](#) and [Tunisia](#) saw slight upgrades as their political environments stabilize.

At the low end of the spectrum, devolving security conditions and/or economic crisis have resulted in countries like [Pakistan](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) maintaining their low ratings.

The [United States](#) continues to retain its previous slight downgrade due to the enduring threat of default surrounding the debt ceiling in that country, matched by a conflict-ridden political climate. In the case of [Mexico](#), there is limited concern about default, but increasing alarm over the security situation in that country and the government's ability to contain it. In [Argentina](#), a default to bond holders resulted in a downgrade to that country. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States.

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Corruption Perceptions Index

Corruption Perceptions Index

Transparency International: [Corruption Perceptions Index](#)

Editor's Note:

Transparency International's [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) is a composite index which ranks countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials. This index indicates the views of national and international business people and analysts about the levels of corruption in each country. The highest (and best) level of transparency is indicated by the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

Rank	Country/Territory	CPI 2009 Score	Surveys Used	Confidence Range
1	New Zealand	9.4	6	9.1 - 9.5
2	Denmark	9.3	6	9.1 - 9.5
3	Singapore	9.2	9	9.0 - 9.4
3	Sweden	9.2	6	9.0 - 9.3
5	Switzerland	9.0	6	8.9 - 9.1
6	Finland	8.9	6	8.4 - 9.4
6	Netherlands	8.9	6	8.7 - 9.0
8	Australia	8.7	8	8.3 - 9.0
8	Canada	8.7	6	8.5 - 9.0
8	Iceland	8.7	4	7.5 - 9.4
11	Norway	8.6	6	8.2 - 9.1
12	Hong Kong	8.2	8	7.9 - 8.5
12	Luxembourg	8.2	6	7.6 - 8.8

14	Germany	8.0	6	7.7 - 8.3
14	Ireland	8.0	6	7.8 - 8.4
16	Austria	7.9	6	7.4 - 8.3
17	Japan	7.7	8	7.4 - 8.0
17	United Kingdom	7.7	6	7.3 - 8.2
19	United States	7.5	8	6.9 - 8.0
20	Barbados	7.4	4	6.6 - 8.2
21	Belgium	7.1	6	6.9 - 7.3
22	Qatar	7.0	6	5.8 - 8.1
22	Saint Lucia	7.0	3	6.7 - 7.5
24	France	6.9	6	6.5 - 7.3
25	Chile	6.7	7	6.5 - 6.9
25	Uruguay	6.7	5	6.4 - 7.1
27	Cyprus	6.6	4	6.1 - 7.1
27	Estonia	6.6	8	6.1 - 6.9
27	Slovenia	6.6	8	6.3 - 6.9
30	United Arab Emirates	6.5	5	5.5 - 7.5
31	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6.4	3	4.9 - 7.5

32	Israel	6.1	6	5.4 - 6.7
32	Spain	6.1	6	5.5 - 6.6
34	Dominica	5.9	3	4.9 - 6.7
35	Portugal	5.8	6	5.5 - 6.2
35	Puerto Rico	5.8	4	5.2 - 6.3
37	Botswana	5.6	6	5.1 - 6.3
37	Taiwan	5.6	9	5.4 - 5.9
39	Brunei Darussalam	5.5	4	4.7 - 6.4
39	Oman	5.5	5	4.4 - 6.5
39	Korea (South)	5.5	9	5.3 - 5.7
42	Mauritius	5.4	6	5.0 - 5.9
43	Costa Rica	5.3	5	4.7 - 5.9
43	Macau	5.3	3	3.3 - 6.9
45	Malta	5.2	4	4.0 - 6.2
46	Bahrain	5.1	5	4.2 - 5.8
46	Cape Verde	5.1	3	3.3 - 7.0
46	Hungary	5.1	8	4.6 - 5.7
49	Bhutan	5.0	4	4.3 - 5.6

49	Jordan	5.0	7	3.9 - 6.1
49	Poland	5.0	8	4.5 - 5.5
52	Czech Republic	4.9	8	4.3 - 5.6
52	Lithuania	4.9	8	4.4 - 5.4
54	Seychelles	4.8	3	3.0 - 6.7
55	South Africa	4.7	8	4.3 - 4.9
56	Latvia	4.5	6	4.1 - 4.9
56	Malaysia	4.5	9	4.0 - 5.1
56	Namibia	4.5	6	3.9 - 5.1
56	Samoa	4.5	3	3.3 - 5.3
56	Slovakia	4.5	8	4.1 - 4.9
61	Cuba	4.4	3	3.5 - 5.1
61	Turkey	4.4	7	3.9 - 4.9
63	Italy	4.3	6	3.8 - 4.9
63	Saudi Arabia	4.3	5	3.1 - 5.3
65	Tunisia	4.2	6	3.0 - 5.5
66	Croatia	4.1	8	3.7 - 4.5
66	Georgia	4.1	7	3.4 - 4.7

66	Kuwait	4.1	5	3.2 - 5.1
69	Ghana	3.9	7	3.2 - 4.6
69	Montenegro	3.9	5	3.5 - 4.4
71	Bulgaria	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.5
71	FYR Macedonia	3.8	6	3.4 - 4.2
71	Greece	3.8	6	3.2 - 4.3
71	Romania	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.3
75	Brazil	3.7	7	3.3 - 4.3
75	Colombia	3.7	7	3.1 - 4.3
75	Peru	3.7	7	3.4 - 4.1
75	Suriname	3.7	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Burkina Faso	3.6	7	2.8 - 4.4
79	China	3.6	9	3.0 - 4.2
79	Swaziland	3.6	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Trinidad and Tobago	3.6	4	3.0 - 4.3
83	Serbia	3.5	6	3.3 - 3.9
84	El Salvador	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.8
84	Guatemala	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.9

84	India	3.4	10	3.2 - 3.6
84	Panama	3.4	5	3.1 - 3.7
84	Thailand	3.4	9	3.0 - 3.8
89	Lesotho	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.8
89	Malawi	3.3	7	2.7 - 3.9
89	Mexico	3.3	7	3.2 - 3.5
89	Moldova	3.3	6	2.7 - 4.0
89	Morocco	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.9
89	Rwanda	3.3	4	2.9 - 3.7
95	Albania	3.2	6	3.0 - 3.3
95	Vanuatu	3.2	3	2.3 - 4.7
97	Liberia	3.1	3	1.9 - 3.8
97	Sri Lanka	3.1	7	2.8 - 3.4
99	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.0	7	2.6 - 3.4
99	Dominican Republic	3.0	5	2.9 - 3.2
99	Jamaica	3.0	5	2.8 - 3.3
99	Madagascar	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2
99	Senegal	3.0	7	2.5 - 3.6

99	Tonga	3.0	3	2.6 - 3.3
99	Zambia	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2
106	Argentina	2.9	7	2.6 - 3.1
106	Benin	2.9	6	2.3 - 3.4
106	Gabon	2.9	3	2.6 - 3.1
106	Gambia	2.9	5	1.6 - 4.0
106	Niger	2.9	5	2.7 - 3.0
111	Algeria	2.8	6	2.5 - 3.1
111	Djibouti	2.8	4	2.3 - 3.2
111	Egypt	2.8	6	2.6 - 3.1
111	Indonesia	2.8	9	2.4 - 3.2
111	Kiribati	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Mali	2.8	6	2.4 - 3.2
111	Sao Tome and Principe	2.8	3	2.4 - 3.3
111	Solomon Islands	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Togo	2.8	5	1.9 - 3.9
120	Armenia	2.7	7	2.6 - 2.8
120	Bolivia	2.7	6	2.4 - 3.1

120	Ethiopia	2.7	7	2.4 - 2.9
120	Kazakhstan	2.7	7	2.1 - 3.3
120	Mongolia	2.7	7	2.4 - 3.0
120	Vietnam	2.7	9	2.4 - 3.1
126	Eritrea	2.6	4	1.6 - 3.8
126	Guyana	2.6	4	2.5 - 2.7
126	Syria	2.6	5	2.2 - 2.9
126	Tanzania	2.6	7	2.4 - 2.9
130	Honduras	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8
130	Lebanon	2.5	3	1.9 - 3.1
130	Libya	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8
130	Maldives	2.5	4	1.8 - 3.2
130	Mauritania	2.5	7	2.0 - 3.3
130	Mozambique	2.5	7	2.3 - 2.8
130	Nicaragua	2.5	6	2.3 - 2.7
130	Nigeria	2.5	7	2.2 - 2.7
130	Uganda	2.5	7	2.1 - 2.8
139	Bangladesh	2.4	7	2.0 - 2.8

139	Belarus	2.4	4	2.0 - 2.8
139	Pakistan	2.4	7	2.1 - 2.7
139	Philippines	2.4	9	2.1 - 2.7
143	Azerbaijan	2.3	7	2.0 - 2.6
143	Comoros	2.3	3	1.6 - 3.3
143	Nepal	2.3	6	2.0 - 2.6
146	Cameroon	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.6
146	Ecuador	2.2	5	2.0 - 2.5
146	Kenya	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.5
146	Russia	2.2	8	1.9 - 2.4
146	Sierra Leone	2.2	5	1.9 - 2.4
146	Timor-Leste	2.2	5	1.8 - 2.6
146	Ukraine	2.2	8	2.0 - 2.6
146	Zimbabwe	2.2	7	1.7 - 2.8
154	Côte d'Ivoire	2.1	7	1.8 - 2.4
154	Papua New Guinea	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Paraguay	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Yemen	2.1	4	1.6 - 2.5

158	Cambodia	2.0	8	1.8 - 2.2
158	Central African Republic	2.0	4	1.9 - 2.2
158	Laos	2.0	4	1.6 - 2.6
158	Tajikistan	2.0	8	1.6 - 2.5
162	Angola	1.9	5	1.8 - 1.9
162	Congo Brazzaville	1.9	5	1.6 - 2.1
162	Democratic Republic of Congo	1.9	5	1.7 - 2.1
162	Guinea-Bissau	1.9	3	1.8 - 2.0
162	Kyrgyzstan	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.1
162	Venezuela	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.0
168	Burundi	1.8	6	1.6 - 2.0
168	Equatorial Guinea	1.8	3	1.6 - 1.9
168	Guinea	1.8	5	1.7 - 1.8
168	Haiti	1.8	3	1.4 - 2.3
168	Iran	1.8	3	1.7 - 1.9
168	Turkmenistan	1.8	4	1.7 - 1.9
174	Uzbekistan	1.7	6	1.5 - 1.8
175	Chad	1.6	6	1.5 - 1.7

176	Iraq	1.5	3	1.2 - 1.8
176	Sudan	1.5	5	1.4 - 1.7
178	Myanmar	1.4	3	0.9 - 1.8
179	Afghanistan	1.3	4	1.0 - 1.5
180	Somalia	1.1	3	0.9 - 1.4

Methodology:

As noted above, the highest (and best) level of transparency with the least perceived corruption is indicated by the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

According to Transparency International, the [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) (CPI) table shows a country's ranking and score, the number of surveys used to determine the score, and the confidence range of the scoring.

The rank shows how one country compares to others included in the index. The CPI score indicates the perceived level of public-sector corruption in a country/territory.

The CPI is based on 13 independent surveys. However, not all surveys include all countries. The surveys used column indicates how many surveys were relied upon to determine the score for that country.

The confidence range indicates the reliability of the CPI scores and tells us that allowing for a margin of error, we can be 90% confident that the true score for this country lies within this range.

Note:

Kosovo, which separated from the Yugoslav successor state of [Serbia](#), is not listed above. No calculation is available for [Kosovo](#) at this time, however, a future corruption index by Transparency International may include the world's newest country in its tally. Taiwan has been listed above despite its contested status; while Taiwan claims sovereign status, [China](#) claims ultimate jurisdiction over Taiwan. Hong Kong, which is also under the rubric of Chinese

sovereignty, is listed above. Note as well that Puerto Rico, which is a [United States](#) domain, is also included in the list above. These inclusions likely have to do with the size and fairly autonomous status of their economies.

Source:

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index; available at URL: <http://www.transparency.org>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Competitiveness Ranking

Competitiveness Ranking

Editor's Note:

The Global Competitiveness Report's competitiveness ranking is based on the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which was developed for the World Economic Forum. The GCI is based on a number of competitiveness considerations, and provides a comprehensive picture of the competitiveness landscape in countries around the world. The competitiveness considerations are: institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication, and innovation. The rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey.

Country/Economy	GCI 2010 Rank	GCI 2010 Score	GCI 2009 Rank	Change 2009-2010
Switzerland	1	5.63	1	0
Sweden	2	5.56	4	2
Singapore	3	5.48	3	0

United States	4	5.43	2	-2
Germany	5	5.39	7	2
Japan	6	5.37	8	2
Finland	7	5.37	6	-1
Netherlands	8	5.33	10	2
Denmark	9	5.32	5	-4
Canada	10	5.30	9	-1
Hong Kong SAR	11	5.30	11	0
United Kingdom	12	5.25	13	1
Taiwan, China	13	5.21	12	-1
Norway	14	5.14	14	0
France	15	5.13	16	1
Australia	16	5.11	15	-1
Qatar	17	5.10	22	5
Austria	18	5.09	17	-1
Belgium	19	5.07	18	-1
Luxembourg	20	5.05	21	1
Saudi Arabia	21	4.95	28	7

Korea, Rep.	22	4.93	19	-3
New Zealand	23	4.92	20	-3
Israel	24	4.91	27	3
United Arab Emirates	25	4.89	23	-2
Malaysia	26	4.88	24	-2
China	27	4.84	29	2
Brunei Darussalam	28	4.75	32	4
Ireland	29	4.74	25	-4
Chile	30	4.69	30	0
Iceland	31	4.68	26	-5
Tunisia	32	4.65	40	8
Estonia	33	4.61	35	2
Oman	34	4.61	41	7
Kuwait	35	4.59	39	4
Czech Republic	36	4.57	31	-5
Bahrain	37	4.54	38	1
Thailand	38	4.51	36	-2
Poland	39	4.51	46	7

Cyprus	40	4.50	34	-6
Puerto Rico	41	4.49	42	1
Spain	42	4.49	33	-9
Barbados	43	4.45	44	1
Indonesia	44	4.43	54	10
Slovenia	45	4.42	37	-8
Portugal	46	4.38	43	-3
Lithuania	47	4.38	53	6
Italy	48	4.37	48	0
Montenegro	49	4.36	62	13
Malta	50	4.34	52	2
India	51	4.33	49	-2
Hungary	52	4.33	58	6
Panama	53	4.33	59	6
South Africa	54	4.32	45	-9
Mauritius	55	4.32	57	2
Costa Rica	56	4.31	55	-1
Azerbaijan	57	4.29	51	-6

Brazil	58	4.28	56	-2
Vietnam	59	4.27	75	16
Slovak Republic	60	4.25	47	-13
Turkey	61	4.25	61	0
Sri Lanka	62	4.25	79	17
Russian Federation	63	4.24	63	0
Uruguay	64	4.23	65	1
Jordan	65	4.21	50	-15
Mexico	66	4.19	60	-6
Romania	67	4.16	64	-3
Colombia	68	4.14	69	1
Iran	69	4.14	n/a	n/a
Latvia	70	4.14	68	-2
Bulgaria	71	4.13	76	5
Kazakhstan	72	4.12	67	-5
Peru	73	4.11	78	5
Namibia	74	4.09	74	0
Morocco	75	4.08	73	-2

Botswana	76	4.05	66	-10
Croatia	77	4.04	72	-5
Guatemala	78	4.04	80	2
Macedonia, FYR	79	4.02	84	5
Rwanda	80	4.00	n/a	n/a
Egypt	81	4.00	70	-11
El Salvador	82	3.99	77	-5
Greece	83	3.99	71	-12
Trinidad and Tobago	84	3.97	86	2
Philippines	85	3.96	87	2
Algeria	86	3.96	83	-3
Argentina	87	3.95	85	-2
Albania	88	3.94	96	8
Ukraine	89	3.90	82	-7
Gambia, The	90	3.90	81	-9
Honduras	91	3.89	89	-2
Lebanon	92	3.89	n/a	n/a
Georgia	93	3.86	90	-3

Moldova	94	3.86	n/a	n/a
Jamaica	95	3.85	91	-4
Serbia	96	3.84	93	-3
Syria	97	3.79	94	-3
Armenia	98	3.76	97	-1
Mongolia	99	3.75	117	18
Libya	100	3.74	88	-12
Dominican Republic	101	3.72	95	-6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	102	3.70	109	7
Benin	103	3.69	103	0
Senegal	104	3.67	92	-12
Ecuador	105	3.65	105	0
Kenya	106	3.65	98	-8
Bangladesh	107	3.64	106	-1
Bolivia	108	3.64	120	12
Cambodia	109	3.63	110	1
Guyana	110	3.62	104	-6
Cameroon	111	3.58	111	0

Nicaragua	112	3.57	115	3
Tanzania	113	3.56	100	-13
Ghana	114	3.56	114	0
Zambia	115	3.55	112	-3
Tajikistan	116	3.53	122	6
Cape Verde	117	3.51	n/a	n/a
Uganda	118	3.51	108	-10
Ethiopia	119	3.51	118	-1
Paraguay	120	3.49	124	4
Kyrgyz Republic	121	3.49	123	2
Venezuela	122	3.48	113	-9
Pakistan	123	3.48	101	-22
Madagascar	124	3.46	121	-3
Malawi	125	3.45	119	-6
Swaziland	126	3.40	n/a	n/a
Nigeria	127	3.38	99	-28
Lesotho	128	3.36	107	-21
Côte d'Ivoire	129	3.35	116	-13

Nepal	130	3.34	125	-5
Mozambique	131	3.32	129	-2
Mali	132	3.28	130	-2
Timor-Leste	133	3.23	126	-7
Burkina Faso	134	3.20	128	-6
Mauritania	135	3.14	127	-8
Zimbabwe	136	3.03	132	-4
Burundi	137	2.96	133	-4
Angola	138	2.93	n/a	n/a
Chad	139	2.73	131	-8

Methodology:

The competitiveness rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the World Economic Forum together with its network of Partner Institutes (leading research institutes and business organizations) in the countries covered by the Report.

Highlights according to WEF --

- The [United States](#) falls two places to fourth position, overtaken by [Sweden](#) and [Singapore](#) in the rankings of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011
- The People's Republic of [China](#) continues to move up the rankings, with marked improvements in several other Asian countries
- [Germany](#) moves up two places to fifth place, leading the Eurozone countries
- [Switzerland](#) tops the rankings

Source:

World Economic Forum; available at URL: <http://www.weforum.org>

Updated:

2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Taxation

Corporate profits are subject to a 35 percent tax rate with a minimum of 200,000 Malagasy francs plus .5 percent of turnover for agricultural, industrial, mining, tourism and transportation enterprises and a minimum of 800,000 Malagasy francs plus .5 percent of turnover for all other enterprises.

Since 1991, export processing zone (EPZ) regulations in Madagascar allow foreign or Malagasy investors to qualify for tax exemptions provided their projects fall within one of the three following categories:

- Investment in export-oriented manufacturing industries;
- Development or management of industrial-free trade zones;
- Provisions of services to EPZ companies.

All three may qualify for tax holidays of varying terms. Personal taxes are reduced and EPZ firms are exempt from paying customs duties, import and value-added taxes, and export duties on their products, which should be 100 percent for export.

EPZ firms may be set up in special zones or may establish themselves independently. They, like any foreign investment, are now legally eligible to hold real property, but similarly are subject to the regulations that have yet to grant foreigners real estate ownership.

The free trade zone is the major focus of direct foreign investment in Madagascar. Of the 200 companies granted status as FTZ companies, about 50 percent are European (mainly French) investments, 30 percent are Mauritian-owned, 20 percent are Asian-owned, and 10 percent are Malagasy held.

According to the 2000 financial law, there are four kinds of duties:

- Import tax (TI): the range is from exempt to 100 percent for certain luxury goods, such as alcohol and tobacco (five percent for raw materials, spare parts and inputs; five to 15 percent for capital goods and 25 to 30 percent for consumer goods).
- Custom fees (DD): from exempt to 25 percent.
- Consumption tax (DA): from exempt to 10 percent.
- Value added tax (TVA): 20 percent.

Compiled by CountryWatch.com. Source: the U.S. State Department.

Stock Market

There is currently no stock market in Madagascar.

Partner Links

Partner Links

Chapter 5

Social Overview

People

Background

In recent years, the population of Madagascar was estimated at approximately 20 million. Almost 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Although the overall population density in rural areas is relatively low, it varies greatly from region to region, often being substantially above average on the island's limited arable land, which constitutes only about five percent of the total land area.

Madagascar's internal population migration is commonly from rural areas to other rural areas, particularly from the densely populated plateau region to the under populated western coastal areas. Migration to the capital has created a significant urbanization crisis. In a city designed to accommodate 50,000 people, population estimates now place the number close to 900,000. Antananarivo is dramatically poor even by African standards, health care is exceedingly low, and joblessness and homelessness are high. By at least one recent study, it is also now considered one of the world's most polluted cities.

Ethnicity

Madagascar's population is of predominantly mixed Asian and African origin. Recent research suggests that the island was uninhabited until Indonesian seafarers arrived in roughly the first century of the common era, or C.E., possibly by way of southern India and East Africa, where they acquired African wives and slaves. Immigrants from eastern Africa are believed to have started coming around the 8th century C.E.

Over the centuries there has been significant inter-marriage between those of Indo-Malay heritage and those of African heritage. As a result, all 18 ethnic groups are a mixture of the two races to varying degrees.

Asian features are most predominant in the central highland people, the Merina (two million) and the Betsileo (one million), whereas the people of the coast have more distinctly African features. The largest groups outside of the central highlands are the Betsimisaraka (2.2 million) and

Tsimhety (1.1 million) and the Sakalava (917,600). In addition, there are communities of Comorians, French, Indians and Chinese.

Language

The Malagasy language is of Malayo-Polynesian origin, versions of which are spoken throughout the island. There are 18 recognized dialects of Malagasy, with varying degrees of mutual comprehensibility. Official Malagasy, a version of the Merina dialect, is taught in schools. French is spoken among the educated of this former French colony.

Religion

Most people practice traditional religions, which tend to emphasize links between the living and the dead. They believe that the dead join their ancestors in the ranks of divinity and that ancestors are intensely concerned with the fate of their living descendants. The Merina and Betsileo reburial practice of famadihana, or "turning over the dead" celebrate this spiritual communion. In this ritual, relatives' remains are exhumed, re-wrapped in new silk shrouds, and re-buried following festive ceremonies in their honor. Other ethnic groups pay tribute to the ancestors in different ways, but investment in the family tomb is considered tantamount, island-wide.

About 40 percent of the Malagasy are Christian and are divided almost evenly between Roman Catholic and Protestant. Many incorporate ancestor worship with their Christian beliefs and bless their dead at church before proceeding with the traditional burial rites. They also may invite a pastor to attend a famadihana.

Ethnicity and Power

A historical rivalry exists between people of the central highlands (Merina) and people from the coast and lowlands (collectively known as cotiers). Merina consider cotiers to be less capable and cotiers consider Merina to be using their position of historic dominance to hoist their current interests over the people of the rest of the island. As the people from the area of the capital, the Merina have a geographic advantage, as well as an economic and education advantage over their coastal counterparts. Therefore, they dominate the civil service, business and professions. The Merina-cotier divide is the most significant divide not only in the social sphere, but also in the political sphere.

Health and Welfare

According to recent estimates, Madagascar's population growth rate of about 3.005 percent per annum, making it high -- but -- comparable with most African countries. The average life expectancy at birth was averaged at about 62.5 years of age, according to recent estimates. The infant mortality rate has been estimated at approximately 55.59 deaths per 1,000 live births.

According to the United Nation Development Program (UNDP), an estimated 65 percent (57.8 percent female, 72.2 percent male) of the population age 15 and above are literate. The CIA estimated an 68.9 percent literacy rate (75.5 percent for men, 62.5 percent for women), which is slightly higher than that of the UNDP. There is reason to believe, however, that both sets of figures are somewhat inflated and include people with a very basic ability to read and write.

About 6.2 percent of GDP in this country is spent on health expenditures; about three percent of GDP is spent on educational expenditures.

Human Development

The aforementioned statistical data suggests that Madagascar is a country with a low quality of life. In this regard, one notable indicator used to measure a country's quality of life is the Human Development Index (HDI), which is compiled annually since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main areas of human development: longevity, knowledge and education, as well as economic standard of living. In a ranking of 169 countries and territories, the HDI places Madagascar in the low human development category, at 135th place.

Note: Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI, which is calculated and updated annually, offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief at www.countrywatch.com. See Bibliography for list of research sources.

Human Development Index

Human Development Index

Human Development Index (Ranked Numerically)

The [Human Development Index](#) (HDI) is used to measure quality of life in countries across the world. The HDI has been compiled since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a regular basis. The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, education, and economic standard of living. Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators. For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this review.

Very High Human Development	High Human Development	Medium Human Development	Low Human Development
1. Norway	43. Bahamas	86. Fiji	128. Kenya
2. Australia	44. Lithuania	87. Turkmenistan	129. Bangladesh
3. New Zealand	45. Chile	88. Dominican Republic	130. Ghana
4. United States	46. Argentina	89. China	131. Cameroon
5. Ireland	47. Kuwait	90. El Salvador	132. Myanmar (Burma)
6. Liechtenstein	48. Latvia	91. Sri Lanka	133. Yemen
7. Netherlands	49. Montenegro	92. Thailand	134. Benin
8. Canada	50. Romania	93. Gabon	135. Madagascar
9. Sweden	51. Croatia	94. Suriname	136. Mauritania

10. Germany	52. Uruguay	95. Bolivia	137. Papua New Guinea
11. Japan	53. Libya	96. Paraguay	138. Nepal
12. South Korea	54. Panama	97. Philippines	139. Togo
13. Switzerland	55. Saudi Arabia	98. Botswana	140. Comoros
14. France	56. Mexico	99. Moldova	141. Lesotho
15. Israel	57. Malaysia	100. Mongolia	142. Nigeria
16. Finland	58. Bulgaria	101. Egypt	143. Uganda
17. Iceland	59. Trinidad and Tobago	102. Uzbekistan	144. Senegal
18. Belgium	60. Serbia	103. Micronesia	145. Haiti
19. Denmark	61. Belarus	104. Guyana	146. Angola
20. Spain	62. Costa Rica	105. Namibia	147. Djibouti
21. Hong King	63. Peru	106. Honduras	148. Tanzania
22. Greece	64. Albania	107. Maldives	149. Cote d'Ivoire
23. Italy	65. Russian Federation	108. Indonesia	150. Zambia
24. Luxembourg	66. Kazakhstan	109. Kyrgyzstan	151. Gambia
25. Austria	67. Azerbaijan	110. South Africa	152. Rwanda
26. United	68. Bosnia and		

Kingdom	Herzegovina	111. Syria	153. Malawi
27. Singapore	69. Ukraine	112. Tajikistan	154. Sudan
28. Czech Republic	70. Iran	113. Vietnam	155. Afghanistan
29. Slovenia	71. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	114. Morocco	156. Guinea
30. Andorra	72. Mauritius	115. Nicaragua	157. Ethiopia
31. Slovakia	73. Brazil	116. Guatemala	158. Sierra Leone
32. United Arab Emirates	74. Georgia	117. Equatorial Guinea	159. Central African Republic
33. Malta	75. Venezuela	118. Cape Verde	160. Mali
34. Estonia	76. Armenia	119. India	161. Burkina Faso
35. Cyprus	77. Ecuador	120. East Timor	162. Liberia
36. Hungary	78. Belize	121. Swaziland	163. Chad
37. Brunei	79. Colombia	122. Laos	164. Guinea-Bissau
38. Qatar	80. Jamaica	123. Solomon Islands	165. Mozambique
39. Bahrain	81. Tunisia	124. Cambodia	166. Burundi
40. Portugal	82. Jordan	125. Pakistan	167. Niger

41. Poland	83. Turkey	126. Congo RC	168. Congo DRC
42. Barbados	84. Algeria	127. Sao Tome and Principe	169. Zimbabwe
	85. Tonga		

Methodology:

For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this Country Review.

Reference:

As published in United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2010.

Source:

United Nations Development Programme's [Human Development Index](http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/) available at URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using ranking available; reviewed in 2015

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Created by Adrian G. White, an Analytic Social Psychologist at the University of Leicester, the "Satisfaction with Life Index" measures subjective life satisfaction across various countries. The data was taken from a metastudy (see below for source) and associates the notion of subjective happiness or life satisfaction with qualitative parameters such as health, wealth, and access to

basic education. This assessment serves as an alternative to other measures of happiness that tend to rely on traditional and quantitative measures of policy on quality of life, such as GNP and GDP. The methodology involved the responses of 80,000 people across the globe.

Rank	Country	Score
1	Denmark	273.4
2	Switzerland	273.33
3	Austria	260
4	Iceland	260
5	The Bahamas	256.67
6	Finland	256.67
7	Sweden	256.67
8	Iran	253.33
9	Brunei	253.33
10	Canada	253.33
11	Ireland	253.33
12	Luxembourg	253.33
13	Costa Rica	250
14	Malta	250

15	Netherlands	250
16	Antiguaand Barbuda	246.67
17	Malaysia	246.67
18	New Zealand	246.67
19	Norway	246.67
20	Seychelles	246.67
21	Saint Kitts and Nevis	246.67
22	United Arab Emirates	246.67
23	United States	246.67
24	Vanuatu	246.67
25	Venezuela	246.67
26	Australia	243.33
27	Barbados	243.33
28	Belgium	243.33
29	Dominica	243.33
30	Oman	243.33
31	Saudi Arabia	243.33
32	Suriname	243.33

33	Bahrain	240
34	Colombia	240
35	Germany	240
36	Guyana	240
37	Honduras	240
38	Kuwait	240
39	Panama	240
40	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	240
41	United Kingdom	236.67
42	Dominican Republic	233.33
43	Guatemala	233.33
44	Jamaica	233.33
45	Qatar	233.33
46	Spain	233.33
47	Saint Lucia	233.33
48	Belize	230
49	Cyprus	230
50	Italy	230

51	Mexico	230
52	Samoa	230
53	Singapore	230
54	Solomon Islands	230
55	Trinidad and Tobago	230
56	Argentina	226.67
57	Fiji	223.33
58	Israel	223.33
59	Mongolia	223.33
60	São Tomé and Príncipe	223.33
61	El Salvador	220
62	France	220
63	Hong Kong	220
64	Indonesia	220
65	Kyrgyzstan	220
66	Maldives	220
67	Slovenia	220
68	Taiwan	220

69	East Timor	220
70	Tonga	220
71	Chile	216.67
72	Grenada	216.67
73	Mauritius	216.67
74	Namibia	216.67
75	Paraguay	216.67
76	Thailand	216.67
77	Czech Republic	213.33
78	Philippines	213.33
79	Tunisia	213.33
80	Uzbekistan	213.33
81	Brazil	210
82	China	210
83	Cuba	210
84	Greece	210
85	Nicaragua	210
86	Papua New Guinea	210

87	Uruguay	210
88	Gabon	206.67
89	Ghana	206.67
90	Japan	206.67
91	Yemen	206.67
92	Portugal	203.33
93	Sri Lanka	203.33
94	Tajikistan	203.33
95	Vietnam	203.33
96	Bhutan	200
97	Comoros	196.67
98	Croatia	196.67
99	Poland	196.67
100	Cape Verde	193.33
101	Kazakhstan	193.33
102	South Korea	193.33
103	Madagascar	193.33
104	Bangladesh	190

105	Republic of the Congo	190
106	The Gambia	190
107	Hungary	190
108	Libya	190
109	South Africa	190
110	Cambodia	186.67
111	Ecuador	186.67
112	Kenya	186.67
113	Lebanon	186.67
114	Morocco	186.67
115	Peru	186.67
116	Senegal	186.67
117	Bolivia	183.33
118	Haiti	183.33
119	Nepal	183.33
120	Nigeria	183.33
121	Tanzania	183.33
122	Benin	180

123	Botswana	180
124	Guinea-Bissau	180
125	India	180
126	Laos	180
127	Mozambique	180
128	Palestinian Authority	180
129	Slovakia	180
130	Myanmar	176.67
131	Mali	176.67
132	Mauritania	176.67
133	Turkey	176.67
134	Algeria	173.33
135	Equatorial Guinea	173.33
136	Romania	173.33
137	Bosnia and Herzegovina	170
138	Cameroon	170
139	Estonia	170
140	Guinea	170

141	Jordan	170
142	Syria	170
143	Sierra Leone	166.67
144	Azerbaijan	163.33
145	Central African Republic	163.33
146	Republic of Macedonia	163.33
147	Togo	163.33
148	Zambia	163.33
149	Angola	160
150	Djibouti	160
151	Egypt	160
152	Burkina Faso	156.67
153	Ethiopia	156.67
154	Latvia	156.67
155	Lithuania	156.67
156	Uganda	156.67
157	Albania	153.33
158	Malawi	153.33

159	Chad	150
160	Côte d'Ivoire	150
161	Niger	150
162	Eritrea	146.67
163	Rwanda	146.67
164	Bulgaria	143.33
165	Lesotho	143.33
166	Pakistan	143.33
167	Russia	143.33
168	Swaziland	140
169	Georgia	136.67
170	Belarus	133.33
171	Turkmenistan	133.33
172	Armenia	123.33
173	Sudan	120
174	Ukraine	120
175	Moldova	116.67
176	Democratic Republic of the Congo	110

177	Zimbabwe	110
178	Burundi	100

Commentary:

European countries, such as [Denmark](#), [Iceland](#), [Finland](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#), [Austria](#) resided at the top of the ranking with highest levels of self-reported life satisfaction. Conversely, European countries such as [Latvia](#), [Lithuania](#), [Moldova](#), [Belarus](#) and [Ukraine](#) ranked low on the index. African countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, [Zimbabwe](#) and [Burundi](#) found themselves at the very bottom of the ranking, and indeed, very few African countries could be found in the top 100. [Japan](#) was at the mid-way point in the ranking, however, other Asian countries such as [Brunei](#) and [Malaysia](#) were in the top tier, while [Pakistan](#) was close to the bottom with a low level of self-identified life satisfaction. As a region, the Middle East presented a mixed bag with Saudi Arabians reporting healthy levels of life satisfaction and Egyptians near the bottom of the ranking. As a region, Caribbean countries were ranked highly, consistently demonstrating high levels of life satisfaction. The findings showed that health was the most crucial determining factor in life satisfaction, followed by prosperity and education.

Source:

White, A. (2007). A Global Projection of Subjective Well-being: A Challenge To Positive Psychology? *Psychiatry* 66, 17-20. The data was extracted from a meta-analysis by Marks, Abdallah, Simms & Thompson (2006).

Uploaded:

Based on study noted above in "Source" ; reviewed in 2015

Happy Planet Index

Happy Planet Index

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is used to measure human well-being in conjunction with environmental impact. The HPI has been compiled since 2006 by the New Economics Foundation. The index is a composite of several indicators including subjective life satisfaction, life expectancy at birth, and ecological footprint per capita.

As noted by NEFA, the HPI "reveals the ecological efficiency with which human well-being is delivered." Indeed, the index combines environmental impact with human well-being to measure the environmental efficiency with which, country by country, people live long and happy lives. The countries ranked highest by the HPI are not necessarily the ones with the happiest people overall, but the ones that allow their citizens to live long and fulfilling lives, without negatively impacting this opportunity for either future generations or citizens of other countries. Accordingly, a country like the [United States](#) will rank low on this list due to its large per capital ecological footprint, which uses more than its fair share of resources, and will likely cause planetary damage.

It should be noted that the HPI was designed to be a counterpoint to other well-established indices of countries' development, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures overall national wealth and economic development, but often obfuscates the realities of countries with stark variances between the rich and the poor. Moreover, the objective of most of the world's people is not to be wealthy but to be happy. The HPI also differs from the [Human Development Index](#) (HDI), which measures quality of life but not ecology, since it [HPI] also includes sustainability as a key indicator.

Rank	Country	HPI
1	Costa Rica	76.1
2	Dominican Republic	71.8
3	Jamaica	70.1
4	Guatemala	68.4
5	Vietnam	66.5
6	Colombia	66.1

7	Cuba	65.7
8	El Salvador	61.5
9	Brazil	61.0
10	Honduras	61.0
11	Nicaragua	60.5
12	Egypt	60.3
13	Saudi Arabia	59.7
14	Philippines	59.0
15	Argentina	59.0
16	Indonesia	58.9
17	Bhutan	58.5
18	Panama	57.4
19	Laos	57.3
20	China	57.1
21	Morocco	56.8
22	Sri Lanka	56.5
23	Mexico	55.6
24	Pakistan	55.6

25	Ecuador	55.5
26	Jordan	54.6
27	Belize	54.5
28	Peru	54.4
29	Tunisia	54.3
30	Trinidad and Tobago	54.2
31	Bangladesh	54.1
32	Moldova	54.1
33	Malaysia	54.0
34	Tajikistan	53.5
35	India	53.0
36	Venezuela	52.5
37	Nepal	51.9
38	Syria	51.3
39	Burma	51.2
40	Algeria	51.2
41	Thailand	50.9
42	Haiti	50.8

43	Netherlands	50.6
44	Malta	50.4
45	Uzbekistan	50.1
46	Chile	49.7
47	Bolivia	49.3
48	Armenia	48.3
49	Singapore	48.2
50	Yemen	48.1
51	Germany	48.1
52	Switzerland	48.1
53	Sweden	48.0
54	Albania	47.9
55	Paraguay	47.8
56	Palestinian Authority	47.7
57	Austria	47.7
58	Serbia	47.6
59	Finland	47.2
60	Croatia	47.2

61	Kyrgyzstan	47.1
62	Cyprus	46.2
63	Guyana	45.6
64	Belgium	45.4
65	Bosnia and Herzegovina	45.0
66	Slovenia	44.5
67	Israel	44.5
68	South Korea	44.4
69	Italy	44.0
70	Romania	43.9
71	France	43.9
72	Georgia	43.6
73	Slovakia	43.5
74	United Kingdom	43.3
75	Japan	43.3
76	Spain	43.2
77	Poland	42.8
78	Ireland	42.6

79	Iraq	42.6
80	Cambodia	42.3
81	Iran	42.1
82	Bulgaria	42.0
83	Turkey	41.7
84	Hong Kong	41.6
85	Azerbaijan	41.2
86	Lithuania	40.9
87	Djibouti	40.4
88	Norway	40.4
89	Canada	39.4
90	Hungary	38.9
91	Kazakhstan	38.5
92	Czech Republic	38.3
93	Mauritania	38.2
94	Iceland	38.1
95	Ukraine	38.1
96	Senegal	38.0

97	Greece	37.6
98	Portugal	37.5
99	Uruguay	37.2
100	Ghana	37.1
101	Latvia	36.7
102	Australia	36.6
103	New Zealand	36.2
104	Belarus	35.7
105	Denmark	35.5
106	Mongolia	35.0
107	Malawi	34.5
108	Russia	34.5
109	Chad	34.3
110	Lebanon	33.6
111	Macedonia	32.7
112	Republic of the Congo	32.4
113	Madagascar	31.5
114	United States	30.7

115	Nigeria	30.3
116	Guinea	30.3
117	Uganda	30.2
118	South Africa	29.7
119	Rwanda	29.6
120	Democratic Republic of the Congo	29.0
121	Sudan	28.5
122	Luxembourg	28.5
123	United Arab Emirates	28.2
124	Ethiopia	28.1
125	Kenya	27.8
126	Cameroon	27.2
127	Zambia	27.2
128	Kuwait	27.0
129	Niger	26.9
130	Angola	26.8
131	Estonia	26.4
132	Mali	25.8

133	Mozambique	24.6
134	Benin	24.6
135	Togo	23.3
136	Sierra Leone	23.1
137	Central African Republic	22.9
138	Burkina Faso	22.4
139	Burundi	21.8
140	Namibia	21.1
141	Botswana	20.9
142	Tanzania	17.8
143	Zimbabwe	16.6

Source: This material is derived from the Happy Planet Index issued by the New Economics Foundation (NEF).

Methodology: The methodology for the calculations can be found at URL: <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>

Status of Women

Gender Related Development Index (GDI) Rank:

49th out of 140

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) Rank:

41st out 80

Female Population:

1.0 million

Female Life Expectancy at birth:

64.5 years

Total Fertility Rate:

1.7

Maternal Mortality Ratio (2000):

23

Total Number of Women Living with HIV/AIDS:

N/A

Ever Married Women, Ages 15-19 (%):

9%

Mean Age at Time of Marriage:

23

Contraceptive Use Among Married Women, Any Method (%):

N/A

Female Adult Literacy Rate:

62.5%

Combined Female Gross enrollment ratio for Primary, Secondary and Tertiary schools:

71%

Female-Headed Households (%):

N/A

Economically Active Females (%):

50.1%

Female Contributing Family Workers (%):

61%

Female Estimated Earned Income:

\$4,861

Seats in Parliament held by women (%):

Lower or Single House: 19.2%

Upper House or Senate: N/A

Year Women Received the Right to Vote:

1946

Year Women Received the Right to Stand for Election:

1946

*The Gender Development Index (GDI) is a composite index which measures the average achievement in a country. While very similar to the Human Development Index in its use of the same variables, the GDI adjusts the average achievement of each country in terms of life expectancy, enrollment in schools, income, and literacy in accordance to the disparities between males and females.

*The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite index measuring gender inequality in

three of the basic dimensions of empowerment; economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making, and power over economic resources.

*Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is defined as the average number of babies born to women during their reproductive years. A TFR of 2.1 is considered the replacement rate; once a TFR of a population reaches 2.1 the population will remain stable assuming no immigration or emigration takes place. When the TFR is greater than 2.1 a population will increase and when it is less than 2.1 a population will eventually decrease, although due to the age structure of a population it will take years before a low TFR is translated into lower population.

*Maternal Mortality Rate is the number of deaths to women per 100,000 live births that resulted from conditions related to pregnancy and or delivery related complications.

*Economically Active Females are the share of the female population, ages 15 and above, whom supply, or are able to supply, labor for the production of goods and services.

*Female Contributing Family Workers are those females who work without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a relative living in the same household.

*Estimated Earned Income is measured according to Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in US dollars.

Global Gender Gap Index

Global Gender Gap Index

Editor's Note:

The Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum ranks most of the world's countries in terms of the division of resources and opportunities among males and females. Specifically, the ranking assesses the gender inequality gap in these four arenas:

1. Economic participation and opportunity (salaries and high skilled employment participation levels)
2. Educational attainment (access to basic and higher level education)
3. Political empowerment (representation in decision-making structures)
4. Health and survival (life expectancy and sex ratio)

	2010 rank	2010 score	2010 rank among 2009 countries	2009 rank	2009 score	2008 rank	2008 score	2007 rank
Country								
Iceland	1	0.8496	1	1	0.8276	4	0.7999	4
Norway	2	0.8404	2	3	0.8227	1	0.8239	2
Finland	3	0.8260	3	2	0.8252	2	0.8195	3
Sweden	4	0.8024	4	4	0.8139	3	0.8139	1
New Zealand	5	0.7808	5	5	0.7880	5	0.7859	5
Ireland	6	0.7773	6	8	0.7597	8	0.7518	9
Denmark	7	0.7719	7	7	0.7628	7	0.7538	8
Lesotho	8	0.7678	8	10	0.7495	16	0.7320	26
Philippines	9	0.7654	9	9	0.7579	6	0.7568	6
Switzerland	10	0.7562	10	13	0.7426	14	0.7360	40
Spain	11	0.7554	11	17	0.7345	17	0.7281	10
South Africa	12	0.7535	12	6	0.7709	22	0.7232	20
Germany	13	0.7530	13	12	0.7449	11	0.7394	7

Belgium	14	0.7509	14	33	0.7165	28	0.7163	19
United Kingdom	15	0.7460	15	15	0.7402	13	0.7366	11
Sri Lanka	16	0.7458	16	16	0.7402	12	0.7371	15
Netherlands	17	0.7444	17	11	0.7490	9	0.7399	12
Latvia	18	0.7429	18	14	0.7416	10	0.7397	13
United States	19	0.7411	19	31	0.7173	27	0.7179	31
Canada	20	0.7372	20	25	0.7196	31	0.7136	18
Trinidad and Tobago	21	0.7353	21	19	0.7298	19	0.7245	46
Mozambique	22	0.7329	22	26	0.7195	18	0.7266	43
Australia	23	0.7271	23	20	0.7282	21	0.7241	17
Cuba	24	0.7253	24	29	0.7176	25	0.7195	22
Namibia	25	0.7238	25	32	0.7167	30	0.7141	29
Luxembourg	26	0.7231	26	63	0.6889	66	0.6802	58
Mongolia	27	0.7194	27	22	0.7221	40	0.7049	62
Costa Rica	28	0.7194	28	27	0.7180	32	0.7111	28
Argentina	29	0.7187	29	24	0.7211	24	0.7209	33
Nicaragua	30	0.7176	30	49	0.7002	71	0.6747	90

Barbados	31	0.7176	31	21	0.7236	26	0.7188	n/a
Portugal	32	0.7171	32	46	0.7013	39	0.7051	37
Uganda	33	0.7169	33	40	0.7067	43	0.6981	50
Moldova	34	0.7160	34	36	0.7104	20	0.7244	21
Lithuania	35	0.7132	35	30	0.7175	23	0.7222	14
Bahamas	36	0.7128	36	28	0.7179	n/a	n/a	n/a
Austria	37	0.7091	37	42	0.7031	29	0.7153	27
Guyana	38	0.7090	38	35	0.7108	n/a	n/a	n/a
Panama	39	0.7072	39	43	0.7024	34	0.7095	38
Ecuador	40	0.7072	40	23	0.7220	35	0.7091	44
Kazakhstan	41	0.7055	41	47	0.7013	45	0.6976	32
Slovenia	42	0.7047	42	52	0.6982	51	0.6937	49
Poland	43	0.7037	43	50	0.6998	49	0.6951	60
Jamaica	44	0.7037	44	48	0.7013	44	0.6980	39
Russian Federation	45	0.7036	45	51	0.6987	42	0.6994	45
France	46	0.7025	46	18	0.7331	15	0.7341	51
Estonia	47	0.7018	47	37	0.7094	37	0.7076	30
Chile	48	0.7013	48	64	0.6884	65	0.6818	86

Macedonia, FYR	49	0.6996	49	53	0.6950	53	0.6914	35
Bulgaria	50	0.6983	50	38	0.7072	36	0.7077	25
Kyrgyz Republic	51	0.6973	51	41	0.7058	41	0.7045	70
Israel	52	0.6957	52	45	0.7019	56	0.6900	36
Croatia	53	0.6939	53	54	0.6944	46	0.6967	16
Honduras	54	0.6927	54	62	0.6893	47	0.6960	68
Colombia	55	0.6927	55	56	0.6939	50	0.6944	24
Singapore	56	0.6914	56	84	0.6664	84	0.6625	77
Thailand	57	0.6910	57	59	0.6907	52	0.6917	52
Greece	58	0.6908	58	85	0.6662	75	0.6727	72
Uruguay	59	0.6897	59	57	0.6936	54	0.6907	78
Peru	60	0.6895	60	44	0.7024	48	0.6959	75
China	61	0.6881	61	60	0.6907	57	0.6878	73
Botswana	62	0.6876	62	39	0.7071	63	0.6839	53
Ukraine	63	0.6869	63	61	0.6896	62	0.6856	57
Venezuela	64	0.6863	64	69	0.6839	59	0.6875	55
Czech Republic	65	0.6850	65	74	0.6789	69	0.6770	64

Tanzania	66	0.6829	66	73	0.6797	38	0.7068	34
Romania	67	0.6826	67	70	0.6805	70	0.6763	47
Malawi	68	0.6824	68	76	0.6738	81	0.6664	87
Paraguay	69	0.6804	69	66	0.6868	100	0.6379	69
Ghana	70	0.6782	70	80	0.6704	77	0.6679	63
Slovak Republic	71	0.6778	71	68	0.6845	64	0.6824	54
Vietnam	72	0.6776	72	71	0.6802	68	0.6778	42
Dominican Republic	73	0.6774	73	67	0.6859	72	0.6744	65
Italy	74	0.6765	74	72	0.6798	67	0.6788	84
Gambia, The	75	0.6762	75	75	0.6752	85	0.6622	95
Bolivia	76	0.6751	76	82	0.6693	80	0.6667	80
Brueni Darussalem	77	0.6748	77	94	0.6524	99	0.6392	n/a
Albania	78	0.6726	78	91	0.6601	87	0.6591	66
Hungary	79	0.6720	79	65	0.6879	60	0.6867	61
Madagascar	80	0.6713	80	77	0.6732	74	0.6736	89
Angola	81	0.6712	81	106	0.6353	114	0.6032	110

Bangladesh	82	0.6702	82	93	0.6526	90	0.6531	100
Malta	83	0.6695	83	88	0.6635	83	0.6634	76
Armenia	84	0.6669	84	90	0.6619	78	0.6677	71
Brazil	85	0.6655	85	81	0.6695	73	0.6737	74
Cyprus	86	0.6642	86	79	0.6706	76	0.6694	82
Indonesia	87	0.6615	87	92	0.6580	93	0.6473	81
Georgia	88	0.6598	88	83	0.6680	82	0.6654	67
Tajikistan	89	0.6598	89	86	0.6661	89	0.6541	79
El Salvador	90	0.6596	90	55	0.6939	58	0.6875	48
Mexico	91	0.6577	91	98	0.6503	97	0.6441	93
Zimbabwe	92	0.6574	92	95	0.6518	92	0.6485	88
Belize	93	0.6536	93	87	0.6636	86	0.6610	94
Japan	94	0.6524	94	101	0.6447	98	0.6434	91
Mauritius	95	0.6520	95	96	0.6513	95	0.6466	85
Kenya	96	0.6499	96	97	0.6512	88	0.6547	83
Cambodia	97	0.6482	97	104	0.6410	94	0.6469	98
Malaysia	98	0.6479	98	100	0.6467	96	0.6442	92
Maldives	99	0.6452	99	99	0.6482	91	0.6501	99

Azerbaijan	100	0.6446	100	89	0.6626	61	0.6856	59
Senegal	101	0.6414	101	102	0.6427	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suriname	102	0.6407	102	78	0.6726	79	0.6674	56
United Arab Emirates	103	0.6397	103	112	0.6198	105	0.6220	105
Korea, Rep.	104	0.6342	104	115	0.6146	108	0.6154	97
Kuwait	105	0.6318	105	105	0.6356	101	0.6358	96
Zambia	106	0.6293	106	107	0.6310	106	0.6205	101
Tunisia	107	0.6266	107	109	0.6233	103	0.6295	102
Fiji	108	0.6256	108	103	0.6414	n/a	n/a	n/a
Guatemala	109	0.6238	109	111	0.6209	112	0.6072	106
Bahrain	110	0.6217	110	116	0.6136	121	0.5927	115
Burkina Faso	111	0.6162	111	120	0.6081	115	0.6029	117
India	112	0.6155	112	114	0.6151	113	0.6060	114
Mauritania	113	0.6152	113	119	0.6103	110	0.6117	111
Cameroon	114	0.6110	114	118	0.6108	117	0.6017	116
Nepal	115	0.6084	115	110	0.6213	120	0.5942	125
Lebanon*	116	0.6084	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Qatar	117	0.6059	116	125	0.5907	119	0.5948	109
Nigeria	118	0.6055	117	108	0.6280	102	0.6339	107
Algeria	119	0.6052	118	117	0.6119	111	0.6111	108
Jordan	120	0.6048	119	113	0.6182	104	0.6275	104
Ethiopia	121	0.6019	120	122	0.5948	122	0.5867	113
Oman	122	0.5950	121	123	0.5938	118	0.5960	119
Iran	123	0.5933	122	128	0.5839	116	0.6021	118
Syria	124	0.5926	123	121	0.6072	107	0.6181	103
Egypt	125	0.5899	124	126	0.5862	124	0.5832	120
Turkey	126	0.5876	125	129	0.5828	123	0.5853	121
Morocco	127	0.5767	126	124	0.5926	125	0.5757	122
Benin	128	0.5719	127	131	0.5643	126	0.5582	123
Saudi Arabia	129	0.5713	128	130	0.5651	128	0.5537	124
Côte d'Ivoire*	130	0.5691	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mali	131	0.5680	129	127	0.5860	109	0.6117	112
Pakistan	132	0.5465	130	132	0.5458	127	0.5549	126
Chad	133	0.5330	131	133	0.5417	129	0.5290	127
Yemen	134	0.4603	132	134	0.4609	130	0.4664	128

Belarus	n/a	n/a	n/a	34	0.7141	33	0.7099	23
Uzbekistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	0.6913	55	0.6906	41

*new country 2010

Commentary:

According to the report's index, Nordic countries, such as [Iceland](#), [Norway](#), [Finland](#), and [Sweden](#) have continued to dominate at the top of the ranking for gender equality. Meanwhile, [France](#) has seen a notable decline in the ranking, largely as a result of decreased number of women holding ministerial portfolios in that country. In the Americas, the [United States](#) has risen in the ranking to top the region, predominantly as a result of a decreasing wage gap, as well as higher number of women holding key positions in the current Obama administration. [Canada](#) has continued to remain as one of the top ranking countries of the Americas, followed by the small Caribbean island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, which has the distinction of being among the top three countries of the Americans in the realm of gender equality. [Lesotho](#) and South African ranked highly in the index, leading not only among African countries but also in global context. Despite [Lesotho](#) still lagging in the area of life expectancy, its high ranking was attributed to high levels of female participation in the labor force and female literacy. The [Philippines](#) and [Sri Lanka](#) were the top ranking countries for gender equality for Asia, ranking highly also in global context. The [Philippines](#) has continued to show strong performance in all strong performance on all four dimensions (detailed above) of the index. Finally, in the Arab world, the [United Arab Emirates](#) held the highest-rank within that region of the world; however, its placement near the bottom of the global list highlights the fact that Arab countries are generally poor performers when it comes to the matter of gender equality in global scope.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of The Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum.

Available at URL:

<http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders%20and%20Gender%20Parity/Gende>

Updated:

Based on latest available data as set forth in chart; reviewed in 2014

Culture and Arts

Content coming soon.

Etiquette

Cultural Dos and Taboos

1. A problem that a visitor in Madagascar may have is never quite knowing the specific cultural "do's and don'ts" because of the diverse range of taboos that differ from village to village. It has been suggested that the foreigner will most likely break a taboo during his or her stay. When the taboo occurs just apologize and explain that your lack of manners is not meant to offend, but rather, you had the best of intentions in mind. They should forgive you after a sincere apology provided that the taboo is not too serious.
 2. Do try to get accustomed to the relaxed sense of time.
 3. Boasting is considered offensive.
 4. Overly complimenting a person is offensive as well and those quick with a compliment are often not trusted.
 5. Madagascar is economically one of the poorest nations of the world, but that should not take away from their deep-rooted generosity and the importance of showing hospitality to guests. Never refuse gifts or food. Gifts are given to honor the guest and likewise by accepting the gift you honor the giver. If you feel the need to give something in return for the hospitality or kindness, donate something to the village or town's community such as the school or donate money toward the next
-

festival.

6. It is customary to shake hands at both greetings and departures.

7. Learn to read between the lines. Malagasy speech is often indirect and people learn to read into what people are saying to determine what sort of request is being made of them.

8. Be aware of the cultural and ethnic differences within Madagascar. Sensitivity to these differences is advisable.

Travel Information

Please Note

This is a generalized travel guide and it is intended to coalesce several resources, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination. As such, it does not include travel warnings for specific "hot spot" destinations.

For travel alerts and warnings, please see the United States Department of State's listings available at URL:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Honduras, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories of West Bank and Gaza, Philippines areas of Sulu Archipelago, Mindanao, and southern Sulu Sea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen.

International Travel Guide

Checklist for Travelers

- 1.** Take out travel insurance to cover hospital treatment or medical evaluation. Overseas medical costs are expensive to most international travelers, where one's domestic, nationalized or even private health insurance plans will not provide coverage outside one's home country. Learn about "reciprocal insurance plans" that some international health care companies might offer.
- 2.** Make sure that one's travel insurance is appropriate. If one intends to indulge in adventurous activities, such as parasailing, one should be sure that one is fully insured in such cases. Many traditional insurance policies do not provide coverage in cases of extreme circumstances.
- 3.** Take time to learn about one's destination country and culture. Read and learn about the place one is traveling. Also check political, economic and socio-cultural developments at the destination by reading country-specific travel reports and fact sheets noted below.
- 4.** Get the necessary visas for the country (or countries) one intends to visit - but be aware that a visa does not guarantee entry. A number of useful sites regarding visa and other entry requirements are noted below.
- 5.** Keep in regular contact with friends and relatives back at home by phone or email, and be sure to leave a travel itinerary.
- 6.** Protect one's personal information by making copies of one's passport details, insurance policy, travelers checks and credit card numbers. Taking copies of such documents with you, while leaving another collection copies with someone at home is also good practice for travelers. Taking copies of one's passport photograph is also recommended.
- 7.** Stay healthy by taking all possible precautions against illness. Also, be sure to take extra supplies of prescription drugs along for the trip, while also taking time to pack general pharmaceutical supplies, such as aspirin and other such painkillers, bandages, stomach ailment medication, anti-inflammatory medication and anti-bacterial medication.
- 8.** Do not carry illicit drugs. Understand that the punishment for possession or use of illegal drugs in some countries may be capital punishment. Make sure your prescription drugs are legal in the countries you plan to visit.
- 9.** Know the laws of one's destination country and culture; be sure to understand the repercussions of breaking those laws and regulations. Often the transparency and freedoms of the juridical system at home is not consistent with that of one's destination country. Become aware of these complexities and subtleties before you travel.
- 10.** For longer stays in a country, or where the security situation is volatile, one should register one's self and traveling companions at the local embassy or consulate of one's country of citizenship.
- 11.** Women should take care to be prepared both culturally and practically for traveling in a different country and culture. One should be sure to take sufficient supplies of personal feminine products and prescription drugs. One should also learn about local cultural standards for women, including norms of dressing. Be aware that it is simply inappropriate and unsafe for women to

travel alone in some countries, and take the necessary precautions to avoid risk-filled situations.

12. If one is traveling with small children, one should pack extra supplies, make arrangements with the travel carrier for proper seating that would adequately accommodate children, infants or toddlers. Note also that whether one is male or female, traveling with children means that one's hands are thus not free to carry luggage and bags. Be especially aware that this makes one vulnerable to pickpockets, thieves and other sorts of crime.

13. Make proper arrangements for accommodations, well in advance of one's arrival at a destination. Some countries have limited accommodation, while others may have culturally distinctive facilities. Learning about these practicalities before one travels will greatly aid the enjoyment of one's trip.

14. Travel with different forms of currency and money (cash, traveler's checks and credit cards) in anticipation that venues may not accept one or another form of money. Also, ensuring that one's financial resources are not contained in one location, or by one person (if one is traveling with others) can be a useful measure, in the event that one loses a wallet or purse.

15. Find out about transportation in the destination country. In some places, it might be advisable to hire a local driver or taxi guide for safety reasons, while in other countries, enjoying one's travel experience may well be enhanced by renting a vehicle and seeing the local sights and culture independently. Costs may also be prohibitive for either of these choices, so again, prior planning is suggested.

Tips for Travelers

- Check with your embassy, consulate, or appropriate government institution related to travel before traveling.
- Ensure you have adequate travel insurance, which includes medical evacuation by air ambulance if necessary.
- Carry currency: French Franc Travelers Checks or cash. Credit cards are not readily accepted, so bring enough cash.
- Keep belongings and valuables in a safe place.
- Beware of pick pockets and snatch and run thieves.
- Register with your embassy.
- Leave your passport, next of kin details and a rough itinerary with your embassy.
- Enter next of kin details into the back of your passport.

- Seek medical advice before traveling especially about malaria, cholera and (if you are traveling from mainland Africa) yellow fever.
- Ensure you have a valid visa for the purpose and duration of your stay.
- Do not wear military attire in public unless you are a member of the military and are visiting in an official capacity.
- Do not carry drugs; penalties can be severe.
- Do not leave your bags unattended.

Note: This information is directly quoted from the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Sources: *United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

Business Culture: Information for Business Travelers

Laws and common business practices are based on the European, particularly French business style. French is the common language of business, though more and more businesspersons speak English.

Sources: *United States Department of State Commercial Guides*

For more general information on etiquette in Madagascar, see our Cultural Etiquette page.

Online Resources Regarding Entry Requirements and Visas

Foreign Entry Requirements for Americans from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Visa Services for Non-Americans from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html

Visa Bulletins from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html

Visa Waivers from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html - new

Passport and Visa Information from the Government of the United Kingdom
<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Visa Information from the Government of Australia
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/visas/index.html>

Passport Information from the Government of Australia
<https://www.passports.gov.au/Web/index.aspx>

Passport Information from the Government of Canada
http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/passport_passeport-eng.asp

Visa Information from the Government of Canada
http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/visas-eng.asp

Online Visa Processing by Immigration Experts by VisaPro
<http://www.visapro.com>

Sources: United States Department of State, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Canada Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Useful Online Resources for Travelers

Country-Specific Travel Information from United States
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Travel Advice by Country from Government of United Kingdom
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

General Travel Advice from Government of Australia
<http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/General>

Travel Bulletins from the Government of Australia
<http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/TravelBulletins/>

Travel Tips from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/tips/index.html>

Travel Checklist by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/checklist_sommaire-eng.asp

Travel Checklist from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/checklist>

Your trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1225.html

A safe trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html

Tips for expatriates abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/residing/residing_1235.html

Tips for students from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html <http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/broc>

Medical information for travelers from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html

US Customs Travel information

<http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/>

Sources: United States Department of State; United States Customs Department, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia; Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Other Practical Online Resources for Travelers

Foreign Language Phrases for Travelers

<http://www.travlang.com/languages/>

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/index.htm>

World Weather Forecasts

<http://www.intellicast.com/>

<http://www.wunderground.com/>

<http://www.worldweather.org/>

Worldwide Time Zones, Map, World Clock

<http://www.timeanddate.com/>

<http://www.worldtimezone.com/>

International Airport Codes

<http://www.world-airport-codes.com/>

International Dialing Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/dialcode.htm>

<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/>

International Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/phones.htm>

International Mobile Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/mobilephones.htm>

International Internet Café Search Engine

<http://cybercaptive.com/>

Global Internet Roaming

<http://www.kropla.com/roaming.htm>

World Electric Power Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/electric.htm>

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

World Television Standards and Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/tv.htm>

International Currency Exchange Rates

<http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

Banking and Financial Institutions Across the World

<http://www.123world.com/banks/index.html>

International Credit Card or Automated Teller Machine (ATM) Locator

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/>

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

International Chambers of Commerce

<http://www.123world.com/chambers/index.html>

World Tourism Websites

<http://123world.com/tourism/>

Diplomatic and Consular Information

United States Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

United Kingdom Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/embassies-and-posts/find-an-embassy-overseas/>

Australia's Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/missions/>

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/embassies.html>

Canada's Embassies and High Commissions

<http://www.international.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/embassies-ambassades.aspx>

Resources for Finding Embassies and other Diplomatic Posts Across the World

<http://www.escapeartist.com/embassy1/embassy1.htm>

Safety and Security

Travel Warnings by Country from Government of Australia

<http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/>

Travel Warnings and Alerts from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html

Travel Reports and Warnings by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/updates_mise-a-jour-eng.asp

Travel Warnings from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/?action=noTravelAll#noTravelAll>

Sources: United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the United States Department of State, the Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Other Safety and Security Online Resources for Travelers

United States Department of State Information on Terrorism

<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/>

Government of the United Kingdom Resource on the Risk of Terrorism

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1044011304926>

Government of Canada Terrorism Guide

<http://www.international.gc.ca/crime/terrorism-terrorisme.aspx?lang=eng>

Information on Terrorism by Government of Australia

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/icat/index.html>

FAA Resource on Aviation Safety

<http://www.faasafety.gov/>

In-Flight Safety Information for Air Travel (by British Airways crew trainer, Anna Warman)

<http://www.warman.demon.co.uk/anna/inflight.html>

Hot Spots: Travel Safety and Risk Information

<http://www.airsecurity.com/hotspots/HotSpots.asp>

Information on Human Rights

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>

Sources: The United States Department of State, the United States Customs Department, the Government of Canada, the Government of United Kingdom, the Government of Australia, the Federal Aviation Authority, Anna Warman's In-flight Website, Hot Spots Travel and Risk Information

Diseases/Health Data

Please Note: Most of the entry below constitutes a generalized health advisory, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination.

As a supplement, however, the reader will also find below a list of countries flagged with current health notices and alerts issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these 3 levels of warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Level 3 (highest level of concern; avoid non-essential travel) --

**Guinea - Ebola
Liberia - Ebola
Nepal - Earthquake zone
Sierra Leone - Ebola**

Level 2 (intermediate level of concern; use utmost caution during travel) --

**Cameroon - Polio
Somalia - Polio
Vanuatu - Tropical Cyclone zone
Throughout Middle East and Arabia Peninsula - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)**

Level 1 (standard level of concern; use practical caution during travel) -

**Australia - Ross River disease
Bosnia-Herzegovina - Measles
Brazil - Dengue Fever
Brazil - Malaria
Brazil - Zika**

China - H7N9 Avian flu
Cuba - Cholera
Egypt - H5N1 Bird flu
Ethiopia - Measles
Germany - Measles
Japan - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)
Kyrgyzstan - Measles
Malaysia -Dengue Fever
Mexico - Chikungunya
Mexico - Hepatitis A
Nigeria - Meningitis
Philippines - Measles
Scotland - Mumps
Singapore - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)
South Korea - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)
Throughout Caribbean - Chikungunya
Throughout Central America - Chikungunya
Throughout South America - Chikungunya
Throughout Pacific Islands - Chikungunya

For specific information related to these health notices and alerts please see the CDC's listing available at URL:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Health Information for Travelers to Madagascar

Several cases of African trypanosomiasis (African sleeping sickness) have been reported from this region recently, including cases among tourists visiting game parks. For more information and recommendations on trypanosomiasis, see Travelers' Health Information on African Trypanosomiasis (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/aftrypano.htm>).

Also, please check the Outbreaks section for important updates on this region, including information on the Epidemic of Meningococcal Disease in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/outbreaks.htm>).

Food and waterborne diseases are the number one cause of illness in travelers. Travelers' diarrhea can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites, which are found throughout the region and can contaminate food or water. Infections may cause diarrhea and vomiting (*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, cholera, and parasites), fever (typhoid fever and toxoplasmosis), or liver damage (hepatitis). Make sure your food and drinking water are safe. (See below.)

Malaria is a preventable infection that can be fatal if left untreated. Prevent infection by taking prescription antimalarial drugs and protecting yourself against mosquito bites (see below). Most travelers to malaria risk areas in this region should take mefloquine to prevent malaria. You can be infected with malaria in all areas of this region except the cities of Addis Ababa, Ismara, and Nairobi, the islands of Reunion and Seychelles, and in highland areas above 2,500 meters. For more detailed information about the risk in specific locations, see Malaria in East Africa (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/regionalmalaria/eafrica.htm>).

A certificate of yellow fever vaccine may be required for entry into certain of these countries. For detailed information, see Comprehensive Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yelfever.htm>).

Dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, onchocerciasis, trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), and Rift Valley fever are diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region. Protecting yourself against insect bites will help to prevent these diseases.

Schistosomiasis, a parasitic infection, is found in fresh water in the region, including Lake Malawi. Do not swim in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) in these countries. (For more information, please see the Swimming Precautions on the Making Travel Safe page at URL <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/safety.htm>.)

Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively. Avoid nighttime travel if possible and always use seat belts.

CDC Recommends the Following Vaccines (as Appropriate for Age):

See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG).
- Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than 6 months, or be exposed through medical treatment.
- Meningococcal (meningitis) vaccine, if you plan to visit the western half of Ethiopia (see meningitis map at URL <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/meninmap.htm>) from December through June.
- Rabies, if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation.
- Typhoid, particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region.
- Yellow fever, if you travel anywhere outside urban areas.
- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria, measles, and a one-time dose of polio vaccine for adults. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11-12 years who did not receive the series as infants.

To Stay Healthy, Do:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filter" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.
- If you travel to an area where there is risk for malaria, take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after travel, as directed. (See your doctor for a prescription.)
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals) and permethrin-impregnated mosquito nets, and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants from dusk through dawn.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.
- Always use latex condoms to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

To Avoid Getting Sick:

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors.
- Don't drink beverages with ice.
- Don't eat dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague). (For more information, please see the Animal-Associated Hazards on the Making Travel Safe page.)
- Don't swim in fresh water, including Lake Malawi. Salt water is usually safer. (For more information, please see the Swimming Precautions on the Making Travel Safe page.)

What You Need To Bring with You:

- Long-sleeved shirt and long pants to wear while outside whenever possible, to prevent illnesses carried by insects (e.g., malaria, dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, and onchocerciasis).
- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethyltoluamide), in 30%-35% strength for adults and 6%-10% for children. Unless you are staying in air-conditioned or well-screened housing, purchase a bed net impregnated with the insecticide permethrin. (Bed nets can be purchased in camping or military supply stores.)
- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhea.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Do's above for more detailed information about water filters.

- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.
- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

After You Return Home:

If you have visited an area where there is risk for malaria, continue taking your malaria medication weekly for 4 weeks after you leave the area.

If you become ill after your trip-even as long as a year after you return-tell your doctor where you have traveled.

For More Information:

Ask your doctor or check the CDC web sites for more information about how to protect yourself against diseases that occur in East Africa, such as:

For information about diseases-

Carried by Insects

Dengue, Malaria, Yellow Fever

Carried in Food or Water

Cholera, *Escherichia coli*, diarrhea, Hepatitis A, Schistosomiasis, Typhoid Fever

Person-to-Person Contact

Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS

For more information about these and other diseases, please check the Diseases (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases.htm>) section and the Health Topics A - Z (<http://www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm>).

Note:

Madagascar is located in the East Africa health region.

Sources:

The Center for Disease Control Destinations Website:
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/indianrg.htm>

Chapter 6

Environmental Overview

Environmental Issues

General Overview:

Madagascar is home to a wealth of unique wildlife and plant species. In this regard, it has instituted many national parks, protected areas, forest reserves, and suchlike, to conserve its bio-diversity. It is also in the process of instituting further land management measures, policies and programs.

Current Issues:

- soil erosion, as a result of deforestation and overgrazing
- desertification
- contamination of surface water, as a result of contact with raw sewage and other organic wastes
- deforestation, as a consequence of slash and burn agriculture
- threats to bio-diversity, and in particular, endangerment of several species of flora and fauna unique to the island

Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Mtc):

8.6

Country Rank (GHG output):

83rd

Natural Hazards:

- periodic cyclones

Environmental Policy

Regulation and Jurisdiction:

The regulation and protection of the environment in Madagascar is under the jurisdiction of the following:

- Ministry of the Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Scientific Research

Major Non-Governmental Organizations:

- Earth Preservation Fund

International Environmental Accords:

Party to:

- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol
- Desertification
- Endangered Species
- Hazardous Wastes
- Law of the Sea
- Marine Life Conservation
- Nuclear Test Ban
- Ozone Layer Protection
- Wetlands

Signed but not ratified:

- None

Kyoto Protocol Status (year ratified):

2003

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

GHG Emissions Rankings

Country Rank	Country
1	United States
2	China
4	Russia
5	Japan
6	India
7	Germany
8	United Kingdom

9	Canada
10	Korea, South
11	Italy
12	Mexico
13	France
14	South Africa
15	Iran
16	Indonesia
17	Australia
18	Spain
19	Brazil
20	Saudi Arabia
21	Ukraine
22	Poland
23	Taiwan
24	Turkey
25	Thailand
26	Netherlands

27	Kazakhstan
28	Malaysia
29	Egypt
30	Venezuela
31	Argentina
32	Uzbekistan
33	Czech Republic
34	Belgium
35	Pakistan
36	Romania
37	Greece
38	United Arab Emirates
39	Algeria
40	Nigeria
41	Austria
42	Iraq
43	Finland
44	Philippines

45	Vietnam
46	Korea, North
47	Israel
48	Portugal
49	Colombia
50	Belarus
51	Kuwait
52	Hungary
53	Chile
54	Denmark
55	Serbia & Montenegro
56	Sweden
57	Syria
58	Libya
59	Bulgaria
60	Singapore
61	Switzerland
62	Ireland

63	Turkmenistan
64	Slovakia
65	Bangladesh
66	Morocco
67	New Zealand
68	Oman
69	Qatar
70	Azerbaijan
71	Norway
72	Peru
73	Cuba
74	Ecuador
75	Trinidad & Tobago
76	Croatia
77	Tunisia
78	Dominican Republic
79	Lebanon
80	Estonia

81	Yemen
82	Jordan
83	Slovenia
84	Bahrain
85	Angola
86	Bosnia & Herzegovina
87	Lithuania
88	Sri Lanka
89	Zimbabwe
90	Bolivia
91	Jamaica
92	Guatemala
93	Luxembourg
94	Myanmar
95	Sudan
96	Kenya
97	Macedonia
98	Mongolia

99	Ghana
100	Cyprus
101	Moldova
102	Latvia
103	El Salvador
104	Brunei
105	Honduras
106	Cameroon
107	Panama
108	Costa Rica
109	Cote d'Ivoire
110	Kyrgyzstan
111	Tajikistan
112	Ethiopia
113	Senegal
114	Uruguay
115	Gabon
116	Albania

117	Nicaragua
118	Botswana
119	Paraguay
120	Tanzania
121	Georgia
122	Armenia
123	Congo, RC
124	Mauritius
125	Nepal
126	Mauritius
127	Nepal
128	Mauritania
129	Malta
130	Papua New Guinea
131	Zambia
132	Suriname
133	Iceland
134	Togo

135	Benin
136	Uganda
137	Bahamas
138	Haiti
139	Congo, DRC
140	Guyana
141	Mozambique
142	Guinea
143	Equatorial Guinea
144	Laos
145	Barbados
146	Niger
147	Fiji
148	Burkina Faso
149	Malawi
150	Swaziland
151	Belize
152	Afghanistan

153	Sierra Leone
154	Eritrea
155	Rwanda
156	Mali
157	Seychelles
158	Cambodia
159	Liberia
160	Bhutan
161	Maldives
162	Antigua & Barbuda
163	Djibouti
164	Saint Lucia
165	Gambia
166	Guinea-Bissau
167	Central African Republic
168	Palau
169	Burundi
170	Grenada

171	Lesotho
172	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
173	Solomon Islands
174	Samoa
175	Cape Verde
176	Nauru
177	Dominica
178	Saint Kitts & Nevis
179	Chad
180	Tonga
181	Sao Tome & Principe
182	Comoros
183	Vanuatu
185	Kiribati
Not Ranked	Andorra
Not Ranked	East Timor
Not Ranked	Holy See
Not Ranked	Hong Kong

Not Ranked	Liechtenstein
Not Ranked	Marshall Islands
Not Ranked	Micronesia
Not Ranked	Monaco
Not Ranked	San Marino
Not Ranked	Somalia
Not Ranked	Tuvalu

* European Union is ranked 3rd
 Cook Islands are ranked 184th
 Niue is ranked 186th

Global Environmental Snapshot

Introduction

The countries of the world face many environmental challenges in common. Nevertheless, the nature and intensity of problem vary from region to region, as do various countries' respective capacities, in terms of affluence and infrastructure, to remediate threats to environmental quality.

Consciousness of perils affecting the global environment came to the fore in the last third or so of the 20th century has continued to intensify well into the new millennium. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, considerable environmental progress has been made at the level of institutional developments, international cooperation accords, and public participation. Approximately two-dozen international environmental protection accords with global implications have been promulgated since the late 1970s under auspices of the United Nations and other international organizations, together with many additional regional agreements. Attempts to address and rectify environmental problems take the form of legal frameworks, economic instruments,

environmentally sound technologies and cleaner production processes as well as conservation efforts. Environmental impact assessments have increasingly been applied across the globe.

Environmental degradation affects the quality, or aesthetics, of human life, but it also displays potential to undermine conditions necessary for the sustainability of human life. Attitudes toward the importance of environmental protection measures reflect ambivalence derived from this bifurcation. On one hand, steps such as cleaning up pollution, dedicating parkland, and suchlike, are seen as embellishments undertaken by wealthy societies already assured they can successfully perform those functions deemed, ostensibly, more essential—for instance, public health and education, employment and economic development. On the other hand, in poorer countries, activities causing environmental damage—for instance the land degradation effects of unregulated logging, slash-and-burn agriculture, overgrazing, and mining—can seem justified insofar as such activities provide incomes and livelihoods.

Rapid rates of resource depletion are associated with poverty and high population growth, themselves correlated, whereas consumption per capita is much higher in the most developed countries, despite these nations' recent progress in energy efficiency and conservation. It is impossible to sequester the global environmental challenge from related economic, social and political challenges.

First-tier industrialized countries have recently achieved measurable decreases in environmental pollution and the rate of resource depletion, a success not matched in middle income and developing countries. It is believed that the discrepancy is due to the fact that industrialized countries have more developed infrastructures to accommodate changes in environmental policy, to apply environmental technologies, and to invest in public education. The advanced industrialized countries incur relatively lower costs in alleviating environmental problems, in comparison to developing countries, since in the former even extensive environmental programs represent a rather minuscule percentage of total expenditures. Conversely, budget constraints, lagged provision of basic services to the population, and other factors such as debt service and militarization may preclude institution of minimal environmental protection measures in the poorest countries.

A synopsis for the current situation facing each region of the world follows:

Regional Synopsis: Africa

The African continent, the world's second-largest landmass, encompasses many of the world's least developed countries. By global standards, urbanization is comparatively low but rising at a rapid rate. More heavily industrialized areas at the northern and southern ends of the continent experience the major share of industrial pollution. In other regions the most serious environmental problems typically stem from inefficient subsistence farming methods and other forms of land

degradation, which have affected an increasingly extensive area under pressure of a widely impoverished, fast-growing population. Africa's distribution of natural resources is very uneven. It is the continent at greatest risk of desertification, especially in the Sahel region at the edge of the Sahara but also in other dry-range areas. Yet at the same time, Africa also harbors some of the earth's richest and most diverse biological zones.

Key Points:

Up to half a billion hectares of African land are moderately to severely degraded, an occurrence reflecting short-fallow shifting cultivation and overgrazing as well as a climatic pattern of recurrent droughts.

Soil degradation is severe along the expanse directly south of the Sahara, from the west to the east coasts. Parts of southern Africa, central-eastern Africa, and the neighboring island of Madagascar suffer from serious soil degradation as well.

Africa contains about 17 percent of the world's forest cover, concentrated in the tropical belt of the continent. Many of the forests, however, are severely depleted, with an estimated 70 percent showing some degree of degradation.

Population growth has resulted in continuing loss of arable land, as inefficient subsistence farming techniques affect increasingly extensive areas. Efforts to implement settled, sustainable agriculture have met with some recent success, but much further progress in this direction is needed. Especially in previously uninhabited forestlands, concern over deforestation is intensifying.

By contrast, the African savanna remains the richest grassland in the world, supporting a substantial concentration of animal and plant life. Wildlife parks are sub-Saharan Africa's greatest tourist attraction, and with proper management-giving local people a stake in conservation and controlling the pace of development-could greatly enhance African economies.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of northern, southern and eastern Africa are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in Mauritania and Madagascar is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these two countries currently under threat.

With marine catch trends increasing from 500,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 3,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Water resource vulnerability is a major concern in northeastern Africa, and a moderate concern across the rest of the continent. An exception is central Africa, which has plentiful water supplies.

Many Africans lack adequate access to resources, not just (if at all) because the resources are unevenly distributed geographically, but also through institutional failures such as faulty land tenure systems or political upheaval. The quality of Africa's natural resources, despite their spotty distribution, is in fact extraordinarily rich. The infrastructure needed to protect and benefit from this natural legacy, however, is largely lacking.

Regional Synopsis: Asia and the Pacific

Asia-earth's largest landmass-and the many large and nearly innumerable small islands lying off its Pacific shore display extraordinarily contrasting landscapes, levels of development, and degrees of environmental stress. In the classification used here, the world's smallest continent, Australia, is also included in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to 9 of the world's 14 largest urban areas, and as energy use for utilities, industry and transport increases in developing economies, urban centers are subject to worsening air quality. Intense population density in places such as Bangladesh or Hong Kong is the quintessential image many people have of Asia, yet vast desert areas such as the Gobi and the world's highest mountain range, the Himalayas, span the continent as well. Forested areas in Southeast Asia and the islands of Indonesia and the Philippines were historically prized for their tropical hardwood, but in many places this resource is now severely depleted. Low-lying small island states are extremely vulnerable to the effects of global warming, both rising sea levels and an anticipated increase in cyclones.

Key Points:

Asian timber reserves are forecast to be depleted in the next 40 years. Loss of natural forest is irreversible in some areas, but plantation programs to restore tree cover may ameliorate a portion of the resulting land degradation.

Increased usage of fossil fuels in China and other parts of southern Asia is projected to result in a marked increase in emissions, especially in regard to carbon dioxide. The increased usage of energy has led to a marked upsurge in air pollution across the region.

Acidification is an emerging problem regionally, with sulfur dioxide emissions expected to triple by 2010 if the current growth rate is sustained. China, Thailand, India, and Korea seem to be suffering from particularly high rates of acid deposition. By contrast, Asia's most highly developed economy, Japan, has effected substantial improvements in its environmental indicators.

Water pollution in the Pacific is an urgent concern since up to 70 percent of the water discharged

into the region's waters receives no treatment. Additionally, the disposal of solid wastes, in like manner, poses a major threat in a region with many areas of high population density.

The Asia-Pacific region is the largest expanse of the world's land that is adversely affected by soil degradation.

The region around Australia reportedly suffers the largest degree of ozone depletion.

The microstates of the Pacific suffer land loss due to global warming, and the consequent rise in the levels of ocean waters. A high-emissions scenario and anthropogenic climate impact at the upper end of the currently predicted range would probably force complete evacuation of the lowest-elevation islands sometime in this century.

The species-rich reefs surrounding Southeast Asia are highly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of coastal development, land-based pollution, over-fishing and exploitative fishing methods, as well as marine pollution from oil spills and other activities.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of China and south-east Asia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in India, Japan, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia and parts of Malaysia is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these countries currently under threat.

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern in areas surrounding the Indian subcontinent.

Regional Synopsis: Central Asia

The Central Asian republics, formerly in the Soviet Union, experience a range of environmental problems as the result of poorly executed agricultural, industrial, and nuclear programs during the Soviet era. Relatively low population densities are the norm, especially since upon the breakup of the U.S.S.R. many ethnic Russians migrated back to European Russia. In this largely semi-arid region, drought, water shortages, and soil salinization pose major challenges.

Key Points:

The use of agricultural pesticides, such as DDT and other chemicals, has contributed to the contamination of soil and groundwater throughout the region.

Land and soil degradation, and in particular, increased salinization, is mostly attributable to faulty irrigation practices.

Significant desertification is also a problem in the region.

Air pollution is prevalent, mostly due to use of low octane automobile fuel.

Industrial pollution of the Caspian Sea and the Aral Sea, as a result of industrial effluents as well as mining and metal production, presents a challenge to the countries bordering these bodies of water.

One of the most severe environmental problems in the region is attributable to the several billion tons of hazardous materials stored in landfills across Central Asia.

Uzbekistan's particular problem involves the contraction of the Aral Sea, which has decreased in size by a third, as a consequence of river diversions and poor irrigation practices. The effect has been the near-total biological destruction of that body of water.

Kazakhstan, as a consequence of being the heartland of the former Soviet Union's nuclear program, has incurred a high of cancerous malignancies, biogenetic abnormalities and radioactive contamination.

While part of the Soviet Union, the republics in the region experienced very high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, as a consequence of rapid industrialization using cheap but dirty energy sources, especially coal.

By contrast, however, there have recently been substantial reductions in the level of greenhouse gas emissions, especially those attributable to coal burning, with further decreases anticipated over the next decade. These changes are partially due to the use of cleaner energy technologies, such as natural gas, augmented by governmental commitment to improving environmental standards.

Regional Synopsis: Europe

Western Europe underwent dramatic transformation of its landscape, virtually eliminating large-scale natural areas, during an era of rapid industrialization, which intensified upon its recovery from World War II. In Eastern Europe and European Russia, intensive land development has been less prevalent, so that some native forests and other natural areas remain. Air and water pollution from use of dirty fuels and industrial effluents, however, are more serious environmental problems in Eastern than in Western Europe, though recent trends show improvement in many indicators. Acid rain has inflicted heavy environmental damage across much of Europe, particularly on forests.

Europe and North America are the only regions in which water usage for industry exceeds that for agriculture, although in Mediterranean nations agriculture is the largest water consumer.

Key Points:

Europe contributes 36 percent of the world's chlorofluorocarbon emissions, 30 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, and 25 percent of sulfur dioxide emissions.

Sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions are the cause of 30 to 50 percent of Central and Eastern Europe's deforestation.

Acid rain has been an environmental concern for decades and continues to be a challenge in parts of Western Europe.

Overexploitation of up to 60 percent of Europe's groundwater presents a problem in industrial and urban areas.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity on the Iberian Peninsula is even further compromised with over 40 percent of the mammal species in this region currently under threat. As a result, there has been a 10 percent increase in protected areas of Europe.

A major environmental issue for Europe involves the depletion of various already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Some estimates suggest that up to 50 percent of the continent's fish species may be considered endangered species. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species.

Fortunately, in the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Recently, most European countries have adopted cleaner production technologies, and alternative methods of waste disposal, including recycling.

The countries of Eastern Europe have made air quality a major environmental priority. This is exemplified by the Russian Federation's addition to the 1995 "Berlin Mandate" (transnational legislation based on resolutions of the Rio Earth Summit) compelling nations to promote "carbon

sinks" to absorb greenhouse gases.

On a relative basis, when compared with the degree of industrial emissions emitted by many Eastern European countries until the late 1980s, there has been some marked increase in air quality in the region, as obsolete plants are closed and a transition to cleaner fuels and more efficient energy use takes place.

Regional Synopsis: The Middle and Near East

Quite possibly, the Middle East will exemplify the adage that, as the 20th century was a century fixated on oil, the 21st century will be devoted to critical decisions about water. Many (though far from all) nations in the Middle East rank among those countries with the largest oil and gas reserves, but water resources are relatively scarce throughout this predominantly dry region. Effects of global warming may cause moderately high elevation areas that now typically receive winter "snowpack" to experience mainly rain instead, which would further constrain dry-season water availability. The antiquities and religious shrines of the region render it a great magnet for tourism, which entails considerable economic growth potential but also intensifies stresses on the environment.

Key Points:

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern across the entire region. The increased usage of, and further demand for water, has exacerbated long-standing water scarcity in the region. For instance, river diversions and industrial salt works have caused the Dead Sea to shrink by one-third from its original surface area, with further declines expected.

The oil industry in the region contributes to water pollution in the Persian Gulf, as a result of oil spills, which have averaged 1.2 million barrels of oil spilt per year (some sources suggest that this figure is understated). The consequences are severe because even after oil spills have been cleaned up, environmental damage to the food webs and ecosystems of marine life will persist for a prolonged period.

The region's coastal zone is considered one of the most fragile and endangered ecosystems of the world. Land reclamation, shoreline construction, discharge of industrial effluents, and tourism (such as diving in the Red Sea) contribute to widespread coastal damage.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of the Middle East are currently threatened.

Since the 1980s, 11 percent of the region's natural forest has been depleted.

Regional Synopsis: Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and Caribbean region is characterized by exceedingly diverse landforms that have generally seen high rates of population growth and economic development in recent decades. The percentage of inhabitants residing in urban areas is quite high at 73.4 percent; the region includes the megacities of Mexico City, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. The region also includes the world's second-highest mountain range, the Andes; significant expanses of desert and grassland; the coral reefs of the Caribbean Sea; and the world's largest contiguous tropical forest in the Amazon basin. Threats to the latter from subsistence and commercial farming, mineral exploitation and timbering are well publicized. Nevertheless, of eight countries worldwide that still retain at least 70 percent of their original forest cover, six are in Latin America. The region accounts for nearly half (48.3 percent) of the world's greenhouse gas emissions derived from land clearing, but as yet a comparatively minuscule share (4.3 percent) of such gases from industrial sources.

Key Points:

Although Latin America is one of the most biologically diverse regions of the world, this biodiversity is highly threatened, as exemplified by the projected extinction of up to 100,000 species in the next few decades. Much of this loss will be concentrated in the Amazon area, although the western coastline of South America will also suffer significant depletion of biological diversity. The inventory of rainforest species with potentially useful commercial or medical applications is incomplete, but presumed to include significant numbers of such species that may become extinct before they are discovered and identified.

Up to 50 percent of the region's grazing land has lost its soil fertility as a result of soil erosion, salinization, alkalinization and overgrazing.

The Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean have all been contaminated by agricultural wastes, which are discharged into streams that flow into these major waters. Water pollution derived from phosphorous, nitrates and pesticides adversely affects fish stocks, contributes to oxygen depletion and fosters overgrowth of aquatic vegetation. Marine life will continue to be severely compromised as a result of these conditions.

Due to industrial development in the region, many beaches of eastern Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from tar deposits.

Most cities in the region lack adequate sewage treatment facilities, and rapid migration of the rural poor into the cities is widening the gap between current infrastructure capacity and the much greater level needed to provide satisfactory basic services.

The rainforest region of the Amazon Basin suffers from dangerously high levels of deforestation, which may be a significant contributory factor to global warming or "the greenhouse effect." In the late 1990s and into the new millennium, the rate of deforestation was around 20 million acres of rainforest being destroyed annually.

Deforestation on the steep rainforest slopes of Caribbean islands contributes to soil erosion and landslides, both of which then result in heavy sedimentation of nearby river systems. When these sedimented rivers drain into the sea and coral reefs, they poison the coral tissues, which are vital to the maintenance of the reef ecosystem. The result is marine degradation and nutrient depletion. Jamaica's coral reefs have never quite recovered from the effects of marine degradation.

The Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) suffers the effects of greatly increased ultraviolet-B radiation, as a consequence of more intense ozone depletion in the southern hemisphere.

Water resource vulnerability is an increasingly major concern in the northwestern portion of South America.

Regional Synopsis: North America

North American nations, in particular the United States and Canada, rank among the world's most highly developed industrial economies—a fact which has generated significant pollution problems, but also financial resources and skills that have enabled many problems to be corrected. Although efforts to promote energy efficiency, recycling, and suchlike have helped ease strains on the environment in a part of the world where per capita consumption levels are high, sprawling land development patterns and recent preferences many households have demonstrated for larger vehicles have offset these advances.

Meanwhile, a large portion of North America's original forest cover has been lost, though in many cases replaced by productive second-growth woodland. In recent years, attitudes toward best use of the region's remaining natural or scenic areas seem to be shifting toward recreation and preservation and away from resource extraction. With increasing attention on the energy scarcity in the United States, however, there is speculation that this shift may be short-lived. Indeed, the energy shortage on the west coast of the United States and associated calls for energy exploration, indicate a possible retrenchment toward resource extraction. At the same time, however, it has also served to highlight the need for energy conservation as well as alternative energy sources.

Despite generally successful anti-pollution efforts, various parts of the region continue to suffer significant air, water and land degradation from industrial, vehicular, and agricultural emissions and

runoff. Mexico, as a middle-income country, displays environmental problems characteristic of a developing economy, including forest depletion, pollution from inefficient industrial processes and dirty fuels, and lack of sufficient waste-treatment infrastructure.

Key Points:

Because of significantly greater motor vehicle usage in the United States (U.S.) than in the rest of the world, the U.S. contribution of urban air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, especially carbon dioxide, is disproportionately high in relation to its population.

Acid rain is an enduring issue of contention in the northeastern part of the United States, on the border with Canada.

Mexico's urban areas suffer extreme air pollution from carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and other toxic air pollutants. Emissions controls on vehicles are in their infancy, compared to analogous regulations in the U.S.

The cities of Mexico, including those on the U.S. border, also discharge large quantities of untreated or poorly treated sewage, though officials are currently planning infrastructure upgrades.

Deforestation is noteworthy in various regions of the U.S., especially along the northwest coastline. Old growth forests have been largely removed, but in the northeastern and upper midwestern sections of the United States, evidence suggests that the current extent of tree cover probably surpasses the figure for the beginning of the 20th century.

Extreme weather conditions in the last few years have resulted in a high level of soil erosion along the north coast of California; in addition, the coastline itself has shifted substantially due to soil erosion and concomitant landslides.

Agricultural pollution-including nitrate contamination of well water, nutrient runoff to waterways, and pesticide exposure-is significant in various areas. Noteworthy among affected places are California's Central Valley, extensive stretches of the Midwest, and land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Inland waterways, especially around the Great Lakes, have substantially improved their water quality, due to concentrated efforts at reducing water pollution by governmental, commercial and community representatives. Strict curbs on industrial effluents and near-universal implementation of sewage treatment are the chief factors responsible for this improvement.

A major environmental issue for Canada and the United States involves the depletion of various

already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species. In the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Due to the decay of neighboring ecosystems in Central America and the Caribbean, the sea surrounding Florida has become increasingly sedimented, contributing to marine degradation, nutrient depletion of the ecosystem, depletion of fish stocks, and diseases to coral species in particular.

Polar Regions

Key Points:

The significant rise in sea level, amounting 10 to 25 centimeters in the last 100 years, is due to the melting of the Arctic ice sheets, and is attributed to global warming.

The Antarctic suffers from a significant ozone hole, first detected in 1976. By 1985, a British scientific team reported a 40 percent decrease in usual regeneration rates of the ozone. Because a sustained increase in the amount of ultraviolet-B radiation would have adverse consequences upon all planetary life, recent environmental measures have been put into effect, aimed at reversing ozone depletion. These measures are projected to garner significant results by 2050.

Due to air and ocean currents, the Arctic is a sink for toxic releases originally discharged thousands of miles away. Arctic wildlife and Canada's Inuit population have higher bodily levels of contaminants such as PCB and dioxin than those found in people and animals in much of the rest of the world.

Global Environmental Concepts

1. Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases

The Greenhouse Effect:

In the early 19th century, the French physicist, Jean Fourier, contended that the earth's atmosphere functions in much the same way as the glass of a greenhouse, thus describing what is now understood as the "greenhouse effect." Put simply, the "greenhouse effect" confines some of the sun's energy to the earth, preserving some of the planet's warmth, rather than allowing it to flow back into space. In so doing, all kinds of life forms can flourish on earth. Thus, the "greenhouse effect" is necessary to sustain and preserve life forms and ecosystems on earth.

In the late 19th century, a Swedish chemist, Svante Arrhenius, noticed that human activities, such as the burning of coal and other fossil fuels for heat, and the removal of forested lands for urban development, led to higher concentrations of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide and methane, in the atmosphere. This increase in the levels of greenhouse gases was believed to advance the "greenhouse effect" exponentially, and might be related to the trend in global warming.

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, after industrial development took place on a large scale and the total human population burgeoned simultaneously with industrialization, the resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions could, many scientists believe, be significant enough to have some bearing on climate. Indeed, many studies in recent years support the idea that there is a linkage between human activities and global warming, although there is less consensus on the extent to which this linkage may be relevant to environmental concerns.

That said, some scientists have argued that temperature fluctuations have existed throughout the evolution of the planet. Indeed, Dr. S. Fred Singer, the president of the Science and Environment Policy Project has noted that 3,000-year-old geological records of ocean sediment reveal changes in the surface temperature of the ocean. Hence, it is possible that climate variability is merely a normal fact of the planet's evolution. Yet even skeptics as to anthropogenic factors concur that any substantial changes in global temperatures would likely have an effect upon the earth's ecosystems, as well as the life forms that inhabit them.

The Relationship Between Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases:

A large number of climatologists believe that the increase in atmospheric concentrations of "greenhouse gas emissions," mostly a consequence of human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, are contributing to global warming. The cause notwithstanding, the planet has reportedly warmed 0.3°C to 0.6°C over the last century. Indeed, each year during the 1990s was one of the very warmest in the 20th century, with the mean surface temperature for 1999 being the fifth warmest on record since 1880.

In early 2000, a panel of atmospheric scientists for the National Research Council concluded in a report that global warming was, indeed, a reality. While the panel, headed by Chairman John Wallace, a professor of atmospheric sciences at the University of Washington, stated that it

remained unclear whether human activities have contributed to the earth's increasing temperatures, it was apparent that global warming exists.

In 2001, following a request for further study by the incoming Bush administration in the [United States](#), the National Academy of Sciences again confirmed that global warming had been in existence for the last 20 years. The study also projected an increase in temperature between 2.5 degrees and 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. Furthermore, the study found the leading cause of global warming to be emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, and it noted that greenhouse gas accumulations in the earth's atmosphere was a result of human activities.

Within the scientific community, the controversy regarding has centered on the difference between surface air and upper air temperatures. Information collected since 1979 suggests that while the earth's surface temperature has increased by about a degree in the past century, the atmospheric temperature five miles above the earth's surface has indicated very little increase. Nevertheless, the panel stated that this discrepancy in temperature between surface and upper air does not invalidate the conclusion that global warming is taking place. Further, the panel noted that natural events, such as volcanic eruptions, can decrease the temperature in the upper atmosphere.

The major consequences of global warming potentially include the melting of the polar ice caps, which, in turn, contribute to the rise in sea levels. Many islands across the globe have already experienced a measurable loss of land as a result. Because global warming may increase the rate of evaporation, increased precipitation, in the form of stronger and more frequent storm systems, is another potential outcome. Other consequences of global warming may include the introduction and proliferation of new infectious diseases, loss of arable land (referred to as "desertification"), destructive changes to existing ecosystems, loss of biodiversity and the isolation of species, and concomitant adverse changes in the quality of human life.

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to

changes in climate.

2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

*** See section on "International Environmental Agreements and Associations" for information related to international policies related to limiting greenhouse gases and controlling climate change emanating from historic summits at Kyoto, Copenhagen, Doha, and Paris. ***

2. Air Pollution

Long before global warming reared its head as a significant issue, those concerned about the environment and public health noted the deleterious effects of human-initiated combustion upon the atmosphere. Killer smogs from coal burning triggered acute health emergencies in London and other places. At a lower level of intensity motor vehicle, power plant, and industrial emissions impaired long-range visibility and probably had some chronic adverse consequences on the respiratory systems of persons breathing such air.

In time, scientists began associating the sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides released from coal burning with significant acid deposition in the atmosphere, eventually falling as "acid rain." This phenomenon has severely degraded forestlands, especially in Europe and a few parts of the [United States](#). It has also impaired some aquatic ecosystems and eaten away the surface of some human artifacts, such as marble monuments. Scrubber technology and conversion to cleaner fuels have enabled the level of industrial production to remain at least constant while significantly reducing acid deposition. Technologies aimed at cleaning the air and curtailing acid rain, soot, and smog may, nonetheless, boomerang as the perils of global warming become increasingly serious. In brief, these particulates act as sort of a sun shade -- comparable to the effect of volcanic eruptions on the upper atmosphere whereby periods of active volcanism correlate with temporarily cooler weather conditions. Thus, while the carbon dioxide releases that are an inevitable byproduct of combustion continue, by scrubbing the atmosphere of pollutants, an industrial society opens itself to greater insolation (penetration of the sun's rays and consequent heating), and consequently, it is likely to experience a correspondingly greater rise in ambient temperatures.

The health benefits of removing the sources of acid rain and smog are indisputable, and no one would recommend a return to previous conditions. Nevertheless, the problematic climatic effects of continually increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases pose a major global environmental challenge, not as yet addressed adequately.

3. Ozone Depletion

The stratospheric ozone layer functions to prevent ultraviolet radiation from reaching the earth. Normally, stratospheric ozone is systematically disintegrated and regenerated through natural photochemical processes. The stratospheric ozone layer, however, has been depleted unnaturally as a result of anthropogenic (man-made) chemicals, most especially chlorine and bromide compounds such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons, and various industrial chemicals in the form of solvents, refrigerants, foaming agents, aerosol propellants, fire retardants, and fumigants. Ozone depletion is of concern because it permits a greater degree of ultraviolet-B radiation to reach the earth, which then increases the incidences of cancerous malignancies, cataracts, and human immune deficiencies. In addition, even in small doses, ozone depletion affects the ecosystem by disturbing food chains, agriculture, fisheries and other forms of biological diversity.

Transnational policies enacted to respond to the dangers of ozone depletion include the 1985 Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Montreal Protocol was subsequently amended in London in 1990, Copenhagen in 1992 and Vienna in 1995. By 1996, 155 countries had ratified the Montreal Protocol, which sets out a time schedule for the reduction (and eventual elimination) of ozone depleting substances (OPS), and bans exports and imports of ODS from and to non-participant countries.

In general, the Protocol stipulates that developed countries must eliminate halon consumption by 1994 and CFC consumption by 1996, while developing countries must eliminate these substances by 2010. Consumption of methyl bromide, which is used as a fumigant, was to be frozen at the 1995 in developed countries, and fully eliminated in 2010, while developing countries are to freeze consumption by 2002, based on average 1995-1998 consumption levels. Methyl chloroform is to be phased out by 2005. Under the Montreal Protocol, most ODS will be completely eliminated from use by 2010.

4. Land Degradation

In recent decades, land degradation in more arid regions of the world has become a serious concern. The problem, manifest as both "desertification" and "devegetation," is caused primarily by climate variability and human activities, such as "deforestation," excessive cultivation, overgrazing, and other forms of land resource exploitation. It is also exacerbated by inadequate irrigation practices. Although the effects of droughts on drylands have been temporary in the past, today, the productivity and sustainability of these lands have been severely compromised for the long term. Indeed, in every region of the world, land degradation has become an acute issue.

Desertification and Devegetation:

"Desertification" is a process of land degradation causing the soil to deteriorate, thus losing its nutrients and fertility, and eventually resulting in the loss of vegetation, known as "devegetation." As aforementioned, "desertification" and "devegetation" are caused by human activities, yet human beings are also the greatest casualties. Because these forms of land degradation affect the ability of the soil to produce crops, they concomitantly contribute to poverty. As population increases and demographic concentrations shift, the extent of land subject to stresses by those seeking to wrest subsistence from it has inexorably risen.

In response, the United Nations has formed the Convention to Combat Desertification-aimed at implementing programs to address the underlying causes of desertification, as well as measures to prevent and minimize its effects. Of particular significance is the formulation of policies on transboundary resources, such as areas around lakes and rivers. At a broader level, the Convention has established a Conference of Parties (COP), which includes all ratifying governments, for directing and advancing international action.

To ensure more efficacious use of funding, the Convention intends to reconfigure international aid to utilize a consultative and coordinated approach in the disbursement and expenditure of donor funds. In this way, local communities that are affected by desertification will be active participants in the solution-generation process. In-depth community education projects are envisioned as part of this new international aid program, and private donor financing is encouraged. Meanwhile, as new technologies are developed to deal with the problem of desertification, they need to be distributed for application across the world. Hence, the Convention calls for international cooperation in scientific research in this regard.

Desertification is a problem of sustainable development. It is directly connected to human challenges such as poverty, social and economic well-being and environmental protection as well. Broader environmental issues, such as climate change, biological diversity, and freshwater supplies, are indirectly related, so any effort to resolve this environmental challenge must entail coordinated research efforts and joint action.

Deforestation:

Deforestation is not a recent phenomenon. For centuries, human beings have cut down trees to clear space for land cultivation, or in order to use the wood for fuel. Over the last 200 years, and most especially after World War II, deforestation increased because the logging industry became a globally profitable endeavor, and so the clearing of forested areas was accelerated for the purposes of industrial development. In the long term, this intensified level of deforestation is considered problematic because the forest is unable to regenerate itself quickly. The deforestation that has

occurred in tropical rainforests is seen as an especially serious concern, due to the perceived adverse effects of this process upon the entire global ecosystem.

The most immediate consequence of deforestation is soil degradation. Soil, which is necessary for the growth of vegetation, can be a fragile and vital property. Organically, an extensive evolution process must take place before soil can produce vegetation, yet at the same time, the effects of natural elements, such as wind and rain, can easily and quickly degrade this resource. This phenomenon is known as soil erosion. In addition, natural elements like wind and rain reduce the amount of fertile soil on the ground, making soil scarcity a genuine problem. When fertile topsoil that already exists is removed from the landscape in the process of deforestation, soil scarcity is further exacerbated. Equally significant is the fact that once land has been cleared so that the topsoil can be cultivated for crop production, not only are the nutrient reserves in the soil depleted, thus producing crops of inferior quality, but the soil structure itself becomes stressed and deteriorates further.

Another direct result of deforestation is flooding. When forests are cleared, removing the cover of vegetation, and rainfall occurs, the flow of water increases across the surface of land. When extensive water runoff takes place, the frequency and intensity of flooding increases. Other adverse effects of deforestation include the loss of wildlife and biodiversity within the ecosystem that supports such life forms.

At a broader level, tropical rainforests play a vital role in maintaining the global environmental system. Specifically, destruction of tropical rainforests affects the carbon dioxide cycle. When forests are destroyed by burning (or rotting), carbon dioxide is released into the air, thus contributing to an intensified "greenhouse effect." The increase in greenhouse gas emissions like carbon dioxide is a major contributor to global warming, according to many environmental scientists. Indeed, trees themselves absorb carbon dioxide in the process of photosynthesis, so their loss also reduces the absorption of greenhouse gases.

Tropical rainforest destruction also adversely affects the nitrogen cycle. Nitrogen is a key nutrient for both plants and animals. Plants derive nitrogen from soil, while animals obtain it via nitrogen-enriched vegetation. This element is essential for the formation of amino acids, and thereby for proteins and biochemicals that all living things need for metabolism and growth. In the nitrogen cycle, vegetation acquires these essential proteins and biochemicals, and then cyclically returns them to the atmosphere and global ecosystem. Accordingly, when tropical rainforest ecosystems are compromised, not only is vegetation removed; the atmosphere is also affected and climates are altered. At a more immediate level, the biodiversity within tropical rainforests, including wildlife and insect species and a wealth of plant varieties, is depleted. Loss of rare plants is of particular concern because certain species as yet unknown and unused could likely yield many practical benefits, for instance as medicines.

As a result of the many challenges associated with deforestation, many environmental groups and agencies have argued for government policies on the sustainable development of forests by governments across the globe. While many countries have instituted national policies and programs aimed at reducing deforestation, and substantial research has been advanced in regard to sustainable and regenerative forestry development, there has been very little progress on an international level. Generally speaking, most tropical rainforests are located in developing and less developed countries, where economic growth is often dependent upon the exploitation of tropical rainforests. Timber resources as well as wildlife hunting tend to be particularly lucrative arenas.

In places such as the Amazon, where deforestation takes place for the construction of energy plants aimed at industrialization and economic development, there is an exacerbated effect on the environment. After forests are cleared in order to construct such projects, massive flooding usually ensues. The remaining trees then rot and decay in the wake of the flooding. As the trees deteriorate, their biochemical makeup becomes more acidic, producing poisonous substances such as hydrogen sulphide and methane gases. Acidified water subsequently corrodes the mechanical equipment and operations of the plants, which are already clogged by rotting wood after the floodwaters rise.

Deforestation generally arises from an economically plausible short-term motivation, but nonetheless poses a serious global concern because the effects go beyond national boundaries. The United Nations has established the World Commission on Forest and Sustainable Development. This body's task is to determine the optimal means of dealing with the issue of deforestation, without unduly affecting normal economic development, while emphasizing the global significance of protecting tropical forest ecosystems.

5. Water Resources

For all terrestrial fauna, including humans, water is the most immediate necessity to sustain life. As the population has increased and altered an ever-greater portion of the landscape from its natural condition, demand on water resources has intensified, especially with the development of industrialization and large-scale irrigation. The supply of freshwater is inherently limited, and moreover distributed unevenly across the earth's landmasses. Moreover, not just demand for freshwater but activities certain to degrade it are becoming more pervasive. By contrast, the oceans form a sort of "last wilderness," still little explored and in large part not seriously affected by human activity. However, coastal environments - the biologically richest part of the marine ecosystem-are experiencing major depletion due to human encroachment and over-exploitation.

Freshwater:

In various regions, for instance the Colorado River in the western [United States](#), current withdrawals of river water for irrigation, domestic, and industrial use consume the entire streamflow so that almost no water flows into the sea at the river's mouth. Yet development is ongoing in many such places, implying continually rising demand for water. In some areas reliant on groundwater, aquifers are being depleted at a markedly faster rate than they are being replenished. An example is the San Joaquin Valley in California, where decades of high water withdrawals for agriculture have caused land subsidence of ten meters or more in some spots. Naturally, the uncertainty of future water supplies is particularly acute in arid and semi-arid regions. Speculation that the phenomenon of global warming will alter geographic and seasonal rainfall patterns adds further uncertainty.

Water conservation measures have great potential to alleviate supply shortages. Some city water systems are so old and beset with leaking pipes that they lose as much water as they meter. Broad-scale irrigation could be replaced by drip-type irrigation, actually enhancing the sustainability of agriculture. In many areas where heavy irrigation has been used for decades, the result is deposition of salts and other chemicals in the soil such that the land becomes unproductive for farming and must be abandoned.

Farming is a major source of water pollution. Whereas restrictions on industrial effluents and other "point sources" are relatively easy to implement, comparable measures to reform hydraulic practices at farms and other "nonpoint sources" pose a significantly knottier challenge. Farm-caused water pollution takes the following main forms:

- Nitrate pollution found in wells in intensive farming areas as a consequence of heavy fertilizer use is a threat to human health. The most serious danger is to infants, who by ingesting high-nitrate water can contract methemoglobinemia, sometimes called "blue baby syndrome," a potentially fatal condition.
- Fertilizer runoff into rivers and lakes imparts unwanted nutrients that cause algae growth and eventual loss of oxygen in the body of water, degrading its ability to support fish and other desirable aquatic life.
- Toxic agricultural chemicals - insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides - are detectable in some aquifers and waterways.

In general, it is much easier to get a pollutant into water than to retrieve it out. Gasoline additives, dry cleaning chemicals, other industrial toxins, and in a few areas radionuclides have all been found in water sources intended for human use. The complexity and long time scale of subterranean hydrological movements essentially assures that pollutants already deposited in aquifers will continue to turn up for decades to come. Sophisticated water treatment processes are available, albeit expensive, to reclaim degraded water and render it fit for human consumption. Yet

source protection is unquestionably a more desirable alternative.

In much of the developing world, and even some low-income rural enclaves of the developed world, the population lacks ready access to safe water. Surface water and shallow groundwater supplies are susceptible to contamination from untreated wastewater and failing septic tanks, as well as chemical hazards. The occurrence of waterborne disease is almost certainly greatly underreported.

Marine Resources:

Coastal areas have always been desirable places for human habitation, and population pressure on them continues to increase. Many types of water degradation that affect lakes and rivers also affect coastal zones: industrial effluents, untreated or partially treated sewage, nutrient load from agriculture figure prominently in both cases. Prospects for more extreme storms as a result of global warming, as well as the pervasiveness of poorly planned development in many coastal areas, forebode that catastrophic hurricanes and landslides may increase in frequency in the future. Ongoing rise in sea levels will force remedial measures and in some cases abandonment of currently valuable coastal property.

Fisheries over much of the globe have been overharvested, and immediate conservation measures are required to preserve stocks of many species. Many governments subsidized factory-scale fishing fleets in the 1970s and 1980s, and the resultant catch increase evidently surpassed a sustainable level. It is uncertain how much of the current decline in fish stocks stems from overharvesting and how much from environmental pollution. The deep ocean remains relatively unaffected by human activity, but continental shelves near coastlines are frequently seriously polluted, and these close-to-shore areas are the major biological nurseries for food fish and the smaller organisms they feed on.

6. Environmental Toxins

Toxic chemical pollution exploded on the public consciousness with disclosure of spectacularly polluted industrial areas such as Love Canal near Buffalo, New York. There is no question that pollutants such as organophosphates or radionucleides can be highly deleterious to health, but evidence to date suggests that seriously affected areas are a localized rather than universal problem.

While some explore the possibilities for a lifestyle that fully eschews use of modern industrial chemicals, the most prevalent remediative approach is to focus on more judicious use. The most efficient chemical plants are now able to contain nearly all toxic byproducts of their production processes within the premises, minimizing the release of such substances into the environment.

Techniques such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) dictate limited rather than broadcast use of pesticides: application only when needed using the safest available chemical, supplemented as much as possible with nontoxic controls.

While heightened public awareness and growing technical sophistication suggest a hopeful outlook on limiting the damage from manmade environmental toxins, one must grant that previous incidents of their misuse and mishandling have already caused environmental damage that will have to be dealt with for many years to come. In the case of the most hazardous radioactive substances, the time scale for successful remediation actually extends beyond that of the recorded history of civilization. Moreover, in this era of high population density and rapid economic growth, quotidian activities such as the transport of chemicals will occasionally, seemingly inevitably result in accidents with adverse environmental consequences.

7. "Islandization" and Biodiversity

With increased awareness regarding the adverse effects of unregulated hunting and habitat depletion upon wildlife species and other aspects of biodiversity, large-scale efforts across the globe have been initiated to reduce and even reverse this trend.

In every region of the world, many species of wildlife and areas of biodiversity have been saved from extinction. Nationally, many countries have adopted policies aimed at preservation and conservation of species, and one of the most tangible measures has been the proliferation of protected habitats. Such habitats exist in the form of wildlife reserves, marine life reserves, and other such areas where biodiversity can be protected from external encroachment and exploitation.

Despite these advances in wildlife and biodiversity protection, further and perhaps more intractable challenges linger. Designated reserves, while intended to prevent further species decline, exist as closed territories, fragmented from other such enclaves and disconnected from the larger ecosystem. This environmental scenario is referred to as "islandization." Habitat reserves often serve as oversized zoos or game farms, with landscapes and wildlife that have effectively been "tamed" to suit. Meanwhile, the larger surrounding ecosystem continues to be seriously degraded and transformed, while within the islandized habitat, species that are the focus of conservation efforts may not have sufficient range and may not be able to maintain healthy genetic variability.

As a consequence, many conservationists and preservationists have demanded that substantially larger portions of land be withheld as habitat reserves, and a network of biological corridors to connect continental reserves be established. While such efforts to combat islandization have considerable support in the [United States](#), how precisely such a program would be instituted, especially across national boundaries, remains a matter of debate. International conservationists and preservationists say without a network of reserves a massive loss of biodiversity will result.

The concept of islandization illustrates why conservation and preservation of wildlife and biodiversity must consider and adopt new, broader strategies. In the past, conservation and preservation efforts have been aimed at specific species, such as the spotted owl and grizzly bear in North America, the Bengal tiger in Southeast Asia, the panda in [China](#), elephants in Africa. Instead, the new approach is to simultaneously protect many and varied species that inhabit the same ecosystem. This method, referred to as "bio-regional conservation," may more efficaciously generate longer-term and more far-reaching results precisely because it is aimed at preserving entire ecosystems, and all the living things within.

More About Biodiversity Issues:

This section is directly taken from the United Nations Environmental Program: "[Biodiversity Assessment](#)"

The Global Biodiversity Assessment, completed by 1500 scientists under the auspices of United Nations Environmental Program in 1995, updated what is known (or unknown) about global biological diversity at the ecosystem, species and genetic levels. The assessment was uncertain of the total number of species on Earth within an order of magnitude. Of its working figure of 13 million species, only 13 percent are scientifically described. Ecological community diversity is also poorly known, as is its relationship to biological diversity, and genetic diversity has been studied for only a small number of species. The effects of human activities on biodiversity have increased so greatly that the rate of species extinctions is rising to hundreds or thousands of times the background level. These losses are driven by increasing demands on species and their habitats, and by the failure of current market systems to value biodiversity adequately. The Assessment calls for urgent action to reverse these trends.

There has been a new recognition of the importance of protecting marine and aquatic biodiversity. The first quantitative estimates of species losses due to growing coral reef destruction predict that almost 200,000 species, or one in five presently contributing to coral reef biodiversity, could die out in the next 40 years if human pressures on reefs continue to increase.

Since Rio, many countries have improved their understanding of the status and importance of their biodiversity, particularly through biodiversity country studies such as those prepared under the auspices of UNEP/GEF. The [United Kingdom](#) identified 1250 species needing monitoring, of which 400 require action plans to ensure their survival. Protective measures for biodiversity, such as legislation to protect species, can prove effective. In the USA, almost 40 percent of the plants and animals protected under the Endangered Species Act are now stable or improving as a direct result of recovery efforts. Some African countries have joined efforts to protect threatened species through the 1994 Lusaka Agreement, and more highly migratory species are being protected by

specialized cooperative agreements among range states under the Bonn Agreement.

There is an emerging realization that a major part of conservation of biological diversity must take place outside of protected areas and involve local communities. The extensive agricultural areas occupied by small farmers contain much biodiversity that is important for sustainable food production. Indigenous agricultural practices have been and continue to be important elements in the maintenance of biodiversity, but these are being displaced and lost. There is a new focus on the interrelationship between agrodiversity conservation and sustainable use and development practices in smallholder agriculture, with emphasis on use of farmers' knowledge and skills as a source of information for sustainable farming.

Perhaps even more important than the loss of biodiversity is the transformation of global biogeochemical cycles, the reduction in the total world biomass, and the decrease in the biological productivity of the planet. While quantitative measurements are not available, the eventual economic and social consequences may be so significant that the issue requires further attention.

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Uitto, Juha I., and Akiko Ono (eds). 1996. Population, Land Management and Environmental Change. The United Nations University, Tokyo.

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Online resources used generally in the Environmental Overview:

Environmental Protection Agency Global Warming Site. URL: <http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming>

Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations: Forestry. URL: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/sofo/en/>

Global Warming Information Page. URL: <http://globalwarming.org>

U n i t e d N a t i o n s E n v i r o n m e n t a l P r o g r a m . U R L : http://www.unep.org/GEO/GEO_Products/Assessment_Reports/

United Nations Global Environmental Outlook. URL: <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>

Note on Edition Dates:

The edition dates for textual resources are noted above because they were used to formulate the original content. We also have used online resources (cited above) to update coverage as needed.

Information Resources

For more information about environmental concepts, CountryWatch recommends the following resources:

The United Nations Environmental Program Network (with country profiles)

[<http://www.unep.net/>](http://www.unep.net/)

The United Nations Environment Program on Climate Change

[<http://climatechange.unep.net/>](http://climatechange.unep.net/)

The United Nations Environmental Program on Waters and Oceans

[<http://www.unep.ch/earthw/Pdepwat.htm>](http://www.unep.ch/earthw/Pdepwat.htm)

The United Nations Environmental Program on Forestry: "Forests in Flux"

[<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/flux/homepage.htm>](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/flux/homepage.htm)

FAO "State of the World's Forests"

[<http://www.fao.org/forestry/FO/SOFO/SOFO99/sofo99-e.stm>](http://www.fao.org/forestry/FO/SOFO/SOFO99/sofo99-e.stm)

World Resources Institute.

[<http://www.wri.org/>](http://www.wri.org/)

Harvard University Center for Health and the Global Environment

[<http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html>](http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html)

The University of Wisconsin Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment

<http://sage.aos.wisc.edu/>

International Environmental Agreements and Associations

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Introduction

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to changes in climate.
2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

Following are two discussions regarding international policies on the environment, followed by listings of international accords.

Special Entry: The Kyoto Protocol

The UNFCCC was adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, and entered into force in 1994. Over 175 parties were official participants.

Meanwhile, however, many of the larger, more industrialized nations failed to reach the emissions' reduction targets, and many UNFCCC members agreed that the voluntary approach to reducing emissions had not been successful. As such, UNFCCC members reached a consensus that legally binding limits were necessitated, and agreed to discuss such a legal paradigm at a meeting in Kyoto, [Japan](#) in 1997. At that meeting, the UNFCCC forged the Kyoto Protocol. This concord is the first legally binding international agreement that places limits on emissions from industrialized countries. The major greenhouse gas emissions addressed in the Kyoto Protocol include carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and methane.

The provisions of the Kyoto Protocol stipulate that economically advanced nations must reduce their combined emissions of greenhouse gases, by approximately five percent from their 1990

levels, before the 2008-2010 deadline. Countries with the highest carbon dioxide emissions, such as the [United States](#) (U.S.), many of the European Union (EU) countries, and [Japan](#), are to reduce emissions by a scale of 6 to 8 percent. All economically advanced nations must show "demonstrable progress" by 2005. In contrast, no binding limits or timetable have been set on developing countries. Presumably, this distinction is due to the fact that most developing countries - - with the obvious exceptions of [India](#) and [China](#) -- simply do not emit as many greenhouse gases as do more industrially advanced countries. Meanwhile, these countries are entrenched in the process of economic development.

Regardless of the aforementioned reasoning, there has been strong opposition against the asymmetrical treatment assigned to emissions limits among developed and developing countries. Although this distinction might be regarded as unfair in principle, associations such as the Alliance of Small Island States have been vocal in expressing how global warming -- a result of greenhouse gas emissions - has contributed to the rise in sea level, and thus deleteriously affected their very existence as island nation states. For this reason, some parties have suggested that economically advanced nations, upon returning to their 1990 levels, should be required to further reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by a deadline of 2005. In response, interested parties have observed that even if such reductions were undertaken by economically advanced nations, they would not be enough to completely control global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming.

As such, the Protocol established a "Clean Development Mechanism" which permits developed countries to invest in projects aimed at reducing emissions within developing countries in return for credit for the reductions. Ostensibly, the objective of this mechanism is to curtail emissions in developing countries without unduly penalizing them for their economic development. Under this model, the countries with more potential emissions credits could sell them to other signatories of the Kyoto Protocol, whose emissions are forecast to significantly rise in the next few years. Should this trading of emissions credits take place, it is estimated that the Kyoto Protocol's emissions targets could still be met.

In 1999, the International Energy Outlook projected that Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Newly Independent States, as well as parts of Asia, are all expected to show a marked decrease in their level of energy-related carbon emissions in 2010. Nations with the highest emissions, specifically, the U.S., the EU and [Japan](#), are anticipated to reduce their emissions by up to 8 percent by 2012. By 2000, however, the emissions targets were not on schedule for achievement. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates forecast that by 2010, there will be a 34 percent increase in carbon emissions from the 1990 levels, in the absence of major shifts in policy, economic growth, energy prices, and consumer trends. Despite this assessment in the U.S., international support for the Kyoto Protocol remained strong, especially among European countries

and island states, who view the pact as one step in the direction away from reliance on fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gases.

In 2001, U.S. President, George W. Bush, rejected his country's participation in the Kyoto Protocol, saying that the costs imposed on the global economic system, and especially, on the US, overshadowed the benefits of the Protocol. He also cited the unfair burden on developed nations to reduce emissions, as another primary reasons for withdrawal from the international pact, as well as insufficient evidence regarding the science of global warming. Faced with impassioned international disapproval for his position, the U.S. president stated that his administration remained interested in dealing with the matter of global warming, but would endorse alternative measures to combat the problem, such as voluntary initiatives limiting emissions. Critics of Bush's position, however, have noted that it was the failure of voluntary initiatives to reduce emissions following the Rio Summit that led to the establishment of the Kyoto Protocol in the first place.

In the wake of the Bush administration's decision, many participant countries resigned themselves to the reality that the goals of the Kyoto Protocol might not be achieved without U.S. involvement. Nevertheless, in Bonn, [Germany](#), in July 2001, the remaining participant countries struck a political compromise on some of the key issues and sticking points, and planned to move forward with the Protocol, irrespective of the absence of the U.S. The key compromise points included the provision for countries to offset their targets with carbon sinks (these are areas of forest and farmland which can absorb carbon through the process of photosynthesis). Another compromise point within the broader Bonn Agreement was the reduction of emissions cuts of six gases from over 5 percent to a more achievable 2 percent. A third key change was the provision of funding for less wealthy countries to adopt more progressive technologies.

In late October and early November 2001, the UNFCCC's 7th Conference of the Parties met in Marrakesh, [Morocco](#), to finalize the measures needed to make the Kyoto Protocol operational. Although the UNFCCC projected that ratification of the Protocol would make it legally binding within a year, many critics noted that the process had fallen short of implementing significant changes in policy that would be necessary to actually stop or even slow climate change. They also maintained that the absence of U.S. participation effectively rendered the Protocol into being a political exercise without any substance, either in terms of transnational policy or in terms of environmental concerns.

The adoption of the compromises ensconced within the Bonn Agreement had been intended to make the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol more palatable to the U.S. In this regard, it failed to achieve its objective as the Bush administration continued to eschew participation in the international accord. Still, however, the Bonn Agreement did manage to render a number of other positive outcomes. Specifically, in 2002, key countries, such as [Russia](#), [Japan](#) and [Canada](#) agreed to ratify the protocol, bringing the number of signatories to 178. The decision by key countries to

ratify the protocol was regarded as "the kiss of life" by observers.

By 2005, on the eve of a climate change conference in London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair was hoping to deal with the problems of climate change beyond the provisions set forth in the Kyoto Protocol. Acknowledging that the Kyoto Protocol could not work in its current form, Blair wanted to open the discussion for a new climate change plan.

Blair said that although most of the world had signed on to Kyoto, the protocol could not meet any of its practical goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions without the participation of the United States, the world's largest polluter. He also noted that any new agreement would have to include India and China -- significant producers of greenhouse gas emissions, but exempt from Kyoto because they have been classified as developing countries. Still, he said that progress on dealing with climate change had been stymied by "a reluctance to face up to reality and the practical action needed to tackle problem."

Blair also touted the "huge opportunities" in technology and pointed toward the possibilities offered by wind, solar and nuclear power, along with fuel cell technology, eco-friendly biofuels, and carbon capture and storage which could generate low carbon power. Blair also asserted that his government was committed to achieving its domestic goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2010.

In the United States, President George W. Bush has said that global warming remained a debatable issue and despite conclusions reached by his own Environmental Protection Agency, he has not agreed with the conclusion that global warming and climate change are linked with human activities. Bush has also refused to ratify Kyoto on the basis of its economic costs.

Australia, an ally of the United States, has taken a similarly dim view of the Kyoto Protocol. Ahead of the November 2005 climate change meeting in Canada in which new goals for the protocol were to be discussed, Australia's Environment Minister, Ian Campbell, said that negotiating new greenhouse gas emission levels for the Kyoto Protocol would be a waste of time. Campbell said, "There is a consensus that the caps, targets and timetables approach is flawed. If we spend the next five years arguing about that, we'll be fiddling and negotiating while Rome burns." Campbell, like the Bush administration, has also advocated a system of voluntary action in which industry takes up new technologies rather than as a result of compelling the reduction of emissions. But the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) has called on its government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, to establish a system of emissions trading, and to set binding limits on emissions. Interestingly, although it did not sign on to Kyoto, Australia was expected to meet its emissions target by 2012 (an 8 percent increase in 1990 levels in keeping with the country's reliance on coal). But this success has nothing to do with new technologies and is due to state-based regulations on land clearing.

Note: The Kyoto Protocol calls for developed nations to cut greenhouse emissions by 5.2 percent

of 1990 levels by 2012.

Special Entry: Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen (2009) --

In December 2009, the United Nations Climate Change Summit opened in the Danish capital of Copenhagen. The summit was scheduled to last from Dec. 7-18, 2009. Delegates from more than 190 countries were in attendance, and approximately 100 world leaders, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and [United States](#) President Barack Obama, were expected to participate. At issue was the matter of new reductions targets on greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

Despite earlier fears that little concurrence would come from the conference, effectively pushing significant actions forward to a 2010 conference in [Mexico](#) City, negotiators were now reporting that the talks were productive and several key countries, such as [South Africa](#), had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main issues that could still lead to cleavages were questions of agreement between the industrialized countries and the developing countries of the world, as well as the overall effectiveness of proposals in seriously addressing the perils of climate change.

On Dec. 9, 2009, four countries -- the [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) -- presented a document outlining ideas for raising and managing billions of dollars, which would be intended to help vulnerable countries dealing with the perils of climate change. Described as a "green fund," the concept could potentially help small island states at risk because of the rise in sea level. [Bangladesh](#) identified itself as a potential recipient of an assistance fund, noting that as a country plagued by devastating floods, it was particularly hard-hit by climate change. The "green fund" would fall under the rubric of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for which developed countries have been committed to quantifying their emission reduction targets, and also to providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

The [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) also called for the creation of a new legal treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol. This new treaty, which could go into force in 2012, would focus largely on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. But [Australia](#) went even further in saying that the successor treaty to the Kyoto Protocol, should be one with provisions covering all countries. Such a move would be a departure from the structure of the Kyoto Protocol, which contained emissions targets for industrialized countries due to the prevailing view that developed countries had a particular historic responsibility to be accountable for climate change. More recently, it has become apparent that substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions demanded by scientists would only come to pass with the participation also of significant developing nation states, such as [China](#) and [India](#). Indeed, one of the most pressing critiques of the Kyoto Protocol was that it was a "paper tiger" that failed to address the impact of the actions of emerging economies like [China](#) and [India](#), with its focus on the developed economies.

Now, in 2009, [China](#) -- as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter -- was responding this dubious distinction by vocalizing its criticism of the current scenario and foregrounding its new commitments. Ahead of the Copenhagen summit, [China](#) had announced it would reduce the intensity of its carbon emissions per unit of its GDP in 2020 by 40 to 45 percent against 2005 levels. With that new commitment at hand, [China](#) was now accusing the [United States](#) and the European Union of shirking their own responsibilities by setting weak targets for greenhouse gas emissions cuts. Senior Chinese negotiator, Su Wei, characterized the goals of the world's second largest greenhouse gas emitter -- the [United States](#) -- as "not notable," and the European Union's target as "not enough." Su Wei also took issue with [Japan](#) for setting implausible preconditions.

On Dec. 11, 2009, [China](#) demanded that developed and wealthy countries in Copenhagen should help deliver a real agreement on climate change by delivering on their promises to reduce carbon emissions and provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to global warming. In so doing, China's Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei said his country was hoping that a "balanced outcome" would emerge from the discussions at the summit. Echoing the position of the Australian government, He Yafei spoke of a draft agreement as follows: "The final document we're going to adopt needs to be taking into account the needs and aspirations of all countries, particularly the most vulnerable ones."

China's Vice Foreign Minister emphasized the fact that climate change was "a matter of survival" for developing countries, and accordingly, such countries need wealthier and more developed countries to accentuate not only their pledges of emissions reduction targets, but also their financial commitments under the aforementioned United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. To that end, scientists and leaders of small island states in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, have highlighted the existential threat posed by global warming and the concomitant rise in sea level.

China aside, attention was also on [India](#) -- another major player in the developing world and a country with an industrializing economy that was impacting the environment. At issue was the Indian government's decision to set a carbon intensity target, which would slow emissions growth by up to 25 percent by the 2020 deadline. This strong position was resisted by some elements in [India](#), who argued that their country should not be taking such a strong position when developed wealthy countries were yet to show accountability for their previous commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The matter grew so heated that the members of the opposition stormed out of the parliament in protest as Indian Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh defended the policy. But the political pressure at home in [India](#) was leaving the Indian delegation in Copenhagen in a state of chaos as well. In fact, India's top environmental negotiator refused to travel to Copenhagen in protest of the government's newly-announced stance.

China and [India](#) were joined by [Brazil](#) and [South Africa](#) in the crafting of a draft document calling for a new global climate treaty to be completed by June 2010. Of concern has been the realization

that there was insufficient time to find concurrence on a full legal treaty, which would leave countries only with a politically-binding text by the time the summit at Copenhagen closed. But Guyana's leader, President Bharrat Jagdeo, warned that the summit in [Denmark](#) would be classified as a failure unless a binding document was agreed upon instead of just political consensus. He urged his cohorts to act with purpose saying, "Never before have science, economics, geo-strategic self-interest and politics intersected in such a way on an issue that impacts everyone on the planet."

Likewise, [Tuvalu](#) demanded that legally binding agreements emerge from Copenhagen. Its proposal was supported by many of the vulnerable countries, from small island states and sub-Saharan Africa, all of whom warned of the catastrophic impact of climate change on their citizens. [Tuvalu](#) also called for more aggressive action, such as an amendment to the 1992 agreement, which would focus on sharp greenhouse gas emissions and the accepted rise in temperatures, due to the impact the rise in seas. The delegation from [Kiribati](#) joined the call by drawing attention to the fact that one village had to be abandoned due to waist-high water, and more such effects were likely to follow. Kiribati's Foreign Secretary, Tessie Lambourne, warned that the people of [Kiribati](#) could well be faced with no homeland in the future saying, "Nobody in this room would want to leave their homeland." But despite such impassioned pleas and irrespective of warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that the rise in sea level from melting polar ice caps would deleteriously affect low-lying atolls such as such as [Tuvalu](#) and [Kiribati](#) in the Pacific, and the [Maldives](#) in the Indian Ocean, the oil-giant [Saudi Arabia](#) was able to block this move.

Meanwhile, within the developed countries, yet another power struggle was brewing. The European Union warned it would only agree to raise its target of 20 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions to 30 percent if the [United States](#) demonstrated that it would do more to reduce its own emissions. It was unknown if such pressure would yield results. [United States](#) President Barack Obama offered a "provisional" 2020 target of 17 percent reductions, noting that he could not offer greater concessions at Copenhagen due to resistance within the [United States](#) Congress, which was already trying to pass a highly controversial "cap and trade" emissions legislation. However, should that emissions trading bill fail in the Senate, the [United States](#) Environment Protection Agency's declaration that greenhouse gases pose a danger to human health and the environment was expected to facilitate further regulations and limits on power plants and factories at the national level. These moves could potentially strengthen the Obama administration's offering at Copenhagen. As well, President Obama also signaled that he would be willing to consider the inclusion of international forestry credits.

Such moves indicated willingness by the Obama administration to play a more constructive role on the international environmental scene than its predecessor, the Bush administration. Indeed, ahead of his arrival at the Copenhagen summit, President Barack Obama's top environmental advisors promised to work on a substantial climate change agreement. To that end, [United States](#)

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson said at a press conference, "We are seeking robust engagement with all of our partners around the world." But would this pro-engagement assertion yield actual results?

By Dec. 12, 2009, details related to a draft document prepared by Michael Zammit Cutajar, the head of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action, were released at the Copenhagen climate conference. Included in the document were calls for countries to make major reductions in carbon emissions over the course of the next decade. According to the Washington Post, industrialized countries were called on to make cuts of between 25 percent and 40 percent below 1990 levels -- reductions that were far more draconian than the [United States](#) was likely to accept. As discussed above, President Obama had offered a provisional reduction target of 17 percent. The wide gap between the released draft and the United States' actual stated position suggested there was much more negotiating in the offing if a binding agreement could be forged, despite the Obama administration's claims that it was seeking greater engagement on this issue.

In other developments, the aforementioned call for financial support of developing countries to deal with the perils of climate change was partly answered by the European Union on Dec. 11, 2009. The European bloc pledged an amount of 2.4 billion euros (US\$3.5 billion) annually from 2010 to 2012. Environment Minister Andreas Carlgren of [Sweden](#) -- the country that holds the rotating presidency of the European Union at the time of the summit -- put his weight behind the notion of a "legally binding deal." Meanwhile, Yvo de Boer, a top United Nations climate change official, focused less on the essence of the agreement and more on tangible action and effects saying, "Copenhagen will only be a success if it delivers significant and immediate action that begins the day the conference ends."

The division between developed and developing countries in Copenhagen reached new heights on Dec. 14, 2009, when some of the poor and less developed countries launched a boycott at the summit. The move, which was spurred by African countries but backed by [China](#) and [India](#), appeared to be geared toward redirecting attention and primary responsibility to the wealthier and more industrialized countries. The impasse was resolved after the wealthier and more industrialized countries offered assurances that they did not intend on shirking from their commitments to reducing greenhouse gases. As a result, the participating countries ceased the boycott.

Outside the actual summit, thousands of protestors had gathered to demand crucial global warming, leading to clashes between police and demonstrators elsewhere in the Danish capital city. There were reports of scattered violence across Copenhagen and more than 1,000 people were arrested.

Nevertheless, by the second week of the climate change summit, hopes of forging a strong deal were eroding as developed and developing nations remained deadlocked on sharing cuts in greenhouse gases, and particularly on the matters of financing and temperature goals. In a bid to

shore up support for a new climate change, [United States](#) President Barack Obama joined other world leaders in Copenhagen. On Dec. 14, 2009, there was a standoff brewing between the [United States](#) and [China](#). At issue was China's refusal to accept international monitoring of its expressed targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The [United States](#) argued that China's opposition to verification could be a deal-breaker.

By the close of the summit, the difficult process eventually resulted in some consensus being cultivated. A draft text called for \$100 billion a year by 2020 to assist poor nations cope with climate change, while aiming to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The deal also included specific targets for developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and called for reductions by developing countries as a share of their economies. Also included in the agreement was a mechanism to verify compliance. The details of the agreement were supported by President Barack Obama, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

This draft would stand as an interim agreement, with a legally-binding international pact unlikely to materialize until 2010. In this way, the summit in Copenhagen failed to achieve its central objective, which was to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions.

Editor's Note

In the background of these developments was the growing global consciousness related to global warming and climate change. Indeed, as the Copenhagen summit was ongoing, it was clear there was enormous concurrence on the significance of the stakes with an editorial on the matter of climate change being published in 56 newspapers in 45 countries. That editorial warned that without global action, climate change would "ravage our planet." Meanwhile, a global survey taken by Globescan showed that concern over global warming had exponentially increased from 1998 -- when only 20 percent of respondents believed it to be a serious problem -- to 64 percent in 2009. Such survey data, however, was generated ahead of the accusations by climate change skeptics that some climate scientists may have overstated the case for global warming, based on emails derived in an illicit manner from a British University.

Special Entry: Climate change talks in Doha in [Qatar](#) extend life of Kyoto Protocol (2012)

December 2012 saw climate talks ensue in the Qatari city of Doha as representatives from countries across the world gathered to discuss the fate of the Kyoto Protocol, which seeks to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. The summit yielded results with decisions made (1) to extend the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, and (2) for wealthier countries to compensate poorer countries for the losses and damage incurred as a result of climate change.

In regards to the second matter, Malia Talakai of [Nauru](#), a leading negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States, explained the necessity of the compensation package as follows: "We are trying to say that if you pollute you must help us."

This measure was being dubbed the "Loss and Damage" mechanism, and was being linked with [United States](#) President Barack Obama's request for \$60 billion from Congress to deal with the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy months before. The sight of a hurricane bearing down on the northern Atlantic seaboard, along with the reality of the scope of reconstruction, appeared to have illustrated the economic costs of climate change -- not so much as a distant environmental issue -- but as a danger to the quotidian lives of people. Still, there was blame to be placed on the [United States](#) and European countries -- some of world's largest emitters -- for failing to do more to reduce emissions.

To that latter end, there was in fact little progress made on the central issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Had those emissions been reduced, there would have been less of a need to financially deal with the devastation caused by climate change. One interpretation was that the global community was accepting the fact that industrialization was contributing to global warming, which had deleterious effects on the polar ice caps and concomitantly on the rise of sea level, with devastating effects for small island nations. Thus, wealthier countries were willing to pay around \$10 billion a year through 2020, effectively in "damages," to the poor countries that could be viewed as the "collateral damage" of industrial progress. But damages today could potentially be destruction tomorrow, leaving in place the existential challenges and burdens to be born by some of the world's smallest and least wealthy island countries.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the representative for the small island nation states at the Doha summit responded with ire, characterizing the lack of progress on reducing emissions as follows: "We see the package before us as deeply deficient in mitigation (carbon cuts) and finance. It's likely to lock us on the trajectory to a 3,4,5C rise in global temperatures, even though we agreed to keep the global average temperature rise of 1.5C to ensure survival of all islands. There is no new finance (for adapting to climate change and getting clean energy) -- only promises that something might materialize in the future. Those who are obstructive need to talk not about how their people will live, but whether our people will live."

Indeed, in most small island countries not just in the Pacific, but also the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have been dominant themes with dire life and death consequences looming in the background for their people. Small island nations in these region are already at risk from the rise of sea-level, tropical cyclones, floods. But their very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming were also at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Increasingly high storm surges can wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Accordingly, the very existence of island nations, such as [Kiribati](#) and [Tuvalu](#), are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map. Yet even with the existential threat of being wiped

off the map in the offing, the international community has been either slow or restrictive in its efforts to deal with global warming, climate change, economic and ecological damage, as well as the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees.

A 2012 report from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Pacific Regional Environment Program underlined the concerns of small island nations and their people as it concluded that the livelihoods of approximately 10 million people in Pacific island communities were increasingly vulnerable to climate change. In fact, low-lying islands in that region would likely confront losses of up to 18 percent of gross domestic product due to climate change, according to the report. The report covers 21 countries and territories, including [Fiji](#), [Kiribati](#), [Samoa](#) and [Tonga](#), and recommended environmental legislation intended to deal with the climate crisis facing the small island countries particularly. As noted by David Sheppard, the director general of the Pacific Regional Environment Program that co-sponsored this study: "The findings... emphasize the need more than ever to raise the bar through collective actions that address the region's environmental needs at all levels."

Regardless of the failures of the summit in [Qatar](#) (discussed above), the meeting did facilitate a process starting in 2015, which would bind both wealthy and poor countries together in the mission of forging a new binding treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol and tackle the central causes of climate change.

For more information on the threats faced in small island nations by climate change and the measures being undertaken to lobby for international action, please see the Alliance for Small Island States available online at the URL: <http://aosis.org/>

Special Report

COP 21 summit in Paris ends with historic agreement to tackle climate change; rare international consensus formed on environmental crisis facing the planet (2015) --

In mid-December 2015, the highly-anticipated United Nations climate conference of parties (COP) in Paris, [France](#), ended with a historic agreement. In fact, it would very likely be understood as the most significant international agreement signed by all the recognized countries of the world since the Cold War. Accordingly, the Paris Agreement was being distinguished as the first multilateral pact that would compel all countries across the world to cut its carbon emissions -- one of the major causes of increasing greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global warming, and its deleterious effects ranging from the dangerous rise in sea level to catastrophic climate change.

The accord, which was dubbed to be the "Paris Agreement," was the work of rigorous diplomacy

and fervent environmental advocacy, and it aimed to address the climate change crisis facing the planet. As many as 195 countries were represented in the negotiations that led to the landmark climate deal. Indeed, it was only after weeks of passionate debate that international concurrence was reached in addressing the environmental challenges confronting the world, with particular attention to moving beyond fossil fuels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The success of the COP 21 summit in Paris and the emergence of the landmark Paris Agreement was, to some extent, attributed to the efforts of France's Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius who presided over the negotiations. The French foreign minister's experience and credentials as a seasoned diplomat and respected statesman paid dividends. He skillfully guided the delegates from almost 200 countries and interest groups along the negotiations process, with ostensibly productive results and a reasonably robust deal to show for it.

On Dec. 12, 2015, French Foreign Minister Fabius officially adopted the agreement, declaring: "I now invite the COP to adopt the decision entitled Paris Agreement outlined in the document. Looking out to the room I see that the reaction is positive, I see no objections. The Paris agreement is adopted." Once Foreign Minister Fabius' gavel was struck, symbolically inaugurating the Paris Agreement into force, the COP delegate rushed to their feet with loud and bouyant cheers as well as thunderous applause.

In general, the Paris Agreement was being hailed as a victory for enviromental activists and a triumph for international diplomats, while at the same time being understood as simply an initial -- and imperfect -- move in the direction of a sustainable future. China's chief negotiator, Xie Zhenhua, issued this message, saying that while the accord was not ideal, it should "not prevent us from marching historical steps forward."

United States President Barack Obama lauded the deal as both "ambitious" and "historic," and the work of strenuous multilateral negotiations as he declared, "Together, we've shown what's possible when the world stands as one." The [United States](#) leader acknowledged that the accord was not "perfect," but he reminded the critics that it was "the best chance to save the one planet we have."

Former [United States](#) Vice President Al Gore, one of the world's most well known environmental advocates, issued a lengthy statement on the accomplishments ensconced in the Paris Agreement. He highlighted the fact that the Paris Agreement was a first step towards a future with a reduced carbon footprint on Planet Earth as he said, "The components of this agreement -- including a strong review mechanism to enhance existing commitments and a long-term goal to eliminate global-warming pollution this century -- are essential to unlocking the necessary investments in our future. No agreement is perfect, and this one must be strengthened over time, but groups across every sector of society will now begin to reduce dangerous carbon pollution through the framework of this agreement."

The central provisions of the Paris Agreement included the following items:

- Greenhouse gas emissions should peak as quickly as possible, with a move towards balancing energy sources, and ultimately the decrease of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century
- Global temperature increase would be limited to 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels and would be held "well below" the two degrees Centigrade threshold
- Progress on these goals would be reviewed every five years beginning in 2020 with new greenhouse gas reduction targets issued every five years
- \$100 billion would be expended each year in climate finance for developing countries to move forward with green technologies, with further climate financing to be advanced in the years beyond

It should be noted that there both legally binding and voluntary elements contained within the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the submission of an emissions reduction target and the regular review of that goal would be legally mandatory for all countries. Stated differently, there would be a system in place by which experts would be able to track the carbon-cutting progress of each country. At the same time, the specific targets to be set by countries would be determined at the discretion of the countries, and would not be binding. While there was some criticism over this non-binding element, the fact of the matter was that the imposition of emissions targets was believed to be a major factor in the failure of climate change talks in Copenhagen, [Denmark](#), in 2009.

In 2015, the talks faced challenges as several countries, such as [China](#) and [India](#), objected to conditions that would stymie economic and development. In order to avoid that kind of landmine, a system Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) was developed and formed the basis of the accord. As such, the Paris Agreement would, in fact, facilitate economic growth and development, as well as technological progress, but with the goal of long-term ecological sustainability based on low carbon sources. In fact, the agreement heralded as "the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era." As noted by Nick Mabey, the head of the climate diplomacy organization E3G, said, "Paris means governments will go further and faster to tackle climate change than ever before. The transition to a low carbon economy is now unstoppable, ensuring the end of the fossil fuel age."

A particular sticking point in the agreement was the \$100 billion earmarked for climate financing for developing countries to transition from traditional fossil fuels to green energy technologies and a low carbon future. In 2014, a report by the International Energy Agency indicated that the cost of that transition would actually be around \$44 trillion by the mid-century -- an amount that would render the \$100 billion being promised to be a drop in the proverbial bucket. However, the general expectation was that the Republican-controlled Senate in the [United States](#), which would have to ratify the deal in that country, was not interested in contributing significant funds for the cause of climate change.

A key strength of the Paris Agreement was the ubiquitous application of measures to all countries. Of note was the frequently utilized concept of "flexibility" with regard to the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the varying capacities of the various countries in meeting their obligations would be anticipated and accorded flexibility. This aspect presented something of a departure from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which drew a sharp distinction between developed and developing countries, and mandated a different set of obligations for those categories of countries. Thus, under Kyoto, [China](#) and [India](#) were not held to the same standards as the [United States](#) and European countries. In the Paris Agreement, there would be commitments from all countries across the globe.

Another notable strength of the Paris Agreement was the fact that the countries of the world were finally able to reach consensus on the vital necessity to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Centigrade. Ahead of the global consensus on the deal, and as controversy continued to surface over the targeted global temperature limits, the leaders of island countries were sounding the alarm about the melting of the Polar ice caps and the associated rise in sea level. Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of [Tuvalu](#) issued this dismal reminder: "Tuvalu's future ... is already bleak and any further temperature increase will spell the total demise of [Tuvalu](#). No leader in this room carries such a level of worry and responsibility. Just imagine you are in my shoes, what would you do?" It was thus something of a victory for environmental advocates that the countries of the world could find consensus on the lower number -- 1.5 degrees rather than 2 degrees.

A significant weak point with regard to the Paris deal was a "loss and damage" provision, which anticipates that even with all the new undertakings intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low carbon future, there would nonetheless be unavoidable climate change consequences. Those consequences ranged from the loss of arable land for farmers as well as soil erosion and contamination of potable water by sea water, to the decimation of territory in coastal zones and on small islands, due to the rise in sea level, with entire small island countries being rendered entirely uninhabitable. The reality was that peoples' homes across the world would be destroyed along with their way of life.

With that latter catastrophic effect being a clear and present danger for small island countries, the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) demanded that the developed world acknowledge its responsibility for this irreversible damage.. Despite the fact that greenhouse gas emissions and the ensuing plague of global warming was, indeed, the consequence of development in the West (the [United States](#) and Europe) and the large power house countries, such as [Russia](#), [China](#) and [India](#), there was no appetite by those countries to sign on to unlimited liability. Under the Paris Agreement, there was a call for research on insurance mechanisms that would address loss and damage issues, with recommendations to come in the future.

The call for research was being regarded as an evasion of sorts and constituted the weakest aspect of the Paris Agreement. Not surprisingly, a coalition of small island nations demanded a "Marshall

Plan" for the Pacific. Borrowing the term "Marshall Plan" from the post-World War II reconstruction effort, the coalition of Pacific island nation, which included [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), [Fiji](#), and the [Marshall Islands](#), called for an initiative that would include investment in renewable energy and shoreline protection, cultural preservation, economic assistance for economies in transition, and a plan for migration and resettlement for these countries as they confront the catastrophic effects of the melting of the Polar ice caps and the concomitant rise in sea level. The precise contours of the initiative remained unknown, unspecified, and a mere exercise in theory at the time of writing. Yet such an initiative would, at some point, have to be addressed, given the realities of climate change and the slow motion calamity unfolding each day for low-lying island nations across the world.

As noted by Vice President Greg Stone of Conservation International, who also functions as an adviser to the government of [Kiribati](#), "Imagine living in a place where you know it's going to go away someday, but you don't know what day that wave's going to come over and wash your home away." He added, "It's a disaster we know is going to happen." Meanwhile, the intervening years promised to be filled with hardship for small island nations, such as [Kiribati](#). Stone explained, "For every inch of sea-level rise, these islands lose 10 feet of their freshwater table to saltwater intrusion," Stone explained. "So it's not just about the day the water finally goes over the island; it's also about the day that there's just not enough water left and everyone has to move off the island." Presaging the future for island nations that could face submersion, Stone said, "If you look ahead 50 years, a country like [Kiribati](#) could become the first aqueous nation. possibility of migration. That is, they own this big patch of ocean, and they administer it from elsewhere."

Foreign Minister Minister Tony Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) emerged as the champion advocating on behalf of small island nation states and a loose coalition of concerned countries from the Pacific to the Caribbean, but with support from the [United States](#). He addressed the comprehensive concerns of small island nations regarding the weaknesses of the deal, while simultaneously making clear that the Paris Agreement signified hope for the countries most at risk. In a formal statement, Debrum declared: "We have made history today. Emissions targets are still way off track, but this agreement has the tools to ramp up ambition, and brings a spirit of hope that we can rise to this challenge. I can go back home to my people and say we now have a pathway to survival." Debrum highlighted the imperatives of Pacific island nations, saying, "Our High Ambition Coalition was the lightning rod we needed to lift our sights and expectations for a strong agreement here in Paris. We were joined by countries representing more than half the world. We said loud and clear that a bare-bones, minimalist agreement would not fly. We instead demanded an agreement to mark a turning point in history, and the beginning of our journey to the post-carbon era."

Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) espoused the quintessential synopsis of the accord and its effects for those most likely to be affected by climate change as he noted, "Climate change won't stop

overnight, and my country is not out of the firing line just yet, but today we all feel a little safer.”

Editor's Entry on [Environmental Policy](#):

The low-lying Pacific island nations of the world, including [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), the [Marshall Islands](#), [Fiji](#), among others, are vulnerable to the threats posed by global warming and climate change, derived from carbon emissions, and resulting in the rise in sea level. Other island nations in the Caribbean, as well as poor countries with coastal zones, were also at particular risk of suffering the deleterious effects of climate change.

Political policy in these countries are often connected to ecological issues, which have over time morphed into an existential crisis of sorts. Indeed, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have also been dominant themes with life and death consequences for the people of island nations in the Pacific. Indeed, the very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming remain at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Yet even so, these countries are threatened by increasingly high storm surges, which could wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Moreover, because these are low lying island nations, the sustained rise in sea level can potentially lead to the terrain of these countries being uninhabitable at best, and submerged at worst. Stated in plain terms, these countries are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map and their plight illuminates the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees. In these manifold senses, climate change is the existential crisis of the contemporary era.

Since the time of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, there have been efforts aimed at extending the life of that agreement, with an eye on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and thus minimizing the effects of climate change. Those endeavors have largely ended in failure, as exemplified by the unsuccessful Copenhagen talks in 2009 and the fruitless Doha talks in 2012 respectively. The success of the COP 21 talks in [France](#), with the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015, was regarded as the first glimmer of hope. Not only did the Paris Agreement signify the triumph of international diplomacy and global consensus, but it also marked the start of the end of the fossil fuel era, with the path forward toward a low carbon future reliant on greener technologies. Most crucially, the Paris Agreement stood as the first significant response in recent times to the central challenge of climate change and its quotidian effects on the lives of real human beings across the world.

1. Major International Environmental Accords:

General Environmental Concerns

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, Espoo, 1991.

Accords Regarding Atmosphere

Annex 16, vol. II (Environmental Protection: Aircraft Engine Emissions) to the 1044 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, Montreal, 1981

Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), Geneva, 1979

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), New York, 1992

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, Vienna, 1985 including the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Depleted the Ozone Layer, Montreal, 1987

Accords Regarding Hazardous Substances

Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movements and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, Bamako, 1991

Convention on Civil Liability for Damage Caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD), Geneva, 1989

Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention), Basel, 1989

Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Helsinki, 1992

Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention), Waigani, 1995

European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), Geneva 1957

FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, Rome, 1985

2. Major International Marine Accords:

Global Conventions

Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention 1972), London, 1972

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by Protocol of 1978 relation thereto (MARPOL 73/78), London, 1973 and 1978

International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1969 (1969 CLC), Brussels, 1969, 1976, and 1984

International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1971 (1971 Fund Convention), Brussels, 1971

Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (HNS), London 1996

International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (OPRC), London, 1990

International Convention Relation to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (Intervention Convention), Brussels, 1969

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Montego Bay, 1982

Regional Conventions

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Oslo Convention), Oslo, 1972

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources (Paris Convention), Paris, 1974

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention), Paris, 1992

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (1974 Helsinki Convention), Helsinki 1974

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Conventions within the UNEP Regional Seas Programme

Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, Bucharest, 1992

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Cartagena de Indias, 1983

Convention for the Protection, Management, and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, Nairobi, 1985

Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-operation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, [Kuwait](#), 1978

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean Sea (Barcelona Convention), Barcelona, 1976

Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment, Jeddah, 1982

Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, Noumea, 1986

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific, Lima, 1981

Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region, Abidjan, 1981

3. Major Conventions Regarding Living Resources:

Marine Living Resources

Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), Canberra, 1980

International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Rio de Janeiro, 1966

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), Washington, 1946

Nature Conservation and Terrestrial Living Resources

Antarctic Treaty, Washington, D.C., 1959

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), Paris, 1972

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nairobi, 1992

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), Bonn, 1979

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Washington, D.C., 1973

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), Ramsar, 1971

Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), Paris 1994

FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, Rome, 1983

International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (ITTA, 1994), Geneva, 1994

Freshwater Resources

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Helsinki, 1992

4. Major Conventions Regarding Nuclear Safety:

Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (Assistance Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (Notification Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Nuclear Safety, Vienna, 1994

Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, Vienna, 1963

5. Major Intergovernmental Organizations

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

European Union (EU): Environment

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Environment Policy Committee (EPOC)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

World Bank

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

World Trade Organization (WTO)

6. Major Non-Governmental Organizations

Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANE)

Climate Action Network (CAN)

Consumers International (CI)

Earth Council

Earthwatch Institute

Environmental Liaison Centre International (ELCI)

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Friends of the Earth International (FoEI)

Greenpeace International

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

International Solar Energy Society (ISES)

IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Pesticide Action Network (PAN)

Sierra Club

Society for International Development (SID)

Third World Network (TWN)

Water Environment Federation (WEF)

Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Federalist Movement (WFM)

World Resources Institute (WRI)

World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF)

7. Other Networking Instruments

Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)

Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE)

Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

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-- See also list of News Wires services below, which are also used for research purposes. --

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Methodology Notes for Economic Data:

Estimates by CountryWatch.com of GDP in dollars in most countries are made by converting local currency GDP data from the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook to US dollars by market exchange rates estimated from the International Monetary Fund International Financial Statistics and projected out by the CountryWatch Macroeconomic Forecast. Real GDP was estimated by deflating current dollar values by the US GDP Implicit Price Deflator.

Exceptions to this method were used for:

- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Nauru
- Cuba
- Palau
- Holy See
- San Marino
- Korea, North
- [Serbia](#) & Montenegro
- Liberia
- Somalia
- Liechtenstein
- Tonga
- Monaco
- Tuvalu

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Methodology Notes for the HDI:

Since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme, in concert with organizations across the globe, has produced the [Human Development Index](#) (or HDI). According to the UNDP, the index measures average achievement in basic human development in one simple composite index, and produces from this index a ranking of countries. The HDI is a composite of three basic components of human development: longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy. Knowledge is measured by combination of adult literacy and mean

years of schooling. Standard of living is measured by purchasing power, based on real GDP per capita (in constant US\$) adjusted for differences in international living costs (or, purchasing power parity, PPP). While the index uses these social indicators to measure national performance with regard to human welfare and development, not all countries provide the same level of information for each component needed to compute the index; therefore, as in any composite indicator, the final index is predicated on projections, predictions and weighting schemes. The index is a static measure, and thus, an incomplete measure of human welfare. In fact, the UNDP says itself the concept of human development focuses on the ends rather than the means of development and progress, examining in this manner, the average condition of all people in a given country.

Specifically, the index is calculated by determining the maximum and minimum for each of the three components (as listed above) and then measuring where each country stands in relation to these scales-expressed as a value between 0 and 1. For example, the minimum adult literary rate is zero percent, the maximum is 100 percent, and the reading skills component of knowledge in the HDI for a country where the literacy rate is 75 percent would be 0.75. The scores of all indicators are then averaged into the overall index.

For a more extensive examination of human development, as well as the ranking tables for each participating country, please visit: <http://www.undp.org>

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Note: Some or all these news services have been used to research various sections of this Country Review.

USING COUNTRYWATCH.COM AS AN ELECTRONIC SOURCE:

MLA STYLE OF CITATION

Commentary

For items in a "Works Cited" list, CountryWatch.com suggests that users follow recommended patterns for indentation given in the *MLA Handbook*, 4th edition.

Individual Works

Basic form, using an Internet protocol:

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Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. *Country Review: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *Country Review:France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_country.asp?vCOUNTRY=61 October, 12, 2003.

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Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. "People." *CountryWatch.com: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *CountryWatch.com: France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.asp?vCOUNTRY=61&SECTION=SOCIAL&TOPIC=CLPEO&TYPE=TEXT. October 12, 2003.

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